



Housing Committee

Town of Chilmark

MEETING NOTES - FINAL

March 16, 2023 (via ZOOM)

Present for the Housing Committee and attending the Zoom meeting were Jim Feiner – Chair, Andrew (Andy) Goldman, Ann Wallace, Allison Cameron Parry, Nettie Kent Ruel and Alison Kisselgof - Administrator. Also in attendance were Peter Cook, Jessica Roddy, Clark Goff and Jeffrey DuBard.

Bill Rossi was not present.

The meeting started at 9:01 AM.

PEAKED HILL PASTURES UPDATE: Andy said the Peaked Hill Pastures (PHP) RFP Committee met the previous day and had planned to consider a pro bono architect for the project. The proposal was withdrawn prior to the meeting so the topic was not discussed. Andy offered that the architect under consideration was well qualified but was no longer a candidate to help with the PHP project. The PHP RFP Committee also discussed whether to talk to another architect or seek a developer or both simultaneously.

Andy said that Rich was going to attend the Citizens Planner conference over the weekend and may learn helpful information to share at their next meeting on Monday.

The Committee is awaiting plans from Vineyard Land Surveying & Engineering (VLSE) and plans to report on its progress at the town meeting. There is also a warrant to ask the Town residents to allocate money from Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds to pay VLSE.

Jim asked if using CPA funds for infrastructure would eliminate the Town's obligation to offer the resulting housing to all income categories. Andy said that this was the case when the Town built the Middle Line Road project and he believes it would still be the case for PHP.

Nettie asked whether the project would be ready for the Town to vote at next year's town meeting. Andy said that he hoped that there was a special town meeting in the fall to vote on the project. In the meantime, the Committee could request funds from the Molly Flender Affordable Housing Trust (MFAHT) to start work on the infrastructure. Andy mentioned that the lottery for Homesites may take place sooner as well.

Jim asked if the project still includes two Homesites that are you-build and two to be built by a developer. Andy confirmed this was part of the concept warrant and still being considered.

Peter offered that the overall funding picture is unclear. He said that he hoped the Committee could talk to potential developers and members of Island Housing Trust to take advantage of their experience in this type of project without any conflicts of interest. Peter said the Planning Board will still pursue changing related by-laws but does not wish this to slow down the project.

Ann asked if legal counsel ever gave an opinion on whether undeveloped land could be used later if zoning changes. Andy was unsure that an answer was received and, if not, suggested that the Planning Board ask again.

ROOM OCCUPANCY EXCISE INCREASE CONTINUED DISCUSSION: Jim recounted at the last meeting that the Committee voted to send a memo to the Select Board regarding an increase in room occupancy excise and the use of the resulting funds for affordable housing. Alison had created a draft of the memo and distributed to Committee members to discuss at this meeting.

Alison explained that she and Ann had drafted the memo but felt the Committee should discuss it before sending to the Select Board since the previous memo did not receive support. She specifically asked about wording of allocating “up to \$200,000” of funds. Andy explained that this wording arose from the previous meeting’s conversation where it was discussed that a percentage could not be used and that the increase is expected to total around this amount. Bill had suggested in the last meeting that the memo should specify the usage of the funds so Andy had suggested funds be put towards PHP debt service. Since it was unclear if the Town would be financing PHP, Andy said it would be better to generalize and say funds would be use for the project, but not specify debt service. Alison mentioned that the memo wording did not specify debt service.

Ann offered that the Committee could approve the memo, ask Bill to review it and bring it back to the Committee if Bill has suggested edits. She felt the memo included the important elements of a dollar amount and a suggested usage.

After some more discussion on the usage of the funds, a motion was made to approve the memo as written to be sent to the Select Board. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous approval.

REVIEW OF OAK BLUFFS EXPANDED RENTAL ASSISTANCE PILOT PROGRAM: Ann had attended a meeting where an expanded rental assistance pilot program for Oak Bluffs was discussed. She emailed information regarding the program for members to review.

Ann said that she thought it would be something for Chilmark to pay attention to and see how it works out. The program would expand rental assistance up to 120% AMI on 5 units to see if more landlords would enroll. The Town of Oak Bluffs would subsidize the difference in rent between 80% and 120% AMI. She noted that the town would never pay more than 50% of the rent.

The other Committee members agreed that the program would be worth considering for Chilmark if successful.

TOPICS NOT ANTICIPATED: Jeffrey DuBard said that he had recently bought a property between Middle Road and Middle Line Road – Alison shared a map of the lot on screen. The land is mostly conservation restricted with a two buildable lots, which are located on Tower Lane. He is seeking to swap some of the conservation land along Middle Road for the buildable lots, which would have easier access. Jeffrey seeks support and feedback from this Committee.

The Committee asked about wetlands in the area. Jeffrey answered that Vineyard Land Surveying & Engineering has informed him there are no wetlands. Members were generally supportive of the idea and asked if Jeffrey had spoken yet to the Conservation Commission (ConCom) about the idea. Jeffrey said that he had talked to individual members of ConCom and received to no concerns from them about the project. Jeffrey asked if he should consider Homesite and/or Youth Lots – he said that he had no interest in rentals on the property. The Committee has no purview over Youth Lots and therefore suggested Homesites.

Jeffrey said he looked forward to sharing more information on this project at later meetings.

There was a brief discussion about meetings returning to in-person if legislation is not extended. Alison asked if the Committee would prefer remote meetings and the consensus was yes because there is better public attendance and there is still is some concern about COVID. Alison said that she would keep the Committee informed about what the options would be moving forward.

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES: A motion was made to accept the 1/19/23 minutes as written. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous approval.

Andy asked that a line in the 2/16/23 minutes which mentioned the PHP RFP Committee would have a financial plan by fall town meeting be omitted since he did not believe that this will happen. A motion was made to accept the minutes with Andy's modification and seconded. The motion passed by unanimous approval.

DOCUMENTS:

Draft minutes from the 1/19/23 & 2/16/23 meetings

NEXT POSSIBLE MEETING: April 20, 2023 @ 9:00 AM

With no further business to conduct the meeting adjourned at 10:08 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Alison Kisselgof, Board Administrator.