



# Housing Committee

## Town of Chilmark

### MEETING NOTES - FINAL January 19, 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, Phil Banta, Laura Silber and Jeffrey DuBard.

Bill Rossi was not in attendance.

The meeting started at 9:01 AM.

**HOMESITE IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES AMENDMENTS PUBLIC HEARING:** The public hearing was opened at 9:01 AM. Jim recounted that a subcommittee of Allison, Nettie and Ann met to discuss and recommend the updated language for the HIG. Alison shared the Homesite Implementation Guidelines (HIG) with the amendments indicated in red.

The first edit suggested was to update the HIG to reflect a change in by-law 6.9B3a made at the last town meeting, which struck the portion requiring that a Homesite lot be located on a minimum of 1 acre. There were no questions or comments offered in regards to this change.

The second edit to the HIG suggested by the subcommittee was to change to the wording of the sale price of a Homesite. Rather than have a number to define the maximum amount a Homesite could be sold for, a paragraph was added to define the sale price as to be determined by the cost of infrastructure and approved by the Housing Committee and the Select Board.

Jessica pointed out that the words “#5 Sale Price to Eligible Purchaser:” would not need to be repeated, since they were not crossed out of the original text.

Jeffrey asked if it was clear that the determination of price should be the seller’s responsibility and that the money paid has to be used for the work intended. The consensus was that this was implicitly stated as well as the fact the project would need to be approved by the Committee and Select Board.

Jessica offered some other syntax corrections: the word town in line 3 should be capitalized and the word engineering in the next line does not need capitalization.

Allison asked about the process of approval once an application has been received. Would there be a site visit? It was suggested that a site visit could take place but it would have to be before the close of the sale.

Phil asked if the infrastructure would need to be installed prior to the sale. There was a discussion about the timing of sale and infrastructure installation. It was the consensus that the infrastructure would need to be done prior to closing of the sale.

With no further comments on the proposed revisions to the HIG, a motion was made to close the public hearing.

The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

A motion was made to accept the HIG revisions with the offered corrections. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous approval.

**PEAKED HILL PASTURES UPDATE:** Andy said that the Peaked Hill Pastures RFP Committee has hired Vineyard Land Surveying & Engineering (VLSE) to produce a scope of work including land layout, infrastructure planning and permitting process. A contract for services was accepted with estimated at a total of \$150,000 including a \$20,000 contingency. The contract would be paid on a time & materials basis. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) approved a request for funds to pay VLSE and a warrant article will be included in the next town meeting. Molly Flender Affordable Housing Trust (MFAHT) Committee authorized usage of funds in the interim. If the town votes to expend funds from CPC, the funds will be used to replenish MFAHT. Andy mentioned that an initial site plan was expected from VLSE at the end of January.

Jim asked if the planning was in two phases – the Homesite lots and the rental units. Andy answered that there were two phases but it did not mean that one needed to be completed before the other starts. Andy offered that the Homesite lottery would be among the first part that could be completed but that an architect could be working on the rental unit design at the same time. Project timing would depend on infrastructure and financing.

There was a brief discussion regarding the PHP RFP Committee’s decision to reduce rental units to 9 and not use 40B zoning.

**ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT PROGRAM ~ HOUSING ASSISTANCE CORP. DISCUSSION:**

Laura Silber joined the meeting to give an update on the Housing Assistance Corp.’s accessory dwelling unit (ADU) program on Cape Cod. Laura shared a webpage entitled “My Home Plus One ADU” (reference: <https://hzu.dec.myftpupload.com/adu/>) and went over some information about Housing Assistance Corp (HAC). Laura said the Martha’s Vineyard Commission (MVC) is partnering with Island Housing Trust to work with HAC to bring more resources to the island.

Laura mentioned that the Cape Cod ADU program was so successful that it had to be paused so that software could be developed to help the public learn about the program and submit applications. She encouraged Committee members to look over the webpage she shared and contact HAC to request extension of the ADU program to the island. Laura also mentioned that there was currently a grant program to incentivize ADU creation at \$10,000/unit.

Jim said that the zoning hasn’t matured with the needs of the island community. Laura offered that the MVC plans to launch an island-wide Housing Task Force in the coming month to address issues like zoning. In the meantime, she suggested that this Committee look at the town’s zoning to identify changes needed. Laura mentioned that the summer housing crunch is approaching and short-term solutions could be enacted, possibly by relaxing zoning. She offered an example of yurts, which could offer temporary housing in the summer months but West Tisbury only allows on a temporary basis.

Allison asked if the Committee should write a letter to the HAC to request more support services for the island. Laura answered that it would be a good idea.

Allison made a motion to draft a letter to the HAC in support in their services and Ann seconded. The motion passed by unanimous support.

**SHORT-TERM RENTAL INCOME UPDATE:** Laura said that she wasn’t sure where the topic of raising the room occupancy excise stood in Chilmark but there are two towns on the Cape that have recently raised the room occupancy excise from 4% to 6%. Laura suggested calculating what the difference would be using the

2022 short term rental tax total of \$458,990. In order to calculate what portion is room occupancy excise and how much raising it 2% would bring in, Laura suggested looking at before and after the short term rental tax went into effect, since the state combines these amounts.

Jim mentioned that there was concern about the impact of short term rental tax would have on the market before it went into effect but no decrease in rental revenue was seen. Therefore, it is expected that raising the room occupancy excise would also have little impact. Laura offered that half of the island towns are at the higher room occupancy excise already and it is unlikely that potential renters are comparing the room occupancy excise between towns before making reservations.

Nettie asked about the process of raising the room occupancy excise. Laura answered that the change would be made via warrant article. She suggested contacting the Aquinnah Housing Committee, which has started this process recently. Laura was unsure if the Aquinnah Housing Committee would bring the warrant article forward or if the Select Board would do so but noted that support from within the town would probably be more successful.

Laura mentioned that the MVC had brought attention to the topic to Town Administrator Tim Carroll but it was prior to the introduction to the short term rental tax. She offered that the town already has the information and there is an opportunity to revisit the topic. Ann asked if Aquinnah's warrant article would designate where the extra funds would be deposited. Laura was not sure about Aquinnah's warrant language but said that Provincetown designated 30% of short term rental revenue to their affordable housing trust and the warrant passed. Laura said that Edgartown is looking to direct a dollar amount if the town raises the excise rate, not a percentage. Jeffrey added that he has spoken to Aquinnah Housing Committee about allocating some of the town's short term rental tax towards affordable housing and their response was enthusiastic. He said that he is proposing a warrant article in West Tisbury that would put 100% of their short term rental tax into the ADU program. Laura asked if the West Tisbury proposal would need to be voted on annually and Jeffrey answered yes since it was a pilot program for just the coming fiscal year. Laura offered to bring information back to the Committee after speaking with the Aquinnah Housing Committee. Allison expressed concerns that the revenue raised by increasing the room occupancy excise would just end up in the General Fund.

Jessica wondered why a motion wasn't made to write a memo to the Select Board to request a 2% raise in the room occupancy excise. As a result, a motion was made to do so. Ann suggested an informal conversation with the Town Administrator Tim Carroll first since the last memo regarding short term rental tax did not get support from the Select Board. Laura agreed that it would be beneficial to speak with Tim first. A new motion was made to meet with Tim first to discuss raising the room occupancy excise to 6%. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous approval.

**MV AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY "HOST/ADOPT A FARMWORKER":** Laura reported that the Martha's Vineyard Agricultural Society (MVAS) held a meeting about farmer housing last week, which is a big issue for farms on island. Dukes County does not currently have an agricultural agent covering the island to inform locals of state support so MVAS is trying to fill this gap. An "Adopt A Farmworker" program is being developed, modeled after the MV Sharks Adopt A Baseball Player program. Laura asked if Committee members could help spread the word. Lauren Lynch is the contact at MVAS. Laura said it would be helpful to let MVAS know of the regulations in Chilmark. Jim mentioned it would be helpful to have a grid summary of regulations by town.

**TOPICS NOT ANTICIPATED:** Phil Banta presented a workplace affordable housing concept that he is working on with Michael Kim at the MVC. The proposal is for modest multi-family structures that can accommodate up to 5 units, some with lofts for extra sleeping capabilities. The idea would be to place these structures on public lands and possibly commercial properties. Although zoning may need to be changed in some towns, the concept is expected to be low impact and high reward initiative to serve the workforce. Phil

mentioned this solution might be easier to accomplish than the ADU program since it doesn't rely on private property owners.

Nettie asked if companies that created this type of housing on their commercial lots would pay for the housing themselves or the town would subsidize. Phil answered that the companies would pay for the housing but would have to seek permission from the towns. Nettie offered that it's not just the workforce that needs housing – she has seen many local families have to leave due to lack of housing.

Jefrey expressed his support for the workplace concept. He offered that there were few commercial properties in Chilmark where the idea could be introduced but several farms that could benefit. Jeffrey said he is interested in seeing what opportunities could be identified in town.

Laura felt this was intriguing idea, especially since it uses private funds, which could allow for more restrictions than public funds. She sees a huge benefit to local farms if the concept is successful. Laura mentioned that Michael Kim has two MIT graduates helping him with case studies on island next week and are looking for an agricultural location to include. Phil said the MIT interns would be creating visuals including site plans and 3D models of buildings to support the concept. Phil offered that workforce housing is only one category of affordable housing being looked at and there would also be a family element included. Peter asked for information on this project to the Planning Board and Ann asked the information to also be sent to the Peaked Hill Pastures RFP Committee.

Allison is interesting in getting information on the square footage of the proposed housing. She pointed out that, although there aren't many commercial businesses, there are a number of home businesses in Chilmark that have a need for single bedrooms for employees.

Phil mentioned that the big hurdle is for the town to consider multi-family housing but feels the key to success on affordable housing is multiple units in one structure. He offered to invite Michael Kim to present at the next meeting, which the Committee accepted.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:** A motion was made to accept the minutes from 12/22/22 as written and seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

A motion was made to accept the minutes from 12/15/22 as written and seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**DOCUMENTS:**

Draft Minutes from 12/15/22 & 12/22/22 Meetings

**NEXT POSSIBLE MEETING:** February 16, 2023 @ 9:00 AM

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

Respectfully submitted by Alison Kisselgof, Board Administrator.