

Planning Board Minutes 01/16/19

APPROVED

Chilmark Planning Board Subcommittee Meeting

Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2019

Present: Janet Weidner, Chair, Cathy Thompson, Peter Cook

Not Present:

Public: Ann Wallace, Clark Goff, Elise Elliston

Staff: Jennifer L. Christy

Meeting called to order at 3:00PM:

- **Peaked Hill Pastures Site Plan Discussion:**

- Ms. Weidner opened the meeting and reminded the members that there will be a number of people attending the full Planning Board meeting on the 28th of January: David Vigneault of the DCRHA, Phillippe Jordi of the IHT, and Christine Flynn and Adam Turner of the MVC. These attendees are coming to the meeting in order to address the pros and cons of the affordable housing initiatives that have recently been undertaken on the island with the purpose of assessing how the Peaked Hill Pastures site may include an affordable housing element.
- Ms. Weidner also stated that she would like to create a timeline of how the subcommittee will move towards the production of a recommendation for the Peaked Hill Pastures site.
- Ms. Thompson asked that the subcommittee also work on a timeline for the completion of the overall Master Plan.
- Mr. Cook suggested that he would like to create a physical outline or armature and begin to place things such as the Menemsha experience on the armature in order to see how future planning may be informed by the work that has already been done. Mr. Cook envisioned a paragraph or so about the Menemsha planning effort, for example, in the overall Master Plan that states where the work is to date. He further stated that the paragraph would also identify how the Menemsha work was organized and completed with the intention of possibly creating a template for future planning work.
- Ms. Weidner suggested that the subcommittee discuss what the group would like to know from David, Phillippe, Christine and Adam on the January 28th.
 - Brief discussion occurred about rentals in Middle Line Road (MLR) and why there is a particular mix of rentals and ownership (6 rented, 6 owned). Ms. Weidner stated a downside she has heard regarding rentals is that it can take a large amount of time for a Town to recoup the costs of a project if the project is primarily rentals. Some discussion occurred regarding whether the MLR project was built with half rentals and half ownership in order to satisfy state requirements. Mr. Cook stated that the MLR project did not satisfy the state requirements for providing housing due to the fact that the applicants/occupants all benefitted from a local preference criterion. Ms. Wallace stated that the state sets the limit at 75% of applicants/occupants receiving local preference and that Chilmark did not meet that criteria for MLR. Ms. Wallace noted that the state has granted an exemption to Dukes County and Nantucket to allow for a greater percentage of income eligibility to be allowed for determining eligibility in an affordable housing project. Ms. Wallace noted that state representatives have communicated to the Town that it is unlikely that the Town would be able to create an economically feasible plan for affordable housing that is less than 35 units.
 - Mr. Cook stated that the Town of Chilmark may have specific problems that impact the ability to provide affordable housing. He suggested that the representatives of the housing and planning organizations be asked if they have any assistance that they can give to the Town to develop a housing philosophy that would help the Town develop a plan for housing that adheres to priorities identified by the Town while also providing some housing options.
 - Ms. Thompson asked for clarification on what the Town needs in order to develop a philosophy that would provide a path to follow.

- Mr. Cook noted the largest obstacle is the lack of large tracts of land to develop units. He also noted that there is some difficulty in reaching those who are in need of housing to make them aware of options.
- Ms. Wallace imagined that there could be an island-wide plan developed for a considerable amount of housing units, such as 35, in down-island towns where there are services and transportation while also providing for “satellite” units in the up-island Towns. This could, Ms. Wallace noted, possibly address the need for up-island towns to contribute in a meaningful way to the housing problem while also recognizing the fact that most people may not want to live in the up-island towns. Ms. Weidner noted that the All Island Planning Board meetings in 2016 and 2017 often dealt with housing and island-wide solutions were discussed.
- Mr. Cook noted that the 2017-18 Housing Production Planning process included demographic projections. It encouraged, he noted, Chilmark to think about senior housing and it encouraged thinking about the viability of Chilmark’s center and school, for example. Mr. Cook reiterated that the Town needs to identify its goals in order to move forward in an informed way.
- Ms. Thompson noted that the Townspeople need to be asked what it is they feel are priorities for the Town.
- Ms. Weidner noted a two-phase project:
 - The subcommittee needs to gather data and create a Peaked Hill Pastures site plan recommendation to the Board of Selectmen
 - The subcommittee needs to reach out to the townspeople for input in order to write the larger Master Plan.
- Ms. Wallace noted that the Peaked Hill Pastures Proposals Committee considered the issue of town employee workforce and their possible housing needs. She also noted the changes in how the Community Center is operating and its changing demographics.
- Ms. Weidner brought the subcommittee back to the topic of the questions to ask of the housing and planning representatives on January 28th. Ms. Elliston suggested that the Town may consider a zoning bylaw change that would allow residents to build duplexes, for example, and other types of building. Ms. Elliston noted that the rules around Accessory Apartments are onerous, it appears, and it seems to discourage the creation of housing.
- Ms. Thompson inquired if the subcommittee should also be working with the Housing Committee to identify parcels of land in Town that are available for affordable Housing.
- Ms. Christy noted that she would reach out to Christine Flynn at the MVC regarding her work on housing-friendly zoning bylaw changes that all the island Towns might implement.
- Mr. Cook noted that the short-term rental law that is currently soon to go into effect could be of benefit to the Town if some of the tax revenue were to go towards a housing bank. He also noted that some tax revenue that goes to the Town could be directed to land acquisition. He also noted, however, that a large influx of town residents would most likely be difficult to absorb due to a lack of services and infrastructure. He noted that towns that have sewer and waste treatment and industrial-type zones have a different perspective on how to address an increase in housing.
- Ms. Weidner suggested that the subcommittee brainstorm the tasks that would bring the subcommittee closer to creating a proposal that would then be submitted to the Board of Selectmen.
- The subcommittee members reviewed the list of priority uses for the Peaked Hill Pastures site produced by the Peaked Hill Pastures Proposals Committee.
- Mr. Cook discussed the different results for the Town if a housing initiative is presented to the Town by an outside entity that sees a need and a possible solution as opposed to the Town developing and moving forward on its own initiative. Mr. Cook noted that a conclusion of the Peaked Hill Pastures Proposals Committee was the likely need, in the future, of housing for employees of the Town yet it is difficult to plan for a possibility that is hard to project. Ms. Thompson noted that the subcommittee would need demographics, projections and other data in order to support a recommendation on affordable housing. Mr. Cook stated that the HPP report has some of this information. Mr. Cook also noted that there is also a history of affordable housing in Chilmark that Ann Wallace provided previously. Ms. Wallace noted that the MLR project has helped 11 families through the rentals there. Ms. Christy stated she would send the link to the HPP report from the MVC website to the subcommittee members and she would send the members the historical document provided by Ann Wallace to the Peaked Hill Pastures Proposals Site.

- Mr. Cook reminded the subcommittee members that they keep to the task of planning and proposing an idea rather than getting into the details of implementation. From the perspective of the Planning Board, he suggested asking, how important is it to present details of the project at the time of the proposal. Further, he stated, the housing representatives should be asked how useful would it be for the Planning Board to present specific details in how the Peaked Hill Pastures project is implemented or would that be counter-productive.
 - The subcommittee proceeded to go through the priorities from the Peaked Hill Pastures Proposals Committee and discussed how they may be assessed and determined to be useful for inclusion in the proposed plan. The subcommittee noted that it does not appear that more work needs to be done to address the open/recreational space priority except to affirm the preservation of it, especially the ballfield.
 - Mr. Cook noted that once the Board develops a vision for the Peaked Hill Pastures site that addresses the priorities of the Town, a developer may then produce a specific plan that fulfills that vision.
 - The subcommittee noted there are some things that would change the proposal. Ms. Weidner noted the issue of the firehouse and noted that may have an impact on the future proposal. She also noted the highway dept. storage and shed may be moving from the Peaked Hill site. Mr. Goff wondered about the water quality in the 8 acre lot that is behind the landfill site on the other side of Tabor House. Mr. Cook also noted that the subcommittee would like to identify the cost of the clay rights in that area.
 - Ms. Weidner stated that she would create a draft document by the next meeting on Jan. 30, 2019.
- **Minutes: January 7, 2019 were not reviewed.**
 - **Next Meeting: January 30, 2019, 3PM (on the Feb. 11, 2019, 3PM subcommittee meeting please place the larger Master Plan on that agenda.)**

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jennifer L. Christy