



# Housing Committee

## Town of Chilmark

### **MEETING NOTES - DRAFT** **September 16, 2021 (via ZOOM)**

Present for the Housing Committee and attending the zoom meeting were Jim Feiner, Ann Wallace, Allison Cameron Parry, Bill Rossi, Nettie Kent Ruel and Alison Kisselgof. Peter Cook was also in attendance. Andrew Goldman was not present.

The meeting came to order at 9:03 AM.

**PEAKED HILL PASTURES SCENARIOS:** Peter and Ann presented an update from the 8/13/21 Planning Board Subcommittee meeting. It was mentioned that the slide show for the September 20<sup>th</sup> community session is available on the town's website. The scenario which the Planning Board Subcommittee has decided to present would include 4 home ownership opportunities and 30-40 rental bedrooms (not units). The Planning Board Subcommittee decided to go for a higher number of bedrooms because the demand for housing is great on the island and also it would hopefully lead to some opposition for discussion. The Planning Board Subcommittee is proposing for the town to build all buildings – the turnkey approach would allow for architectural continuity, cost control and green energy design.

The board talked about the use of private donations for funding and how the amount needed would have to be identified after the financials of the project were final. After a brief discussion about maximum density for the development and how it would be received, it was offered that a somewhat aggressive approach could be taken without losing support of town voters. The members were reminded that only a portion of the lot would be developed in this current design to leave the remainder for future needs; although, some of the land has issues that would limit its development like wetlands. There is currently ~ 2 million in town money to put towards the project. Two financing options are being discussed by the Planning Board Subcommittee: one for the rental units which would be eligible for state and federal funds and another for the homeownership opportunities which could use private funds raised.

Rentals versus home ownership was discussed. Some members would like to see more home ownership in the design. It was offered that rental units could be changed to ownership later. The AMI of 80% for state affordable housing designation was talked about – members feel it is too low but that raising it would affect public funds available for the project. 150-200% range is probably more in line with what the island needs for housing as there are a number of residents who have higher incomes than 80% AMI but still have difficulty finding housing.

The board discussed the need to keep this project moving because the housing crisis on island will not improve with time. The selection of a developer to champion the project was talked about and it was decided that the committee would reach out to the Housing Committee in West Tisbury to inquire about their experiences with developers. It was also suggested that Chuck Hodgkinson would be a good person to talk to about developers. It was unclear if a developer was hired whether the town could retain ownership of the land.

With the final community session for Peaked Hill Pastures coming up the following Monday, the committee members agreed to reach out to anybody that may not have attended a session to encourage their participation.

**REVISION OF BYLAW:** A bylaw 6.9 revision was started in 2019 but the process was delayed due to the pandemic. The change would allow zoning below an acre for a Homesite lot. The town clerk asked for revisions by the first week of October to be included on the spring town meeting. It was suggested that the revision be put on the Planning Board's agenda to start the process anew.

**4+ ACRE LOT REVIEW:** Chris Seidl of the MVC has offered to make a searchable app that would easily identify 4+ acres lots in town but the app is not finished yet. Pam Bunker could also supply a list of properties but that Chris' searchable application would be more useful tool. The members will discuss this topic again when the app is available.

The list of 4+ acres will be used to identify properties that could possibly accommodate affordable housing. It was suggested it would be difficult to get people to sell part of their land and a plan on how to accomplish this should be decided. It was mentioned that the only people who would probably sell a portion of their land to help with affordable housing would do so for family but not strangers. It was offered that the identification of lots would be useful just to give data on what could be available, and not necessarily to convince owners to divide their lots. It was agreed that the searchable index would be helpful tool regardless of success in creating Homesite lots.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:** The members did not have any corrections to the minutes from the last minutes. A motion was made to accept the minutes for 8/19/21 as presented, the motion was seconded and passed by unanimous vote.

**OTHER TOPICS:**

Next ZOOM Meeting: October 21, 2021 @ 9:00am.

With no further business to conduct the meeting adjourned at 9:53 AM.

Respectfully submitted by Alison Kisselgof, board administrator.