

Housing Bank Review Committee (HBRC)

August 3rd, 2022

5:30 pm

A meeting of the Committee was held on the above date and time via the Zoom Application. Members present were:

Aquinnah – Mike Hebert
Chilmark – Jim Malkin,
Edgartown – James Hagerty
Oak Bluffs – Mark Leonard
Tisbury – Rachel Orr
West Tisbury – Jessica Miller

Mr. Malkin opened the meeting at approximately 5:33pm.

Mr. Malkin referenced the first agenda item and then opened the floor to Mr. Brendan O’Neill, the Executive Director of Vineyard Conservation Society (VCS).

Mr. O’Neill briefly explained the mission of VCS and their obligation to submit testimony on land use matters. He then went through the four broad areas referenced in his July 7th letter submitted to the HBRC.

1. Encourage more restriction on the proposed 25% new development. More specifically, language that would steer the 25% to land that is next to preexisting developments, not prime habitat.
2. Define “local ecology” better through suggested language like “ecological functioning” or specifically what should not be disturbed.
3. Prohibit new construction on State mapped habitat.
4. Frame multi tiered approach to energy questions - pick a hers number and ask the energy representative for more clarity on goals.

Mr. Malkin then asked if any of the Committee members had any questions for Mr. O’Neill.

Ms. Orr asked about the priority habitats primary locations being up island, and how that would affect development. Mr. O’Neill said there were priority habitat all over the island and the idea is always up for discussion. Ms. Miller asked about class one and two prime farmland classification, and its affect on West Tisbury. Mr. O’Neill discussed how the prohibition of farmland was only an idea, and up for discussion as the committee progressed through the process.

Mr. Malkin asked if the general public had any questions for Mr. O’Neill. There were none.

Mr. Malkin then referenced the second agenda item, and a letter from a West Tisbury resident. Mr. Malkin felt that the issues brought up in the letter went above the scope of the HBRC with regard to a complete re-write of the bill. Mr. Malkin asked if any of the Committee members felt otherwise.

Ms. Orr commented on the letter referencing commercial properties, and how the current CCHBMV legislation did not clearly define the parameters. Mr. Malkin suggested that local zoning bylaws would help fill in any of the gaps. Ms. Leonard referenced the CCHBMV language, and the proposal that funds for any mixed use project could not finance any commercial elements.

Mr. Abrams (CCHBMV) concurred with Ms. Leonard, and said the language was already in the legislation. Ms. Sibling (CCHBMV) commented that there was nothing prohibiting the CCHBMV from purchasing commercial property and turning into residential use.

Mr. Malkin then discussed how the next logical step in the HRBC process would be to discuss the lessons learned from State Lawmakers (Senator Cyr and Representative Fernandes) in lieu of the transfer fee bill recently being pulled from the legislative process. Mr. Malkin felt that direct communication would best assist the HBRC in developing feasible and realistic amendments.

Mr. Leonard felt another good step would be to discuss and debate each proposed amendment and make edits accordingly. Mr. Hebert concurred, and felt that an in person meeting would best facilitate the process. Ms. Miller felt that going through each amendment line by line with further explanation of language would also be beneficial. Mr. Hagerty said that the lessons learned from Beacon Hill would best facilitate reviewing the amendments. Ms. Orr concurred.

Mr. Malkin said that he would reach out to Senator Cyr and request that he attends then next HBRC meeting. He also requested that each committee member start compiling additional questions and issues with regard to the proposed amendments.

Mr. Hebert then asked Ms. Silber and Mr. Abrams if the CCHMBV had been in communication with State Legislators. Ms. Sibling and Mrs. Abrams explained what updates they have provided to Senator Cyr and Representative Fernandes.

Mr. Hagerty request that the Committee approve the last meetings minutes. Mr. Hagerty motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Leonard seconded. Unanimous. Mr. Hebert abstained.

Mr. Malkin said he we have a draft a letter requesting Senator Cyr's presence at the next meeting in a few days.

At 6:18 PM the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

James Hagerty
Edgartown Town Administrator