

## **Edgartown Affordable Housing Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday January 24, 2023 at 5:00 PM**

Members in Attendance: Chairman Mark Hess, Jason Mazar-Kelly, Maria Ventura, Melissa Vincent, Christine White, Christina Brown

Others Present: Art Smadbeck, Joe Rock

Chairman Hess opened the meeting at 5:00 PM.

Minutes: Melissa Vincent made a motion to accept the November 15, 2022 and December 6, 2022 minutes. Jason Mazar-Kelly seconded the motion and the motion passed with one abstention.

### **Old Business:**

Meshacket update: Chairman Hess informed the committee that the ZBA passed the Meshacket project unanimously with no public opposition which goes back to all of the work done over the years, from public meetings, speaking with the abutters, getting input of town boards and the project looks to be well underway. The Chairman went on to say things are looking good for the project, costs of materials have gone up and the committee may need to seek some other sources of revenue to help the project down the road. Ms. Faria stated that she sent financials from Island Housing Trust and Affirmative Investments to the AHT and AHC right before the meeting and through discussions with the development team it appears that their costs have gone up significantly. The committee may need to consider assisting them further. The committee will have to decide whether they would consider additional funding as a request from the stabilization fund or elsewhere but Ms. Faria believes that this would be beneficial as so much has already gone into the project. Ms. Faria suggested that the committee have a good look at the financials and consider an amount to contribute. Mr. Mazar-Kelly asked if Ms. Faria was aware of a number between what was originally proposed and what the costs are now. Ms. Faria responded that she believes that there is a two-million-dollar difference. The Chairman stated that once the committee receives a solid amount and has an idea of what is needed to fill the gap, he's sure the committee can seek several avenues of funding.

Quammox West update: The committee discussed the need for a well to be drilled in order for the potential owner to acquire the permitting that the potential owner needs to receive their funding. The Chairman stated that since Ms. Caldwell technically does not own the land yet, the bank is not extending her any type of loan until she owns the land in order to own the land and build on it, there needs to be several things done to it, one of them being the well drilling and the committee needs to help her with that. Assuming the AHC approves the work to be done, the trust is willing to spend \$4,000.00 on well drilling and some clearing of the property. There was some discussion about the details of the work to be done on the property. CJ Moriarty made a motion to solicit a second bid for the well-drilling and basic clearing of the well area. Jason Mazar-Kelly seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Christine White moved that after the second bid is received, the Affordable Housing Committee will approve an expenditure of up to \$4,000.00 for the minor land clearing to get the drill to the appropriate

location and the drilling aspect of the property. Christina Brown seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Avakian Property resale: The Chairman explained that the Avakians plan to sell their home that was a part of the buy-down program. The buy-down program was funded by the proceeds from the decision of the MVC through the Field Club development. The home is perpetually deeded to the affordable housing program and the Avakians will be selling their portion of the property back to the town and wish to do so quickly. The committee will repurchase the home based on the calculations laid out in the deed restrictions and the home will be sold through the lottery process, which DCRHA will handle. CJ Moriarty made a motion to go forward with the purchase of 4 22<sup>nd</sup> Street South and to resell the house through Dukes Country Regional Housing Authority. Maria Ventura seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

### **New Business:**

Joe Rock, proposal for housing/membership: Chairman Hess informed the committee that there are a couple of openings on the AHC, which needs to be advertised. The Chairman would like to speak with all of the committee members to understand their future intentions and if there are members that intend to move on in the near future, they should speak with him. In the meantime, the Chairman is aware that Joe Rock has shown interest in joining the committee as well as a couple of others, in joining the AHC and Mr. Rock is present to make a few comments on his interest. Mr. Rock told the committee a little about his background and the reason for his interest in affordable housing is because he has seen friends and coworkers struggle with finding secure housing and doesn't see very many people (other than the AHC's and other housing related entity's) stepping up to bring new ideas and energy to this very important topic. Mr. Rock would like to step up and get involved. The Chairman stated that he appreciated Mr. Rock's comments and the committee will be advertising for at least one position on the AHC in the very near future and someone will inform him of when the position is advertised. The Chairman briefly stated the process of how one is appointed to the position. Mr. Rock gave an overview of his plans for work force/ staff housing for the waste water department. Mr. Rock stated that he is willing to do whatever is necessary to see the project through. The Chairman thanked Mr. Rock for his energy and interest in the possibilities (for affordable housing). Any request for funding would need to be in a written form and potentially a request directed towards CPC funding. The Chairman discussed his experience with constructing workforce housing for his employees and offered to have a conversation with Mr. Rock about that experience. Mr. Mazar-Kelly commented that he thinks the proposal looks promising and while CPC funding might be out of the question because of the income limitations, it may be possible to include a request for funds from the stabilization fund via a warrant article for the special town meeting. Mr. Mazar-Kelly asked Ms. Faria if there could be more than one request to get additional funding. Ms. Faria expressed concern that given that it is workforce housing and not necessarily affordable housing that it may not be appropriate for the AHC to make that request, but the wastewater department definitely could. Ms. Vincent stated that she loved Mr. Rock's enthusiasm and commitment but as the affordable housing committee, they have to look at what this project is, yes it is affordable housing for municipal employees but does it come under the guise "Affordable" as the AHC is charged with. Ms. Vincent went on to say that of course everyone would love to see this happen because we all

know without services we don't have a vibrant community but at the end of the day the AHC cannot develop or fund it because it doesn't come under the guise of "Affordable". Mr. Smadbeck commented that he believes it is worthwhile for either the AHC or Mr. Rock himself, on behalf of Wastewater, to ask for enough money to go to town counsel. Whether through the affordable housing trust or the Selectboard, to say this is an idea that they would like to pursue because there may be a way, if they are only going to use town funds, to finance this. If the town can have staff housing for municipal employees without having to offer it to people outside of the town, Mr. Rock could have a lawyer look at the law, and tell us within the law, how one can do it this way with the use just town funds. From there, one could bring a project to the town and say, here's a project we can do, it will cost five million dollars to build these buildings and it would be able to house x amount of people. However, before getting to that point, going to town counsel to find a legal pathway to accomplish with what Mr. Rock would like to accomplish. The Chairman discussed creating a blueprint for municipal employee housing that is legal and can be funded legally. The Chairman requested that Mr. Rock put all of what was discussed into a document so that he could begin to put together a blueprint for these types of projects for the future. Mr. Smadbeck mentioned that Nantucket has done this for their teachers, there was a legal path that they followed, all that needs to be done is find out what that legal path is and build housing and he encourages Mr. Rock to keep going with the idea.

Account for affordable housing: Ms. Faria stated that she and the town accountant, Amy Tierney, had researched the account and discovered an older MVC decision that designated funding to that account, somewhere in the realm of \$60,000.00. The account now contains around \$76,000.00. Ms. Faria is waiting to hear from town counsel to find out how to either put the funds directly into the Trust or to designate it for a particular purpose, such as the Meshacket project.

Warrant Articles: Ms. Faria stated that the committee should consider discussing the warrant article previously put together for expanded rental assistance and a new one to acquire additional funding for Meshacket Commons. Ms. Faria stated she believes they both warrant a longer conversation and it might be best that the AHC schedule another meeting in early February to discuss this topic. Mr. Mazar-Kelly asked Ms. Faria if the warrants should be reworded or what is the action item there. Ms. Faria replied that she thought given the financial situation with Meshacket, it should be considered if the AHC should request less funds for the extended rental assistance program and more funding towards the Meshacket project given its higher priority. Ms. Faria also expressed concern that there are other topics to be discussed in regards to the extended rental assistance program, will DCRHA manage the applications for the new applicants, would that be done in house instead and given that DCRHA currently requests roughly \$112,000.00 would the committee be able to validate a \$250,000.00 request. Mr. Mazar-Kelly stated that he understood and prioritizing the Meshacket project makes sense as well as getting an idea of what the financial need is from IHT and AI. Once the AHC receives that confirmation then the AHC can put a warrant article together for Meshacket and prioritize that. From there and if there is time, the AHC can go for the extended rental assistance and maybe that will be at a lower amount than originally proposed. Mr. Mazar-Kelly went on to say that he

spoke with David Vingeault and there is the potential for DCRHA to manage (a rental program) up to 150% AMI and that would allow the AHC to have DCRHA do that work.

The Chairman stated that he wanted to bring the committee up to date on one piece of correspondence and unfortunately they have received the resignation of Ms. Faria. Ms. Faria is moving on and the Chairman and Mr. Mazar-Kelly spoke with Ms. Faria about it and Ms. Faria has done a terrific job for the AHC and AHT. Ms. Faria is a great person and has done extremely well in the job, the town and people she has served thank her and they wish her the best. The Chairman requested that Ms. Faria stay on for one more meeting in early February as Mr. Mazar-Kelly suggested, to get the warrant articles worked out, if the AHC would like to proceed that way. The Chairman suggested that the AHC discuss how they would like to structure the position moving forward in the next meeting.

Demo Delays: Christine White made a motion to pass on 5 Pleasant Avenue. CJ Moriarty seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Arielle Faria