

Edgartown Affordable Housing Committee Meeting
Tuesday March 5, 2019 at 5:00 PM

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

Chairman Mark Hess opened the meeting at 5:00 PM

Minutes: Christine White made a motion to accept minutes from February 5, 2019. Maria Ventura seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with one change to the text.

Old Business: Meeting House Place Subdivision: The Chairman shared with the Committee the latest proposal from the Meeting House Place subdivision given to the MVC regarding the affordable housing portion of the application. Chairman Hess informed the Committee that this was discussed at the Trust meeting and the consensus was that the monetary proposal was fair but the time frame proposed (which was over 4 years) was unreasonable. Chairman Hess read the specific time and amounts due in the times proposed. Melissa Vincent expressed discontent with the payment schedule also, citing that the money given 3-4 years down the line is not actually worth as much. Ms. Vincent believes that if the developers develop the property then they should pay the \$490,000.00 up front and then anything additional overtime is fine, paying the affordable housing portion should be paid like everything else. If the developers don't have the money to develop the property and distribute payments in a timely manner they should not develop it. Maria Ventura made a motion that it is the position of the Committee that they would like the \$490,000.00 paid in full, upfront. Melissa Vincent seconded and the motion was unanimously passed with one abstention. (Christina Brown) Chairman Hess expressed to the administrator that the Committee would like to make it clear that they are appreciative of the additional monetary gesture however, the Committee does still feel that the \$490,000.00 should be paid in full upfront.

Chairman Hess redistributed larger versions of the sketch he put together for Meshacket displaying a rough layout for the potential building layout given the moth habitat for National Heritage. Lucy Morrison and the administrator are working together with the procurement officer Juliet Mulinare to review the RFP in order to present any questions or concerns they have to the Committee towards the end of March.

Chairman Hess informed the Committee that the Mariner's Way subdivision submitted their first payment in the amount of \$19,500.00. The remainder of \$19,500.00 will follow soon. Chairman Hess brought up a concern raised by Christine White at the Trust meeting that she would like the assistant to check with the MVC to make sure there were no changes made to the Mariner's Way plan that would affect their payment amount to the Committee. The assistant will draft a letter to the MVC saying that to the Committee's satisfaction, under the original proposal/DRI, the Committee has received the funds for the Mariner's Way project and the Committee would like to check if the arrangement is still the same. The assistant will also CC the selectman on the letter. Lucy Morrison added that she did not believe that they added any square footage.

Lucy Morrison also added that the Commission will be presenting the new affordable housing policy on Wednesday March 20, 2019 at 5:30 PM. Christina Brown commented that the Commission is looking for comments because it was a small group of people that put it together so the Committee's input would be appreciated. Lucy Morrison also stated that there is a joint affordable housing meeting being held at 4:30 PM that same day if anyone desired to come early to that.

Lucy Morrison mentioned that in regards to Meshacket, for the new MVC water quality policy, she had done some preliminary nitrogen calculations and the Committee will owe around \$500,000.00 in mitigation fees even though Meshacket is on sewer. One of the things the Meeting House Place project was speaking to the MVC about was that they would potentially pay that fee for the Committee.

New business: Philippe Jordi and Faren Worthington presented a concept to the Committee about pocket neighborhoods. Mr. Jordi first spoke of different projects that they are currently working on, some repurposing existing buildings and some new builds. He is hoping to help all of the towns achieve their HPP goals (Edgartown would like to have 60 units over the next 5 years) and he believes that the research that Ms. Worthington is working on in conjunction with the concept of pocket neighborhoods will help to achieve these goals. Ms. Worthington has received a grant to help identify properties in all island town that are 1-2 acres that can be purchased for the purposes of affordable housing.

IHT is looking into the development of "pocket neighborhoods" of 6-10 homes within 3-5 duplexes on 1-1.5 acres of land connected to town water (and in some cases sewer) that IHT is able to either purchase from the market or purchase from property owners directly. Most of these lots lie outside of town center in R20 zoned areas, and would require a "friendly 40B" permit from the ZBA. Typically, a 40B permit requires 4-6 months to secure. They would have to work with a very patient seller or paying for an offer while securing necessary permits in these cases. They are now looking to speak with the various towns to figure out permitting for these neighborhoods. There is currently no town mechanism to provide a special permit for this type of development. The current process would add at least 3-4 months onto the process in addition to more funding. VH changed their zoning laws in order to make the permitting process easier. Mr. Jordi would like the town to come up with a by-law (changing zoning) in the other island towns. VH was a modification of an existing by-law but Mr. Jordi and Ms. Worthington are hoping to put something together to help the other towns come up with a plan for a proposal to change zoning by-laws.

Mr. Jordi also mentioned he had a lot of buy-in, they spoke to abutters individually and got them to support these projects because it can actually increase the value of their properties. Chairman Hess expressed that the Committee continues to be impressed with what Mr. Jordi and IHT are doing on the island for affordable housing and the options they are coming up with. Ms. Worthington presented her research for viable lots in the various island towns for these pocket neighborhoods. The assistant plans to speak to Ms. Worthington in the near future to discuss different ways they can help each other.

Makenzie Brooks addressed the Committee regarding the Housing bank to answer questions and give the Committee a brief overview of the housing bank's plans and intentions for the potential use of the short term rental taxes. Ms. Brooks described a dire need for affordable housing and housing in general needed for island residents. Ms. Brooks stated that voters expressed a need for an island-wide housing bank but the question was how it would be funded. A group of housing advocates and community members began speaking about the next steps when a message came from Boston that the short-term rental tax might go through, an expansion of the "rooms tax". Ms. Brooks expressed that the 4 percent room tax pot would just grow with the short-term rental tax being implemented. Ms. Brooks stated that the governor of Massachusetts signed the bill to mitigate the housing issues in MA, with Boston as its focus of the bill but it made perfect sense for the island community because the short-term rentals are part of the reason the island doesn't have any year-round housing left. The housing bank quickly put together a warrant article for the funding portion, signed on the 28th of December and Edgartown's petition was due January 2nd but Ms. Brooks was able to get onto the Special town meeting with 265 names on the petition. The Housing Bank carefully drafted the article to set up the housing bank much like the land bank, there would be one elected commissioner from each town and a seventh member from the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority. There would need to be a majority vote of the

Commissioners in order for a project to move forward but once it got to the town floor it would need to go to the housing trust and the municipal housing trust would also need to approve it therefore there would also be municipal control. The Housing Bank then went forward with the funding portion where they initially asked for 3 percent and then they revised it to make it clearer and stronger which lead them to asking for 50 percent of the revenue from each town's expanded local excise tax to be dedicated to the Housing Bank. Christina Brown inquired whether or not they were asking for 50 percent of the total room tax which is the old tax and the new one to which Ms. Brooks answered yes. Ms. Brooks went on to say unfortunately the old and new tax cannot be separated given how the governor signed the bill. The money goes to Boston and then it comes back as a pot of money that is not broken into specific amounts from short-term rental tax and room tax, it's one lump sum, then the Housing Bank would take 50 percent of that. There was discussion about the towns position regarding potentially loosing that income. Ms. Brooks points out that the way the legislation is written, the monies are supposed to go towards year-round housing, not just affordable housing, therefore the Housing Bank could address the housing needs of those that would not normally qualify for affordable housing but are unable to find suitable housing at their income level. This would address seniors and others that are above 150 percent AMI. The Committee discussed their thoughts individually. The Committee spoke about addressing housing issues as a regional problem. Chairman Hess mentioned that some people are not sold on the figures and how the money is going to be distributed with each town amongst other issues and although he thinks a housing bank is a good idea, there are still a lot of questions about the figures. Ms. Brooks and Mr. Jordi mentioned that there will be a town hall meeting March 22, 2019 at 5:30 PM to discuss and understand the housing crisis and the housing bank concept. Melissa Vincent expressed that she doesn't want to see a commuter community here on the Vineyard and thus we need to address the housing issues in different ways. Committee members expressed interest in the Housing Bank putting together a one-pager to help explain the financial, the legislation etc. for clearer information. Chairman Hess stated that there is a perception amongst many that the proposal feels very forced, the intentions might be good but it seems like people are being told this is the way it's going to happen with this money as opposed to working with the towns to bringing the Housing Bank into fruition. The Chairman thanked Ms. Brooks for coming in and discussing the Housing Bank with the Committee and trying to continually fund affordable housing projects.

The assistant discussed meeting with the chief of police to inform him what the Committee does and he discussed with her his concern for short-term housing issues for those in need. The conversation went well. The assistant also mentioned that the library had interest in a discussion. The Chairman suggested potentially doing the library, police and fireman in a similar manner to the presentation made at the Edgartown school, this will be discussed further in the next meeting.

Correspondence: 9 Puwal lane was passed on for the demo delay.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Arielle Faria