

Edgartown Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, January 15, 2014

Members in Attendance: Chairman- Mark Hess, Tom Soldini, Joseph Roberts, Tim Rush, Christina Brown, Melissa Vincent, Christine White.

Others in Attendance: Margaret Serpa, Susan Markwica, Kathleen Farrell, Evelyn Macomber

Announcements: Tom Soldini was appointed to the Committee, and Lucy Morrison was hired as the new Administrative Assistant to replace Sibel Suman.

Chairman Mark Hess opened the meeting at 4:31 PM.

Tom Soldini was welcomed to the Committee. As mentioned at the previous meeting, Sibel Suman resigned at the end of December. Tom and Mark were appointed to find and hire a replacement. Lucy Morrison, the current Planning Board Clerk, expressed interest and was hired on January 10, 2014. The contract for the Administrative Assistant position was read. Melissa Vincent was concerned that there was no limit on the number of hours. Joseph Roberts asked if this was the same contract that Sibel had; it was. Christine White made a motion to amend the contract to end June 30, 2014, when the fiscal year ends, as opposed to December 31, 2014. Mark Hess seconded this motion, and it was unanimously passed. Mark Hess suggested developing a solid budget for the contract position taking the extra work for the Meshacket project into account, then amending the contract on July 1st to include a cap on the number of hours. Christina Brown made a motion to approve the contract as written until June 30th, and then amend it on July 1st when the new budget is concrete. Christine White seconded, and all but Melissa Vincent approved. The motion carried, 6-1.

Christina Brown made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting on December 5, 2013 as written. Melissa Vincent seconded this motion, and it was unanimously approved.

The current \$30,000 threshold for a lot to be sold into the program was discussed. This constraint is specifically for lots deemed unbuildable by the ZBA. West Tisbury is currently at a \$50,000 limit, and is considering increasing it to \$60,000. Christine White moved to increase the maximum sale value for an unbuildable non-conforming lot to \$50,000. Melissa Vincent seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously. A letter stating this increase will be sent to the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Selectmen, the Planning Board, the Building Inspector and the Board of Health. This increase ensures that purchasers can live affordably; neighbors to properties are participating in bidding wars to buy the lots in an effort to prevent them from being built upon. These properties are being sold for too much, and then the buyer can no longer afford to build a house.

Kathleen Farrell approached the board and explained her application. She has been living on the island since May of 2013 with a friend, Evelyn Macomber, who owns a home on 4th Street. She is currently working as a reading specialist, focusing on individualized attention, at the Charter School, and her hours will hopefully be increased to full time. She worked at the Edgartown Yacht Club from May to October of 2013, and she volunteers at the Edgartown Public Library running a Benchmark Literacy project for early readers, working specially with dyslexic students. She is hoping to purchase a section of

her friend's property and use her current assets to construct a home. Her application will be reviewed in more detail, and discussed at the next meeting.

Mark Hess and Melissa Vincent expressed interest in developing more specific criteria for applicants. Lucy will read through previous applications and determine their qualifying attributes, to redevelop standards for acceptance into the program.

The Committee discussed the updates for the Meshacket project. Mark Hess distributed a project concept detailing the old and revised site plans, future steps, and e-mail correspondence with Doug Hoehn. Final approval from the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program (NHESP) and the Archeological Society was still pending. The Committee conferred about a final model for the types of buildings to be located on the Meshacket property. Joseph Roberts proposed universal designs, so that every unit would be handicap accessible. It was decided that the budget, building assignments, and the sizes of apartments and buildings would be discussed at the next meeting. Mark Hess suggested holding an open meeting devoted strictly to the Meshacket project, with the Committee available to public comment, after the final approval from NHESP. Tom Soldini will continue to work on the RFP with Jenn O'Hanlon, the Procurement Officer for the Town of Edgartown. A 40B was also discussed; the Committee will seek counsel with the Selectmen when the time comes.

New officers were appointed for the upcoming year. Christina Brown nominated Mark Hess for Chairman. Tim Rush seconded, there were no other nominations, and the motion was unanimously approved. Melissa Vincent nominated Tim Rush as Vice-Chairman, there were no other nominations, and the motion was unanimously approved.

The Committee spoke about writing a statement for Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Report.

Christine White mentioned that two of her current employees are leaving the island because cannot find housing. She also brought up that at the Council on Aging budget meeting, there has been almost a 50% increase in seniors, who no longer have jobs and are living strictly on their social security income. Melissa Vincent added that the younger generation is also leaving because they can't find housing. Young families are going from two jobs to one. She's noticed that there has been approximately a 40% increase in qualifying people, applications are stacking up, more are qualified than not. The Committee is facing more scrutiny from the public. This increases the importance of streamlining the application process, and of organizing permits and the website.

The Committee decided to hold two meetings per month in February and March. The first and third Wednesday of the month, the 5ths and the 19ths were agreed upon. The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 5, 2014 at 3:30 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:57 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lucy Morrison