



Town of West Boylston
140 Worcester Street
West Boylston, MA 01583
April 4, 2023

Members Present: Robert J. Barrell, Chris Berglund, Marcia Cairns, Marc Frieden, Anna Mary Kraemer, Patrica Halpin and Chris Rucho

Also Present: David Femia

The zoom meeting opened at 6:17 PM

The Chairperson called a roll call with Mr. Barrell, Mr. Berglund, Ms. Cairns, Mr. Frieden, Ms. Halpin answering present. Ms. Kraemer had difficulty connecting.

The minutes of the January 9, 2023 meeting were approved on a motion by Mr. Berglund and seconded by Ms. Cairns. The Chairperson called for a roll call vote Mr. Berglund, Ms. Cairns, Mr. Barrell, Mr. Frieden voted in the affirmative. Mr. Rucho abstained.

Ms. Kraemer joins the meeting.

The minutes of the January 31, meeting were approved on a motion by Mr. Rucho and seconded by Ms. Kraemer. The Chairperson called for a roll call vote. Mr. Berglund, Mr. Barrell, Ms. Cairns, Mr. Frieden, Mr. Rucho, Ms. Halpin and Ms. Kraemer voted in the affirmative.

Ms. Halpin asked if there were any updates from Boards. Mr. Femia stated that the required SHI (subsidized housing inventory) numbers will be updated with the 2020 census and will indicate a 25% increase in the unmet need of affordable housing. The Governor has filed legislation to create a cabinet secretary for housing and additionally considered using state land for affordable housing. Mr. Femia advised the Trust that the size of affordable housing developments can not exceed more than 200 units. No further updates were available.

Ms. Halpin reiterated the ill-considered practice of using guidelines by the state agencies to use guidelines as regulations rather than establishing rules through the legislative process e. g. the changes to determine whether a municipality has met the criteria articulated in the original process (GLAM of 1.5% land requirement act). Trust members were in agreement.

Ms. Halpin reported that she and Ms. Warren- Dymont met with the Tuft University graduate students via zoom to discuss the role of the Trust in developing affordable housing according to community needs and goals stated in the Town wide Master plan. . This interview highlighted the obstacles of the Trust namely the lack of staff/ planner, the wetlands, the need to identify developers willing to build affordable housing at 50% AMI and the need of developers sensitive to the community needs. Guidelines should not be considered as regulations. The students will make available the results of the study.

The Housing Production Plan needs to be updated by November 2023. The Plan should be written by an experienced professional. Most of the historical background material can be culled from the prior plans. A number of vendors were discussed including LDS, Central Mass Regional Planning and the former COG employees. COG is not interested in doing the work. The Trust desires a quality job at a competitive price. The current estimated price is \$40,000.00. It was agreed that the Chairperson should meet with the Town Administrator to ascertain the lawful mandated procurement process.

Mr. Berglund has identified a grant opportunity that may provide funding for the preparation of the Housing Production Plan, The One Stop for Growth round of funding, due June 1, 2023. Mr. Berglund has filed an expression of interest, however, the complete application is about 16 pages. He stated that he needs assistance completing the grant. Ms. Cairns and Mr. Barrell volunteered to assist with the grant. Mr. Rucho advised the Trust that the Town has a volunteer grant writer and the Town Administrator should be contacted. It will be a challenge to timely complete the volume of paperwork.

The LDS report was tabled.

Mr. Rucho adjourned the meeting at 7:13 PM. This motion was seconded by Mr. Berglund and on roll call Mr. Barrell, Ms. Cairns, Mr. Berglund, Mr Frieden, Mr. Rucho, Ms. Kraemer and Ms. Halpin voted in affirmative.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Barrell

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