



Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: April 13, 2021

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Remote

Attendees: Chairperson, Brian Keating; Clerk, Lora Woodward; Members: Ken Hartlage, John Ladik, Renee D'Argento

Guests: Margaret Scarsdale, Select Board; Casey Campetti, Planning Board

1. Call to Order

7:02pm by Chair, Brian Keating

2. Acceptance of Minutes of any previous meetings

Ken Hartlage makes motion to accept the meeting minutes of 3/23/21;
John Ladik seconded. Vote was 5-0; Motion passed.

3. Added Topic: Full Time Planner (Casey Campetti)

- a. Casey described the current workload and hours of the Town Planner, made the committee aware that a full-time planner is being discussed as part of the town budget, and asked for the committee's support of the role.
- b. Lisa Davis, current Town Planning Consultant, is currently budgeted to work 10-13 hours per week; Planning Board and EDAC are in support of a full-time planner;
- c. Planning department has a lot of responsibilities and initiatives to move forward now and coming up, including items in the master plan implementation, and they are looking for someone to take the initiatives forward;
- d. Lisa is to leave at some point in this calendar year and the Planning Board feels that the sooner a new planner can get established the better; Casey is looking for input from the AHC for the full-time planning position
- e. Currently what has been proposed is a 13% increase in time proposed for the Town Planner
- f. Brian asked if a letter to Andrew would be helpful – Public Hearing on the Budget is tomorrow night for the Finance Committee – 7pm meeting
- g. Brian says that a full time planner would help with housing, grants; it takes a full-time staff
- h. Casey says that right now there's not a lot of time for forward motion work
- i. John Ladik – says he would not vote for it on the FinCom because there are not funds in the budget to support it

- j. Renee asked if the position is full-time with benefits
- k. Casey says that it should be competitive to attract the best candidates
- l. Planning department has administrative support in addition to the town planner
- m. Casey said that it's a matter of what is being prioritized in the budget; there are new positions being budgeted
- n. Renee says that there would be a huge value add for the town
- o. Margaret asked what would we give them to do on day 1; what vision would they enact? Downtown revitalization plan; how many housing starts or special permits; budget supports planning department; Margaret supports a full time planner, but not July 1 2021; the budget does currently include \$50,000 for a zoning consultant; \$20,000 for Peter Fitz consultant
- p. Casey said that Pepperell is used to supporting projects one by one; Pepperell doesn't need a perfect vision in place before hiring a full time planner; Pepperell generally has a reactive approach to planning; we need a planner to help to develop initiatives; consider the imminent arrival of Indian Hill, we need someone in town now to set ourselves up to be welcoming; someone at the table with technical expertise; consultants need to be managed to help projects;
- q. Brian asked, has Lisa done an assessment of opportunity costs – what is she not doing? – is the MPIT team looking at those?
- r. Casey said that it is Lisa recommendation that the town have a full time planner; future years will be as busy as 2020 – Pepperell should be a good place to do business;
- s. Renee asked what a full time planner would do for affordable housing? Casey responded that this the affordable housing initiatives would be new work that we would be partially putting on a planner's plate
- t. Planning department is a place where a lot of things intersect; worry how much those things could be prioritized; Renee says the opportunity cost
- u. Make sure the committee is aware; hope that we would be supportive?
- v. AHC is not in a position to do the tasks on our plate; we need a planner
- w. What did we put in the budget? – what did we say we would do through Master Plan
- x. Lora brought up that we can vote on whether we support the full time planner
- y. Margaret said that the committee couldn't vote on something that wasn't on the agenda
- z. Brian will add to the next agenda and said It would be good to write a letter in support of the full time planner
- aa. John said that there's plenty of time to influence the budget now that town meeting has been pushed back and that PB and EDAC letters went to the finance committee
- bb. Brian to draft a letter

4. **Civic Engagement Night AHT Presentation (Renee)**

- a. Renee gave a dry run of the presentation.
- b. Requested someone to do the slides, while she presents; Margaret says that a moderator will be advancing the slides and it providing the script in advance will facilitate this
- c. Timing – 13 minutes
- d. Add script at the bottom of the slides
- e. Brian said it could be paired down – a few too many “alsos”
- f. Hi all: I'm sorry I have to jump off -- I have a commitment at 7:45 ... On March 22, I wrote the committee to let you know CEN was being rescheduled from April,

due to Town Meeting being moved. Would you please confirm that Thursday, June 3rd at 7:00 would work? Please email me at mescarsdale@town.pepperell.ma.us as I won't have access to this Chat after the call. Great work on these slides, and I look forward to working with you more!
Renee: Would you mind to share the slides/script with me?

- g. John – I'd like you to say something right up front asking for support of the Affordable Housing Trust – a headline ask; talk it into the opening part of your presentation
- h. Ken asked what is the purpose of including houses
- i. Pictures show that affordable housing is in keeping with the tone of the committee
- j. Renee will make the edit to the slide and cut down to 10 minutes

5. Update on Pepperell Media Presentation (Brian)

- a. Brian says that he's been trying to sync images and script to create a video
- b. Brian went through the PowerPoint he created
- c. Timed to 20 minutes
- d. Start of public education
- e. Add go to civic engagement night, go to Town Meeting, vote for Affordable Housing Trust
- f. Three videos in the works: housing diversity, history of affordable housing
- g. Would like to do another video on Community Preservation Act and how it supercharges AHT; creates a budget that you can count on rather than waiting for money; it is easier to plan ahead; AHT is efficient and effective

6. Inclusionary Zoning (Sean)

- a. Committee to go through the documents that Sean emailed
- b. Figure out what the priority order is for PB

7. RFP same (Brian)

- a. Brian reviewed an example in the City of Methuen of an RFP
- b. Renee brought up that it is important to have what we want in the metrics and the design, e.g. get to "net zero"
- c. Climate Change Committee needs to do a project on energy efficient housing and would like to approach AHC
- d. What parcel of land are we talking about? Senior Center, Nissitissit Middle School
- e. Get RFP on the PB agenda
- f. A Town Planner would be the role to move it forward
- g. Select Board would be able to assign to AHC; it would be easier for AHT to move forward; we should know the process if AHT is approved or not
- h. Brian to discuss options with TA
- i. Renee has a list of affordable housing units and will send it around

8. MPIT – Review Priorities

9. Next Meeting

Set for Tuesday, May 11 at 7:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made by Renee D'Argento; Seconded by Ken Hartlage.
Voted 5-0; Motion passes unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:52pm.