

ACTON COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION

Pursuant to notice given a Regular Meeting of the Acton Community Housing Corporation (ACHC) was held January 14, 2010, at 7:00 PM in room 121 of the Acton Town Hall. Present and constituting a quorum for the purpose of conducting business were, Brent Reagor, Nancy Tavernier, Corrina Roman-Kreuze, Bob Van Meter and Associate Members Dan Buckley, Naomi McManus, Kevin McManus.

Guests: Pat Clifford, Keith LeBlanc, Peter Hocknell, David Honn, Leigh Honn, Kimberley Connors-Hughes, Michaela Moran, Todd Bachmann, John Horne, Deb Piper, Glen Kaufmann.

Nancy Tavernier, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Brent Reagor was the Clerk for this meeting.

1) The minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 10, 2009 were reviewed and approved.

2) Financial Report

Kevin updated the committee on the ACHC fund balances.

\$100,000 to AHA for the Massachusetts Avenue project will be paid out of the Middlesex account in February because that has the lowest interest rate. Citizens amount will be transferred to BOA. It was suggested that Kevin investigate GE Capital and Bank of New England for better interest rates.

3) Updates

Towne Building (Old High School Commons)

Notification was sent out by email that the project has been given \$334,294 in Low Income Federal tax credits as part of a program announced by the Governor and \$1.6M in DHCD subsidies. The project will find an investor to buy the tax credits. Only banks are buying tax credits right now.

Lalli Terrace

Occupancy will be issued in beginning to mid- February.

Madison Place

The next affordable unit is commencing construction and the buyer is lined up and beginning the mortgage process.

99 Parker St. site visit

DHCD had their site visit yesterday. Nancy will be on a conference call with DHCD to discuss the results of the visit.

Highgrove Estates, Stow/Acton

This 64 unit project of duplexes and triplexes is proposed to be built mainly in Stow (56 units) with 8 units in Acton. The project will have one access point in Acton and one in Stow. Eight units will be off Windemere Drive and the access will be off Woodchester Drive. The BOS was notified in early December of the pending MassHousing application. MassHousing notified the Town on January 11 of the 30 day comment period on the application. The developer has been invited to present to the BOS on February 8. The 40B Comprehensive Permit filing in Acton will cover the 8 units in Acton and the access onto Woodchester Drive.

The committee reviewed the available plans and documentation and offered the following comments:

- 1) The selling price of the Acton units is over \$100,000 more than the units in Stow. What is the difference?
- 2) ACHC has not been contacted by the developer but will be in attendance at the BOS meeting should the developer decide to present.
- 3) It would be beneficial for ACHC to meet with our counterparts in Stow to discuss comments on this project.
- 4) Traffic emptying from the development into Acton from the development
- 5) Potential trails or trail easements that tie into the Flagg Hill Conservation Area

4) Appointment with Glen Kaufmann, presentation of conceptual plans for 111-113 School St. 40B development

Nancy distributed the 2009 version of the “Guidelines for Affordable Housing Development in Acton – The Review Process”.

Mr. Kaufmann presented the site, which is located to the rear of Fort Pond Brook Place, a development he built through the LIP process 5 years ago. The existing conditions are a 6 unit multi-family dwelling with a barn. He is proposing 8 units, with four duplex buildings. The buildings would be architecturally similar to the River Street development to the rear to maintain the character of the neighborhood. The buildings would be 2 ½ stories with three bedrooms and parking in the rear. The project is in the early conceptual stage. Mr. Kaufmann plans to apply to MassHousing in lieu of the LIP process, but wants to remain in consultation with Town Boards and Committees. He has not spoken with MassHousing yet about this project.

Mr. Kaufmann was asked about maintaining the house as part of the project, and described the issues that he has identified which would make the project difficult. The foundation is a dry stone rubble foundation set directly on ledge and the internal layout is such that 3 units would not be equal in size or layout. The structure, built in 1900, would require significant upgrades to meet current codes. The barn located on the western edge of the property is in even poorer structural condition, with a rotting foundation. There is no timeline for the project right now with the state of the current new condominium market. Speculative market rate pricing would be near \$400,000 for 2200 square foot units.

It was noted that this will be the fourth MassHousing project in the last six months where the developer has chosen not to pursue the LIP process. He has made this decision after his disappointing experience with a project on Sylvia Street turned down by the Selectmen, but he is still willing to work with the Town as much as possible. It was suggested that Mr. Kaufmann meet with the Design Review Board.

Public Comment –

Question about spacing between the buildings. Mr. Kaufmann has not determined the final spacing.

Comment made that the project increases the bedroom count for the property from 6 to 24.

Question about the buffer between the new project and Fort Pond Brook Place. Mr. Kaufmann responded that the current boulder barrier would remain.

Question about the sideline setbacks in the Zoning Bylaw for this area. The current setback would be 20 feet since this is in the R-2 district.

Question about saving the beech tree on the property. Mr. Kaufmann stated that the tree will most likely be taken down as it is in a poor location for construction.

Statement was made about reducing the height of the buildings to minimize visual impact on the neighborhood. Mr. Kaufmann responded that the market is driving what is currently built. Buyers are looking for 9 foot ceilings on the first floor and 8 foot ceilings on the second floor.

Questions were raised about the wetlands across School Street on the former Sawyer property. Mr. Kaufmann stated that the road creates a barrier, but he will consult with the Acton Natural Resources Department.

Abutter to the project encouraged the developer to meet with the Design Review Board.

5) Old Business

File scanning project

IT Department is engrossed in Town Meeting preparations, so project is on hold.

Transitional Housing fund

Approved by the BOS, first \$2500 payment has been made from our discretionary funds from Middlesex.

6) New Business

Request from Planning for housing inventory and assessment

The Planning Department has requested that the ACHC complete the existing conditions inventory and analysis housing element of the affordable units in the ACHC inventory and program. A motion was made seconded and approved to hire a consultant to complete this project. Bob and Brent will investigate names of consultants for the project.

7). The Regular Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM and the next meeting was scheduled February 18, 2010 at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Brent Reagor
Recorder