

**Town of Fairfield
Office of Community & Economic Development
Affordable Housing Committee
November 9, 2022**

The Affordable Housing Committee of the Town of Fairfield held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, November 9, 2022 in the Second Floor Conference Room of the Old Town Hall. The meeting was also held via Zoom.

PRESENT: Steve Grathwohl; Urb Leimkuhler; Heather Dubrosky (zoom); Gwynne Alperovich (zoom), Joanne Csonka (zoom)

ALSO: Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development; Bob Elwanger, Fairfield Senior Advocates

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Grathwohl called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He noted that due to the format of the meeting only members of the committee would be permitted to contribute.

Mr. Grathwohl encouraged Committee members to attend meetings of other town boards and commissions in order to educate members about the work of the AHC. He stressed that it was important to make a distinction and be mindful when expressing their views as individuals as opposed to when representing the views of the entire committee.

MINUTES: Consider & Act Upon the minutes of October 12, 2022 Meeting

A motion was made by Mr. Leimkuhler and seconded by Ms. Dubrosky to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of October 12, 2022. Mr. Grathwohl introduced an amendment to add to **Affordable Housing Plan**: A sentence would be added at the end to read; "In retaining a consultant, a scope of work and cost will be determined before an agreement is reached." The amended minutes were adopted unanimously.

ADU Workshop

Mr. Elwanger from Fairfield Senior Advocates reported on the details of the workshop that will be held at the Fairfield Museum and History Center on Monday, November 14, 2022 from 7-8:00 p.m. Panelists have been invited and materials are being prepared. Mr. Grathwohl thanked the organizers of the program: Mr. Elwanger, Mr. Leimkuhler, and the late Carrie Makover.

Affordable Housing Plan: Discussion of Next Steps

Mr. Grathwohl led a discussion of the Affordable Housing Plan: its goals, strategies and a possible calendar for addressing the issues. Mr. Leimkuhler suggested that the AHC develop sub committees to address the priorities and make suggestions for implementation. Committee members are asked to forward other suggestions to Mr. Grathwohl or Mr. Barnhart.

Review/Discussion of Town Properties for Potential Affordable Housing Development

Mr. Leimkuhler discussed the chart that he had distributed that enumerated the properties that might be suitable/available for building duplexes or triplexes. He asked if Committee members might be willing to do a visual site assessment (drive by) of subject properties to determine the suitability to support housing. The Committee discussed the methodology and approach, which will be refined at future meetings.

Old Business and Updates

Mr. Barnhart provided the following updates:

- 980 High Street: The Inland Wetlands hearing on this property was continued.
- Berkley Road: Inland Wetlands approval has been secured, but awaiting TPZ application.
- 200 Pequot Avenue: a variance was granted by ZBA to facilitate the development of 18 residential units. Two of the units will be designated as affordable. TPZ approval is still needed.
- Parkview Commons: The recommendation to purchase 376 Quincy will be presented to the TPZ and RTM later this year. The property is in foreclosure and scheduled to be sold at auction on 1/14/23. Mr. Barnhart reported that an RFQ would be issued in order to identify a development partner. The Town has acquired four lots thus far.
- 244 Greenfield Street: Mr. Barnhart reported that the Town and Habitat for Humanities have executed a development agreement. A proposed ground lease will be presented for Town Boards approval in January, with construction scheduled to start next spring.
- St. Emory's School/Convent: The Fairfield Housing Authority is again negotiating for the purchase of the property.

Moratorium Status: an updated spreadsheet was distributed. Mr. Barnhart estimated that the Town won't have enough points to apply for an initial moratorium until the end of 2023 or early 2024 at the earliest. (Units must have been issued a Certificates of Occupancy to be eligible.)

Housing Trust Fund: The current balance is \$650,000. Mr. Barnhart noted that \$350K has been reserved for the purchase of 376 Quincy. Mr. Grathwohl asked for an accounting of the income and distribution of the HTF to date. Mr. Barnhart indicated that he will prepare as part of the AHC Annual Report.

New Business

Mr. Grathwohl asked if it would be prudent to approach the state for help in buying single units (condos, coops, etc.) that come on the market and add them to Fairfield's affordable housing stock. Mr. Barnhart mentioned the difficulty of managing single units. Mr. Barnhart reported on a pilot program whereby the Town is providing CDBG funds to assist private investors in purchasing and rehabbing rental units conditioned upon their being deed restricted as affordable for a period of not less than forty years.

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gretchen Goethner