

**Town of Fairfield
Office of Community & Economic Development
Affordable Housing Committee
April 10, 2024**

The Affordable Housing Committee of the Town of Fairfield held its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 10, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Conference Room of the Old Town Hall. The meeting was also available via Zoom.

PRESENT: Urb Leimkuhler (Zoom); Bob Ellwanger; Steve Grathwohl; Janice Bouloubasis; Brian Vahey; Jacqueline Paige

ABSENT: Nina Velez

ALSO: Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development; Michelle McCabe; Jonathan Delgado

Mr. Leimkuhler called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

Minutes

The minutes of March 13, 2024 were approved unanimously.

Affordable Housing Plan: Discussion of Next Steps & Timeline

Inclusionary Zoning/Middle Housing

Mr. Barnhart referred commissioners to the draft text amendment on inclusionary zoning that had been distributed previously. Mr. Barnhart commented that his analysis of similar provisions in nearby Fairfield County communities was nearly complete. Mr. Leimkuhler mentioned on-going work to update the Town's Plan of Conservation & Development. He suggested that the Committee review the strategies to encourage middle housing as proposed in the chapter entitled "A Community Is Home to All" within the POCD draft. Mr. Barnhart referenced legislation being considered by the General Assembly (Substitute Bill # 5335, An Act Concerning the Development of Middle Housing") that would reward communities for developing middle housing. Should a joint planning meeting with the TPZ Commission prove infeasible, Mr. Barnhart suggested meeting with TPZ staff to review the proposed text amendments.

Parking

Mr. Ellwanger reviewed his findings with regard to underutilized parking lots. Mr. Ellwanger observed that the current parking requirements result in excess parking spaces (estimated at 19 acres) that could be put to better use. Mr. Barnhart mentioned that the members of the EDC would be supportive of these proposed changes. The

Committee discussed reaching out to TPZ staff, other groups as well as affected property owners to obtain input. Mr. Grathwohl suggested engaging a traffic consultant.

Old Business and Updates

Mr. Barnhart reported that there were no new set aside applications, and that he is continuing to work on the Town's initial moratorium application. He expects the Town to surpass the necessary points with the completion of the Park Avenue project later this year.

Mr. Barnhart reported that the Housing Trust Fund has an uncommitted balance of \$705,839.

Mr. Barnhart reported that the Board of Selectmen approved the development agreement with Habitat for Humanity for the redevelopment of Parkview Commons.

Mr. Barnhart reported that construction work is continuing on the two new duplexes on Greenfield Street, which are expected to be completed by early next year.

Mr. Barnhart reported that the Town and Carol Martin are continuing to discuss the purchase of the former St. Emery's school on Biro Street from the Bridgeport Diocese.

Mr. Leimkuhler updated the Committee on the status of the POCD and suggested that Committee members carefully review the revised draft document.

New Business

Mr. Grathwohl asked if the AHC should be advocating for additional staff resources. Mr. Barnhart noted the additional committee assignments and agreed that his department is under-resourced. He noted that, with the First Selectman's support, he is bringing on board a part-time housing specialist to assist.

Mr. Vahey reported that he was continuing his research on land trusts and that he had reached out to several individuals knowledgeable about the function of the Hartford Land Trust.

Mr. Barnhart noted that the initial organizational meeting of the Fair Rent Commission is scheduled for April 25, 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 p.m. The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, May 8, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Gretchen Goethner