

**Town of Fairfield
Office of Community & Economic Development
Affordable Housing Committee
August 9, 2023**

The Affordable Housing Committee of the Town of Fairfield held its Regular Meeting on Wednesday, August 9, 2023 in the Second Floor Conference Room of the Old Town Hall as well as via Zoom.

PRESENT: Urb Leimkuhler; Steve Grathwohl; Bob Ellwanger; Janice Bouloubasis; Gwynne Alperovich; Heather Dubrosky; Nina Velez

ALSO: Mark Barnhart, Director of Community and Economic Development; Aicha Woods, Director, Fairfield County Center for Housing Opportunity

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Leimkuhler called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Minutes:

A motion was made to accept the amended minutes of the regular meeting of July 14, 2023. The motion was duly seconded and unanimously approved.

Guest Speaker:

Ms. Woods introduced herself and explained that her organization is focused on aiding/guiding the regional response to the housing shortage in Fairfield County. The FCCHO provides technical advice, research and communication assistance to housing developers and local municipal housing entities. Ms. Woods noted her organization's work in promoting ADU's, including educating municipal officials, consumers, lenders and others on the value proposition. She noted that among the barriers to creating more affordable housing are land costs, public sentiment and regulatory issues. Ms. Woods encouraged the AHC to use her organization as a resource in developing affordable housing proposals for Fairfield.

Affordable Housing Plan

Mr. Leimkuhler reported on efforts to sponsor a workshop this October on ADUs similar to one held this past year. Mr. Leimkuhler also noted that TPZ is considering an update to the Town's Plan of Conservation & Development, which includes recommendations to make some modest zoning changes to create opportunities for additional "missing middle" (2-4 units) housing. Mr. Ellwanger reviewed his analysis of parking utilization at large, commercial parking lots which may provide opportunities for affordable housing or other types of development. Others commented that excess parking could be eliminated to reduce impervious surfaces and allow more green space and landscaped areas.

Old Business and Updates

Mr. Barnhart mentioned that the Town should accumulate enough points for an initial moratorium application next year with the completion of three affordable housing projects already under construction.

Mr. Barnhart reported that two set aside applications (Berkeley/Unquowa Road) that were denied by the TPZ Commission are under appeal.

Mr. Barnhart reported that the Town had received a brownfield grant to assist with the clean-up and redevelopment of a brownfield site at 81 Black Rock Turnpike, but that the terms and conditions of the grant may prove too onerous to accept.

Mr. Barnhart stated that his office is working with the owner of 60 Katona Drive to explore converting an existing two-story office building to 18 units of residential, a portion of which will be affordable.

One unit within the Parkview Commons development is in foreclosure and scheduled for a tax sale. The Town intends to submit a bid to acquire the property. The Town has issued a request for qualifications to identify development partners for the Parkview Commons redevelopment.

A ground breaking will be held for the Greenfield Street development after Labor Day.

The Housing Trust Fund currently has \$778,703 with \$319,000 in reserve for additional acquisitions within Parkview Commons.

The meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m. The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, September 13, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Gretchen Goethner