

Town of Richmond
AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE
Minutes of June 15, 2020

Present Were: Bruce Olean, Chair
Denise Stetson
Pierre Duval

Also Present: Shaun Lacey, Town Planner

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m. by Chair B. Olean. S. Lacey noted that AHC member A. Perkins was absent from the meeting. P. Duval noted a lack of cookies available.

B. Approval of Minutes

- 1) Minutes of December 16, 2019

A motion was made by D. Stetson, seconded by B. Olean, to approve the minutes of December 16, 2019 as presented. The motion passed unanimously (3-0).

C. Continued Business

- 1) Roundtable discussion of affordable housing in Town, including:
 - Richmond Ridge
 - Fox Run
 - Preserve at Boulder Hills – Inclusionary Zoning exemption request
 - Highlander Estates

S. Lacey provided an update of projects under construction. All of the units within the Richmond Ridge development will be made affordable and the project is under construction with a completion target for the summer or early fall.

The Committee discussed the current status of Fox Run. The project includes 25 affordable units. S. Lacey noted that affordable unit sales are brought to his attention periodically and continue to sell at 120 percent of the area median income. B. Olean inquired if the development was close to being fully complete. S. Lacey responded that the majority of the development appears to be finished.

S. Lacey informed the Committee that the Preserve at Boulder Hills has a senate bill (no. S2670) under review by State representatives. If approved, the Preserve at Boulder Hills would be exempt from inclusionary zoning requirements in accordance with Chapter 18.18 of the Richmond Code of Ordinances. He also noted that the Town Council approved a resolution in 2019 supporting such a bill, but that the State chapter of the American Planning Association (APA-RI) was not favorable

to the proposal. The Committee expressed its concern about the proposed legislation as it did not further the Town's goals of providing affordable dwelling units for its population. B. Olean noted that further thought should be placed into preparing a letter from the Committee expressing its concerns to the Town Council.

S. Lacey provided a summary of a recently-denied comprehensive permit application located at 3 Carolina Nooseneck Road known as "Highlander Estates." The proposal began as a 10-unit multi-family development, before being reduced to eight units. The Planning Board ultimately denied the master plan application on the basis that the project did not comply with several goals and policies contained within the Comprehensive Community Plan, nor did it comply with various technical requirements such as the Rhode Island Stormwater Design and Installation Standards Manual. Two affordable units would have been required. The application is under appeal before the State Housing Appeals Board (SHAB).

S. Lacey provided a summary of the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP). An update of the CCP is currently underway. S. Lacey noted that if any member of the Committee was open to reviewing the current chapter and providing some recommendations it would be taken under advisement. The Committee requested a copy of the current Housing chapter.

S. Lacey and D. Stetson informed the Committee members that Washington County Community Development Corporation (WCCDC) would no longer be administering the Community Development Block Grant Program on behalf of the Town. S. Lacey noted that existing projects that received grant money in prior years would continue to be managed by Alice Buckley of WCCDC. New applications for this year's grant funding cycle will not be accepted due to staffing and resource restrictions. B. Olean inquired if the Town was set to lose funding from this program. S. Lacey responded that the Town will not be impacted financially. S. Lacey also noted that he is hopeful that a new organization to administer the program will be available in 2021 so that the grant application cycle may continue.

E. Adjournment

A motion was made by D. Stetson, seconded by B. Olean, to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously (3-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Attested to by:



Shaun Lacey, AICP
Town Planner