

Housing @ Hildreth House Committee (H@HHC)

Meeting Minutes – November 18, 2016

Members Present: Hank Fitek, Sue Guswa, Rick Maiore, Victor Normand, Lucy Wallace

Guests: Bruce Nickerson; Bill Scanlon, Planner

Administrative: Rick Maiore was elected chair. Lucy Wallace volunteered to be the clerk. The committee reviewed its charge.

Site Overview: Lucy gave a brief summary of the 2008 effort to design housing for this site:

- considered a mix of rental and home ownership units;
- anticipated 30-45 units in 3-4 multiunit buildings;
- housing would be located on west side of property and behind the Fire Station in order to keep an unimpeded view of Hildreth House from Ayer Rd.; and
- the proposal had been presented to seniors at the COA for their input.

Rick confirmed that the site had access to town water, with the installation of a 6" water main to the site, and sewer, with approximately 3,000 gal/day available for this site. There also is a gas line to the Hildreth House. Rick believes the utilities would support 20 housing units. Sue Guswa suggested we not necessarily max out the site based on available sewer capacity, but rather focus on building housing that will be viewed by the public as an asset to the town and Town Center.

The committee agreed on a goal of providing moderate-priced housing for seniors seeking to downsize and to please everyone, if that is possible. Victor Normand felt that ownership would be better than rental for reaching our goal of moderate priced housing. Sue asked for a written commitment from the Water and Sewer Commission regarding the available septic capacity for this project. Rick reported that a written release of 3,000 gal/day had been sent to the Selectmen by the Commission. While the letter did not reference the Hildreth housing project specifically, it left the designated use of the 3,000 gal/day up to the Selectmen.

Next Steps: Lucy suggested a site walk as soon as possible to familiarize everyone with the site. As GPR had done the mapping of the site for the 2008 effort, Rick offered to contact Cal Goldsmith to see if he would be willing to meet with us. A tentative date of November 21th at 3 PM was suggested, with December 6th after 11 AM as backup. December meeting dates were also set: December 8th and 22nd at 1 PM. If these days and times continue to be convenient for committee members the first and third Thursday of the month may become our regular meeting days and times.

Lucy will speak to Julie Doucet about providing a link to our committee on the town web site which we would use for posting minute and relevant documents and provide the public a way to forward questions and comments to us, as has been provided for the Charter Commission.

Public Comment: Bruce Nickerson offered two observations. First, that we should provide for 10% of the housing to be affordable so that the town's overall percentage of affordable housing would not be negatively impacted. Second, that the relative benefits of land sale vs. 99-year lease of land be considered, particularly with respect to obtaining town meeting approval.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 AM.