

Housing @ Hildreth House Committee (H@HHC)
Meeting Minutes – July 18, 2019
Volunteers Meeting Room, Town Hall
13 Ayer Road, Harvard, MA

Members Present: Carl Sciple, Rick Maiore, Victor Normand, Lucy Wallace

The meeting was convened by Chairman Rick Maiore at 8 AM.

The Committee reviewed and discussed what it had learned from the meetings with representatives of Diamond Sinacori/Tise Design and NOW Communities. Both developers had suggested a single, large building with 17-20 units, as opposed to scattered duplexes, as the best use of the site for both aesthetic reasons and financial feasibility.

Lucy Wallace was not certain that the current overlay zoning would allow for a single, multifamily building, but rather limited development to single family or duplex units.

Victor Normand noted that the town approved the zoning for this site with the expectation that development would be in keeping with surrounding residential, village development. He did not think residents would approve an apartment building.

There followed a lengthy discussion on options for going forward, based on known and unknown factors.

1. Targeted population: active seniors looking to downsize.
2. Seniors' expectations: independent living; lower expenses (taxes and maintenance).
3. Site has utilities (water, sewer and gas).
4. Unit selling price should be in the moderate range.
5. Engineering work already done on site will give any potential developer a good sense of the cost of site development.
6. Preferred development is single family or duplex units.
7. Maximizing the return of sale of land is no longer the primary criteria (it is not expected to provide funds to offset the cost of Hildreth House Phase 2)
8. The future status of the Fire Station needs to be resolved. The Fire Station assessment should be completed this fall, which will inform availability of those lands to be part of housing development.

Lucy suggested modifying the previous RFP and/or developing an RFQ to put the property on the market again. Rick noted one reason we had a poor response to the previous RFP was our hitting the wrong audience (large developers) by posting in the state's Central Registry. Carl had developed a list of smaller developers which would be the ones interested in this scale project.

It was agreed that we should review the previous RFP and come to the next meeting with suggested revisions. Lucy suggested that we go to the Select Board with the proposed RFP/RFQ to explain our goals with the new RFP/RFQ and to get confirmation that maximizing the land sale price is not the Board's first priority.

Carl will forward the RFP to the Committee.

Administrative

The minutes of May 9th and June 10th were approved as presented.

The next meeting date was not set.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 AM.