

Housing @ Hildreth House Committee (H@HHC)

Meeting Minutes – May 25, 2017

Members Present: Hank Fitek, Rick Maiore, Fran Nickerson, Victor Normand, Lucy Wallace, Pablo Carbonell

Guests: Bill Scanlan, Planner; Ben Osgood, TTI; Joan Eliyesil, *Harvard Press*; Fire Chief Richard Sicard

Meeting was convened at 1 PM.

Administrative: Minutes of May 18th were approved as amended.

TTI Plans: Ben reviewed the rationale for moving the Fire Department's storage tent to the proposed location. Ben felt providing direct access from the new road would be more efficient for the Fire Department rather than the existing route behind the Fire Station. Ben noted the lot division would keep the tent on Town land and would therefore require an easement with the developer for the road construction. Chief Sicard commented that he would like to be sure the turning radius is adequate for the Forestry Truck when hauling the trailer, both for exiting the driveway and backing the boat into the tent upon returning to the site. The Chief mentioned that the boat is used about a half dozen times per year. Ben and the Chief agreed to meet after the meeting so Ben could measure the wheel base. TTI will determine if the turning radius is adequate using Auto-Turn software. The Chief also wanted to know if the radius of the street curve and the outside diameter of the cul-de-sac could accommodate the Department's largest vehicle, the ladder truck; he feels it is critical that all vehicles be able to access the development for fire protection. Ben will get the wheel base measurement and perform the calculation. Finally, the Chief approved the two proposed fire hydrant locations.

Test Pits: Rick Maiore will check with the DPW Director to determine if the DPW can provide a backhoe and operator for a day to assist TTI with the test pits in order to reduce the cost of the TTI proposal. Victor Normand noted that in case the DPW is unable to help out that the work proceed with TTI's cost for the backhoe and operator. The Committee agreed. Ben stated that TTI would do the testing after Memorial Day and include the information on the site plan.

Development Issues: Victor identified several issues for the Committee to consider when moving forward with the Request for Proposals. He noted it is important to try to achieve two important goals of the project: housing for seniors, and moderate cost housing. Terms should be included in the RFP and Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) to provide assurance the conditions will be met after the Town loses control of the property.

1. Set a limit on overall floor space, such as an average of 1,500 square feet per unit. For 17 units, this amounts to 25,500 square feet. The developer would then have the flexibility to allocate that floor area into units of varying size. This would provide a diversity of unit sizes and prices to appeal to a broader segment of the senior population.
2. The HHOD bylaw caps the number of 3-bedroom units at 25% of the total.
3. The Town has an expectation that the project move forward quickly. A developer might have a tendency to delay construction to let housing prices increase. Victor suggested that the developer have one finished unit available for sale on the site at all times. If the housing market falters, there is little the Town can do to require rapid completion of the project.

4. The RFP should have a requirement for a Marketing Plan, which would be an important factor in selecting a developer. The Plan would specify how the developer would advertise and market the development, and more importantly, state how the developer will qualify and select buyers for the units. As the Committee expects this project to generate a great deal of interest, it is important to know how the developer will take reservations and select the purchasers.
5. Victor noted he has asked MassDevelopment for a copy of the LDA for the Emerson Green development, which is somewhat analogous to this project in that it had a variety of conditions designed to achieve a certain outcome.

Appraisal and Survey: A Town Meeting vote is necessary to determine the property is surplus to the Town's needs. Members felt the vote did not need to take place prior to issuing the RFP. However, an appraisal to determine the value of the surplus property would be important to Town Meeting voters. An appraisal will help to insure the Town receives fair value for the property. Having an approved site plan and knowledge of the number of units are important considerations with determining the value of the land. Procuring an appraisal is subject to state procurement laws. The Town will also require a survey of the land to dispose, which will be carved out of the Fire Station and Hildreth House properties.

Pablo Carbonell felt it was important that the RFP and LDA not be too cumbersome or complex that they scare off potential developers for the property. He also requested that the unit designs have some consideration for eventual renovation for handicapped accessibility since health conditions may change for buyers over time.

Future meeting dates remain:

- June 8 at 8 AM for the H@HHC
- June 19 at 7 PM with Planning Board
- June 20 at 5 PM with COA
- June 20 at 7 PM with Selectmen

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 PM