

**Housing @ Hildreth House Committee (H@HHC)**  
**Meeting Minutes – February 14, 2019**  
**Volunteers Meeting Room, Town Hall**  
**13 Ayer Road, Harvard, MA**

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

*Staff:* Chris Ryan, Director, Community & Economic Development

*Guest:* Paul Green

The meeting was convened by Chairman Rick Maiore at 8:05 AM.

Administrative

The minutes of the January 10, 2019 meeting were approved as presented.

Updates

*Fire House Study:* Rick reported that the RFP has gone out for the Fire House study. Proposals will be due 30 days after the RFP's release.

*Request for Interest or Information (RFI):* Chris Ryan reported that he had reached out to local planners through MA Planners List Serve for names of local developers towns had worked with who were good community partners and delivered a quality product. He received several names back (such as the developer of Pine Hills in Plymouth, River Walk in Concord) and invited them to a meeting to discuss our project and get their suggestions. The upshot of this meeting was that they liked having the opportunity to develop their own ideas or development schemes based on the parameters given by the town. One way to do this is to issue a Request of Interest or Information (RFI) in which basic information on the site is provided and goals for its development set forth, and then ask the developer for their suggestions. This exercise is not expensive for the developer in time or resources and is a good way to stimulate interest in taking on this project. Based on what we learned in the responses we would be in a better position to frame an RFP for the sale and development of the land.

Chris had gotten a copy of an RFI issued by Acton last fall and will distribute it to the Committee. He explained the process used by Acton as well, which included a site visit for interested developers and providing access to information the town had on the site. Given the engineering work we have done, we have good information to give the developers. Chris added that two developers have offered tours of their projects: Dan Gainsboro who developed River Walk and is building Emerson Green on Devens; and Consigli Construction who has a development in Sherborn which was adjacent to a vintage house similar to the Hildreth House. Chris is in the process of organizing a field trip to the Gainsboro properties, probably in late March/early April. Lucy Wallace expressed interest in seeing the Sherborn project too.

Rick asked members for their response to Chris' idea of issuing an RFI. Victor Normand thought it would be a very good way to stimulate interest by local developers, noting the last time when we issued the RFP through the state's listing we were targeting the wrong group. He added that we have good information on the site's potential: 14 units, market price we are targeting, and type of housing (senior with first floor masters). Hank Fitek agreed this seemed like a reasonable avenue to pursue. Lucy agreed as well. Chris reiterated that we needed to be clear on our goals as presented in the RFI, as responses would be our first indication of whether or not they are attainable. Lucy suggested Chris

prepare a draft for us to review at our March meeting so that we would be better prepared when we did our site visits. Rick suggested a time line of issuing the RFI in early April with responses due in early May. An appraisal and RFPs could be done over the summer, with the goal of going to a fall Special Town Meeting for approval to surplus the land. If we were able to meet that schedule, Lucy suggested having a hand out on our progress to date at Annual Town Meeting.

*Funding Request:* Lucy reported that the Rantoul Elderly Trust had received a \$14,000 gift from Columbia Pictures; its current balance is now approximately \$31,000. Given that, she recommended to the Select Board drop our small warrant article request for \$7,500 and instead use the Rantoul funds.

Public Comment: Paul Green reiterated his concern that he does not believe the project, as currently envisioned, is financially feasible or viable. He is willing to share his spreadsheet whereby he calculated expenses and potential profit for the developer, using costs we had been using. He urged the Committee to do its homework.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 AM.

Next Meeting: March 14<sup>th</sup> at 8 AM