

MINUTES
Hamilton Affordable Housing Trust
December 15, 2016 - 6:00 p.m.
Hamilton- Wenham Library

Members present: Peter Britton, chair, Russ Tanzer, Mark Johnson, Michael Lombardo and Bill Wilson.

Other people present: Patrick Reffett, Director of Planning and Inspections; Mary Beth Lawton, Director, Council on Aging; Dorr Fox, Hamilton Community Projects Coordinator.

Peter Britton opened the meeting at 6:05 p.m. Marc Johnson made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 30, 2016 meeting. Russ Tanzer seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Peter Britton read a letter from the Council on Aging signed by Thomas Hever, Chairman, and dated December 13, 2016, regarding the location of affordable senior housing Hamilton.

DISCUSSION WITH HAHT CONSULTANT ON COA/WINTHROP SCHOOL/PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

Mike Hardiman, Hargidon Architecture and Design, reviewed changes to his presentation at the previous meeting with the Trust. He discussed three pro formas for the project which had the assumption that there would be home ownership units. Assuming that there would be a \$150,000 acquisition cost for the land, there could be nine market rate and three affordable units. Assuming that there were no acquisition costs, there could be eight market rate and four affordable units. Assuming that there are no acquisition costs and the Affordable Housing Trust donated \$200,000 to the project, there could be six market rate and six affordable units.

Assuming that the project has rental units, he presented a pro forma for twenty four market units and six affordable units. However, under this scenario all thirty units would count toward the state requirement for ten percent affordable units. He presented possible site plans and possible floor plans.

He stated that he had met with the school facilities manager. Based upon this meeting, he revised the layout of the school playing fields, including baseball fields and basketball courts to accommodate the housing. This reconfiguration would add a development cost of \$250,000. Robert Porcetti inquired whether the school children could use Patton Park, instead of having their own play fields. Mr. Hardiman stated that the School Department stated that there is a need for both facilities. Mr. Johnson noted that the children would need to cross Bay Road at a very dangerous intersection. Veronica Curan stated that she would not want to have her children cross Bay Road to use a playground.

Bill Wilson inquired about the distance between the school, the playground and the housing units. There was a discussion regarding cutting out a few units to increase this distance.

Peter Conant discussed the pro formas in more detail. He noted that they contain the assumption of construction costs at \$200 a square foot. The pro formas are intended for a private developer. He noted that a non-profit developer may be able to make the numbers work better because they have access to state and federal programs. He noted that this is a small project for a rental project. Under this scenario, management costs may be an issue.

Mr. Conant explained that a private developer could not construct a financially viable project with 100 percent affordable units. He believes that a non-profit developer may be able to. Andrew DeFranza stated that if a developer could use tax credits and a state subsidy, one could construct a 100 percent affordable project. Otherwise, one could not. Mr. Conant concurred, stating that only a non-profit could complete a 100 percent affordable project.

Mark Smith inquired about real estate taxes. Mr. Conant stated that for affordable units, there would be a tax discount. Mr. Smith stated that he is concerned about increased school costs. Rosemary Kennedy stated that all of the rental units will count toward the stated mandated ten percent whether they are affordable or not. Mr. DeFranza stated that while all of the units would count toward the ten percent, a developer cannot get a subsidy or tax credits on the units that are not affordable. Douglas Trees stated that he is concerned about increased school costs and would prefer senior housing. Mary Beth Lawton stated that she believes that the site would be best used for affordable senior housing. Mr. DeFranza stated that there is a need for both family and senior housing to reach the required ten percent. Mr. Britton concurred, noting that while seniors are the town's primary demographic, there is a need for housing for all. Mr. Wilson noted that there are declining school enrollments and that the schools could use the students.

Tom Ford inquired about whether the plans indicated that there were wetlands on the site. Mr. Conant stated that the plans indicated that there were wooded areas on the site that are not necessarily wetlands. He noted that Chapter 40B MGL allows waiving town wetlands bylaws, but not state regulations.

Patrick Reffett inquired whether they included the peer review for the project in the pro forma. He noted that there would be a need for a traffic study as well as a peer review for drainage. Mr. Conant stated that they have built this cost into their contingency account and that there will also be a cost for the state review. Mr. Hardigan stated that the peer review for a similar project in Ipswich was \$12,000.

Mr. Smith inquired about the penalty for not meeting the ten percent affordable housing requirement. Mr. Tanzer explained that the Town could be subject to an unfriendly project under Chapter 40B MGL. There was a brief discussion regarding Chapter 40B MGL. Mr. Johnson stated that the Town needs to put affordable

housing in place that they want, and not be threatened by a project under Chapter 40B MGL.

The Trust members determined that they had all of the information that they needed from the consultants and that they would continue to discuss the site further at an upcoming meeting.

560 BAY ROAD

Mr. Johnson reviewed the draft step 2 analysis for the 560 Bay Road, noting that a project would have very high visual impact to Bay Road and Bridge Street. The site is located within the historic district and contains an historic house. The site has adequate uplands for a septic system, however soil tests would need to be performed. Testing on adjacent sites have had mixed results. While Bay Road has traffic capacity, there would need to be special attention to ensure that the intersection is not impacted by the curb cut for the project. Traffic impacts should be reviewed under the permitting process.

Mr. Tanzer stated that the design of the project would need to be consistent with the historic district. Michael Lombardo stated that there may be traffic issues if there are a lot of units in the development. Mr. Wilson noted that while the site is closer to downtown, with its location next to the proposed bank, a traffic study would be needed.

Mr. Trees inquired why the site was being considered. He questioned whether Harborlight had determined the number of units to make the project viable. Mr. Johnson stated that the owner of the site had approached Harborlight. Therefore, the Affordable Housing Trust is reviewing it. Mr. Trees inquired whether the project would be a friendly 40B. Several Trust members stated that they did not know at this time.

Richard Boroff inquired which site was being reviewed. Trust members explained that it was 560 Bay Road and the adjacent site. Robin Sears inquired how many units would need to be constructed to make the project work financially. Mr. Wilson suggested thirty units. Mr. Johnson suggested that to the extent that state law addresses density, the number might be up to eight units per acre. Other Trust members stated that it would depend on many factors. Mr. Trees stated that thirty units will only give two years of protection from other comprehensive permits. The Town needs a larger site with more units. Trust members noted that Harborlight needs a certain number of units to ensure that an affordable rental project will work financially.

Mr. Smith inquired whether the Trust had spoken with developers who have a different development model, such as the construction of a mixed income project. Mr. Britton noted that the Town has developed a Host-Community Agreement. Mr. Wilson stated that while the Town is currently working with Harborlight and Habitat for Humanity through the Host-Community Agreement, they are open to discussing projects with other partners that may have different goals and concepts

in order to meet the community's needs. Mr. Lombardo stated that the Town is currently working with Harborlight and Habitat for Humanity. The Town is looking into other developers who are willing to work with the community.

Mr. Trees stated that the financial impact of a project on the Town should be explored. Mr. Lombardo noted that developers cater to varying demographics. Ms. Kennedy stated that the Town should look at developers who build projects for people who earn eighty percent of the median income of the community. The Town should be concerned about the economic impact of a project.

Ms. Curan stated that there are issues pertaining to the steep slopes on the site. There will be drainage issues.

Mr. Trees stated that there will be traffic issues and there will need to be a traffic light.

Martha Homer stated that it is difficult to assess the impacts when there is not a definitive project. Stephen Homer stated that he does not want to see a project that is out of character with the historic district.

Mr. Lombardo stated that there are questions whether there is a viable project for the site considering the economics and the issues related to the site.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Britton noted that the 7 Kinsman Lane site is for sale and that this site should be discussed at the next meeting on January 5, 2017. It was determined that abutting property owners should be sent notices of the meeting. It was also decided to request Mr. DeFranza to attend the next meeting.

Lori Sanders inquired which properties had been sent for further review to the Board of Selectmen. She also inquired whether traffic studies would be required for these projects. Mr. Johnson stated that the sites included 13 Essex Street, the Gordon Conwell Seminary site and the Longmeadow Way sites.

Mr. Lombardo moved to approve the bills for the Affordable Housing Trust, including a bill for the use of the library for meetings and a bill from Miyares and Harrington LLP for legal fees. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Mr. Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m. Russ Tanzer seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

