

Town of Ayer

Department of Community & Economic Development

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Minutes of February 12, 2021– Ayer Affordable Housing Committee

Location: Zoom Meeting, Ayer Town Hall

Members Present: Janet Providakes, Karin Swanfeldt, Ken Diskin

Also Present: Alicia Hersey, Community Development Program Manager, Committee Administrator. Blair Haney, Karen Chapman, and Jonathan Vos of Montachusets Regional Planning Commission (MRPC).

Janet Providakes, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Janet Providakes reads the Covid open meeting zoom requirements and requested the board to introduce themselves.

General Business

Approve the Agenda

Karin Swanfeldt made a motion to approve the agenda, Ken Diskin seconded. Unanimous vote to approve the agenda. (3-0-0)

Approve the Minutes for January 22, 2021

Karin Swanfeldt made a motion to approve the minutes of January 22, 2021, Ken Diskin seconded. Motion passed unanimously. (3-0-0)

Public Comment

Janet Providakes reported that she had received public comment and request that when the Housing Production Plan and Ayer Affordable Housing Trust Bylaws became available that they be posted and available before the Feb 24th meeting on the Ayer Town Website.

Housing Production Plan presented by Blair Haney of MRPC

Zoom presentation of the proposed final draft of the Ayer Housing Production Plan. The Zoom presentation included an overview the Purpose, Goals and Implementation of the Housing Production Plan (HPP). Mr. Haney reviewed the findings of the Ayer Housing Production Plan which included the following information:

- What did we find?
- What have we done?
- What are we going to do?

What did we find?

Mr. Haney reviewed the demographics of the Town, specifically highlighting the Town's aging of our population.



What have we done?

A discussion ensued regarding whether the Subsidized Housing Unit (SHI) number should be the 2019 number which aligned with the American Community Survey (ASC) from 2019 or the update SHI number from 2020. The Committee decided to go with the SHI number from 2020.

What are we going to do?

Review of goals and strategies from the 2017 Master Plan and the new proposed goals and strategies from the proposed Housing Production Plan.

Next Steps?

- Complete Plan
- Approval from PB & BOS
- Submit to State Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD)

The earlier discussion on Rehab Affordable units on the Towns SHI list was revisited and the Committee agreed that though these units did not qualify for the Town's SHI list, they were still "little a" affordable and should be included in the Ayer Housing Production Plan. Ken Diskin emphasized that the Housing Production Plan should include plans for low-income housing that qualifies for the SHI list but also housing that supports all the low to moderate households that currently exist in our community. Blair Haney pointed out that the retaining of residents that are low to moderate income is key to fighting gentrification.

The Committee thanked MRPC for the presentation and all their hard work. It was confirmed that the proposed Housing Production Plan with the discussed changes would be presented to the joint Select Board and Planning Board on March 2nd, 2021.

For a full copy of this presentation please see the "Ayer Affordable Housing Committee Meeting: February 12th, 2021 video posted on the Ayer Affordable Housing Committee web page or the Ayer Public Access Corp. website:

<https://ayer.vod.castus.tv/vod/?video=47f14724-336e-4382-8a22-d1c9f0aefe27&nav=recent>

Committee Discussion on the HPP

The Committee wanted to know why Ayer qualified as an Environmental Justice Site. Alicia said she would have Alan explain the qualifications which make parts of Ayer an Environmental Justice Community. Ken Diskin explained that when using "OLIVER" the Massachusetts GIS site you can see which parts of Ayer are designated Environmental Justice.

Discussion – Affordable Housing Trust Bylaw Public Input Session

The Committee discussed the upcoming Public Input Session and decided to present the Affordable Housing Trust Proposed Bylaws. The Committee developed an agenda for the Public Input Session for the Housing Trust.

The AAHC agreed to meet on Feb. 19th 2021 at 10 am, to review the proposed changes of the Housing Production Plan.

Rental Assistance Program

The Committee postponed their discussion on Rental Assistance Programs to a future meeting. Deciding to focus on the development of the Trust in the upcoming meetings.

Old Business

Ken Diskin spoke about the professional assistance that the Town has received over the past 5 years and the successful development of planning, zoning, housing, and conservation that has come out of this assistance. Ken Diskin spoke positively on the "Junction of Ideas" currently in our Town and the positive impact that all these ideas and efforts have brought to the Town.

Meeting adjourned

Karin Swanfeldt made the motion to adjourn the meeting, Ken Diskin seconded.
Unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 am. (3-0-0)

Janet Perindok

4/23/21