

Ayer Affordable Housing Committee + Ayer Affordable Housing Trust Open Session Joint Meeting Minutes: May 11, 2022

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, MGL Chapter 30A, Section 18 and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Ayer Affordable Housing Committee and Trust is being conducted by remote participation. Every effort has been made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided in the Order. Broadcast and recorded by APAC.

Geof Tillotson, AAHT, presiding. Meeting called to order at 6:04pm

AAHT Trustees present: Patricia Bagni-Latimer, Colleen Krieser, Cyndi Lavin (Clerk), Geof Tillotson

AAHT Members absent: Shaun Copeland, Jake Driscoll (Chair), James Stephen (Vice-Chair)

Janet Providakes, Chair AAHC. Meeting called to order at 6:05pm

AAHC Members present: Janet Providakes (Chair), Ron Morrison. Ken Diskin

AAHC Members absent: James Stephen

Also present: Alicia Hersey – AAHC + AAHT Administrator; Cindy Knox – IT Director for Ayer; Carly Antonellis – Assistant Town Manager; Sam Goodwin, Jess Gugino, and John Ellis – ZBA; other community members; representatives from NOAH

Agenda Items: General Business

Review and approval of agenda: no changes made

AAHT Motion: A motion was made by Patricia Bagni-Latimer and seconded by Colleen Krieser to approve the meeting agenda as posted. **Motion passed by roll call vote 4-0-0**

AAHC Motion: A motion was made by Ken Diskin and seconded by Ron Morrison to approve the meeting agenda as posted. **Motion passed by roll call vote 3-0-0**

Review and approval of minutes:

AAHT 02/11/22 A motion was made by Patricia Bagni-Latimer and seconded by Colleen Krieser to accept. **Motion passed by roll call vote 4-0-0**

AAHC 04/13/22 A motion was made by Ken Diskin and seconded by Ron Morrison. **Motion passed by roll call vote 3-0-0.**

Agenda Item: Public Comment + Questions

None

Agenda Item: Presentation on Ayer Commons by NOAH

Members of the NOAH team working on Ayer Commons were introduced: Phil Giffie, Annika Lambert (project manager), Laurent Bouzelmat, and Sharon Loewenthal (finance). Annika reported that there would be 64 units in phase 1 plus the community building. These are 2-floor stacked apartments and town houses. Several units will be fully handicapped accessible, all will be ADA compliant. They are also pursuing solar panels and passive energy for the buildings.

Sharon explained that phase 1 would cost approximately \$30 million, giving Ayer 43 Affordable units (at or below 60% AMI) and 21 Workforce units (at or below 70% AMI). Phase 2 would add an additional 32 units. Annika added that there would also be 8 units set aside for Section 8. NOAH is

asking the Town of Ayer for a \$400,000 commitment, which is about 1% of the total cost. Sam Goodwin requested that the language be considered carefully so that people didn't think the money was a "loan" that would be repaid.

The question arose as to how the units will be allocated. They will be granted by State lottery, with an early application period available for the Town. There will be some degree of local preference, but much of the funding is from the State, so applications cannot be exclusively from Ayer.

There will be a completely separate process of funding and applications for phase 2.

Colleen Krieser requested that the plans make sure there is accommodation for school buses and perhaps shuttles to navigate.

Sharon said that NOAH would need the Town's commitment by Fall 2022 in order to go ahead in late 2022/early 2023. The entire timeline could easily slip, and there is no guarantee that the project will receive the State grant in its first round. But an optimistic/aggressive opening could potentially be in 2025.

There was more discussion about local preference and benefits to the Town of Ayer to work with NOAH and do this project. Alicia Hersey pointed out that having the needed 10% Affordable units in Town would open up grant possibilities, and Cyndi Lavin pointed out that not having that needed 10% leaves the Town vulnerable to hostile 40B developers. NOAH is a friendly 40B developer, a non-profit that wants to work within the Town of Ayer bylaws.

There was a discussion on accessibility to water and sewer, and it was requested that electric lines be underground.

Janet Providakes requested that the Committee and the Trust go over the schedule of deadlines to make sure none would be missed.

Agenda Item: Ayer Rental Assistance Program (ARAP)

Alicia Hersey explained that only 3 of the applicants are going forward with the assistance. One landlord didn't work out, and a second applicant received RCAP money instead. A new applicant was discussed and accepted. It was also noted that the AAHT's request to CPC was accepted at Annual Town Meeting.

AAHT Motion: A motion was made by Geof Tillotson and seconded by Cyndi Lavin to accept applicant #107. **Motion passed by roll call vote 4-0-0**

Agenda Item: New Business

Jake is being deployed shortly. He would like to go on a leave from the AAHT, but needs to step down as the Chair. This will be discussed further at the June meeting.

Next meeting:

AAHT – June 8 at 6:00pm

AAHC – July 10 at 10:00am

Adjournment:

AAHT Motion: A motion was made by Pat Bagni-Latimer and seconded by Colleen Krieser to adjourn at 8:23pm. **Motion passed by roll call vote 4-0-0**

AAHC Motion: A motion was made by Ron Morrison and seconded by Ken Diskin to adjourn at 8:23pm. **Motion passed by roll call vote 3-0-0**

Janet Provada

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