

Housing @ Hildreth House Committee (H@HHC)
Meeting Minutes – June 28, 2018
Volunteers Meeting Room, Town Hall
13 Ayer Road, Harvard, MA

Members Present: Pablo Carbonell, Hank Fitek, Fran Nickerson, Victor Normand, Carl Sciple, Fire Chief Rick Sicard, Lucy Wallace

Guest Present: Marie Sobalvarro, Assistant Town Administrator

The meeting was convened by Lucy Wallace at 8:05 AM.

Administrative

The minutes of the May 10, 2018 meeting were approved as presented.

Update on Planning Board Decision

Paul Green, the proponent of the Citizens' Petition to amend the Hildreth House Overlay District to require that 25% of the housing be affordable (which was tabled at the 2018 Annual Town Meeting) had attended the last Planning Board meeting to seek the Board's support for his proposal. Lucy reported that Rick Maiore, who had attended the meeting, informed her that the Planning Board did not support his proposal and, furthermore, should Paul resubmit the Petition at a future town meeting, the Planning Board would recommend against it. Fran Nickerson confirmed this decision, noting the vote by the Planning Board was unanimous. Carl Sciple had spoken to Paul after the Planning Board meeting and reported that Paul was concerned that the price point of moderately-priced housing for seniors would not be met due to the cost of site development and land acquisition. Lucy noted that the Town could sell the land at discount to keep the cost of housing in the moderate range.

Project Scope

Given the exclusion of the Fire Department's land from the site, a question arose as to the number of units the Hildreth House property would support. Lucy noted that the original proposal for 17 units included 3 single family units. The Fire Department portion was to have 1 single family and 1 duplex unit. She suggested that the remaining 2 single family units could be converted to duplexes so that the Hildreth House portion might be developed with 8 duplexes for 16 units. While we had originally consider a range of size from 1 to 3 bedroom units, with a cap on the total number of units, Fran and Victor Normand both noted that most senior housing had at least 2 bedrooms.

Pablo Carbonell reminded the Committee that we would need another appraisal, given both the reduced number of units and the fact that the only offer we had received for the original, 17-unit development was \$500,000.

Application for Sewer Connection

Carl Sciple has volunteered to take the lead in drafting an application to the Water & Sewer Commission for a 3,000 gals/day sewer permit. Carl has been in touch with Cindy Russo, chair of the Commission, who had directed him to the relevant sections of the permit application regarding the "growth neutrality" requirement of the Center sewer system. In order to add a new use to the system, per section 1.8b of the

Commission's regulations, the applicant must demonstrate the public good for granting the connection and the inability of the site to provide on-site disposal.

Carl said he believed the public good was demonstrated by the Town's adoption of the overlay zoning for the property to allow senior housing and the Select Boards' vote to sell the land in order to raise funds for the Hildreth House Phase II project. Victor suggested getting a letter from the engineer, Ben Osgood, who prepared the original site plan, stating that the site could not accommodate on-site septic disposal of the anticipated 16 units, and to include the letter with the application. Marie Sobalvarro has Ben's contact information and will reach out to him for such a letter. She asked if the Committee had funds to pay Ben, should he require a fee for the letter. Lucy suggested asking the Select Board to request a reserve fund transfer from the Finance Committee or request funds from the Select Board's professional services/consultant account.

Pablo suggested that the application refer to the possibility of a second phase of housing if the Fire Station is relocated and that site becomes available. Victor calculated that given DEP's metric of 150 gals/day for a 2-bedroom senior unit, our request for 3,000 gal/day would accommodate 20 units, which would probably be the most the site could support.

Update on Fire Station RFQ

Chief Rick Sicard and Marie have begun work on the Request for Qualifications for a firm to do a study of the adequacy of the Fire Station to meet current and future needs. Rick reported that he has spoken to 2 architecture firms to learn what study criteria should be included in the RFQ. He added that MRPC will do a traffic study of the site (with the multiple users, including potential senior housing) at no cost to the Town. Marie noted this study would be built on an earlier one done by MRPC for the Town Center. Rick also confirmed that the study will include looking at other sites for a fire station. Marie added that the cost of options would be part of the study.

Victor wondered if the traffic study by MRPC could be completed before the Fire Station study so that the housing project could proceed before the Fire Station study was complete. Rick and Marie felt the location of the Fire Station would have a major impact on traffic flow associated with any proposed housing and so the traffic analysis would need to be done in parallel with the Fire Station study.

Lucy asked about the timeline for the RFQ and study, and when the study might be completed. Marie hopes to have the RFQ out in August so that interviews of firms could be done in September and a firm selected and work underway later in the fall. Lucy asked if the study and recommendations would be completed by next summer, given that major capital requests would need to be made in September.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 AM.

Next meeting: July 19 at 8 AM