

Town of Old Lyme
Affordable Housing Commission
Regular Meeting
Wednesday April 19th 2023 5:00 PM
Old Lyme Memorial Town Hall, Meeting Hall

Call-in access available at:
1-605-472-5727 Access Code 3819718

MINUTES (UNAPPROVED)

1. Call to Order
 - The meeting was called to order at 5:05pm
 - Members present: Michael Fogliano, Bill Belluzzi, Amy Hosier, John Coughlin (by phone), alternates Laurie Walker and Anthony Vasiliou
2. Election of Officers
 - Bill Belluzzi made a motion to amend the agenda to defer election of officers until after item 4 in order to allow time for Jenn Miller to arrive at the meeting. Second by Amy Hosier. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Public Comment
 - None
4. Approval of Minutes
 - 4.1. March 15 2023 Regular Meeting
 - Motion to approve by John Coughlin, second by Bill Belluzzi. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
 - Motion by Amy Hosier to amend the agenda to hold election of officers as the last item on the agenda before adjournment. Second by John Coughlin. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
5. General Information Items, Communications, and Correspondence
6. Old Business
 - 6.1. Projects
 - 6.1.1. McCulloch Family Open Space Affordable Housing Option
 - Jenn Miller arrived at 5:15pm
 - Mr. Fogliano briefed the attendees on a meeting held including himself, First Selectman Tim Griswold, and Attorney Mike Carey on April 5 2023. At that meeting, three outstanding questions regarding the project were discussed. The first question was about the specific legal requirements that need to be met in order to exercise the option. Attorney Carey is continuing his research, the results of which will be incorporated into any agreement with a development partner. The second question was on how to utilize the ARPA grant funds awarded to the Commission to support the project through a development partner. Attorney Carey's recommendation was to have the town retain control

of the funds and responsibility for documentation and reporting, and disburse funds incrementally to the partner rather than assigning the entire grant and management responsibility to the partner. This could be accomplished by establishing a Steering Committee including a member having familiarity with Town accounting procedures and ARPA documentation and reporting requirements. That Steering Committee could also provide general oversight of the project to ensure that Town objectives for the project were being met. Attorney Carey further recommended that the Commission request an amendment to the original ARPA grant application to extend the Project End Date to December 31, 2026 as set in the Grant Agreement. The third question was on how to perform a transparent public selection process for a development partner considering the unique aspects of this project and the limited number of potential partners with suitable qualifications and business models. Attorney Carey recommended that this could be accomplished by convening a public meeting of the Board of Selectmen with an agenda to review the exploratory discussions held with the two local not-for-profit organizations specializing in affordable housing development (the HOPE Partnership and Habitat for Humanity of Eastern CT) about the project, and a vote by the Board to select one of the potential partners for continuing discussions aimed at coming to a formal agreement. At a follow up meeting between Mr. Fogliano and Mr. Griswold on April 14, next steps were planned as (1) preparation of a request for an amendment to the ARPA grant application to extend the Project End Date for consideration by the BOS as well as a briefing on the current status of the project to be placed on the agenda for the May 1 BOS meeting; and (2) convening a special meeting of the BOS after the May 1 meeting to select a partner for continuing discussions and to appoint a steering committee expected to consist at minimum of a member of the BOS, a member of the Affordable Housing Commission, a member of the Open Space Commission at their option, a member of the Board of Finance or town Finance department having familiarity with ARPA requirements, and a member with development project management experience. Discussion among the Commission members included that in addition to the technical and financial objectives for the project, some assurance would be needed that the project would be brought to completion in a reasonable time frame. The need for community engagement and fundraising to support the project was also discussed.

6.2. Standing Workstreams

6.2.1. Community Engagement

- Mr. Belluzzi will draft an article for the upcoming Events publication drawing on recent local news items relevant to affordable housing.

6.2.2. Policy and Regulatory

6.2.2.1. Pending State Legislation including HB-6890

- Mr. Fogliano made a motion for the Commission to take a position of opposition to HB-6890 based on the analysis and opposition by RiverCOG and the CT Council of Small Towns, and authorize the Chair to communicate that position to the Board of Selectmen and elected CGA representatives. Second by Jenn Miller. Motion passed unanimously.
- The Commission discussed recent proceedings of the Zoning Commission regarding the HROD application, and the rejection of that application. The Commission agreed that the Planning and Zoning Commissions should be engaged early and often in preparation for proposed zoning changes. That process has already begun for Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations, and will continue as a top priority.

6.2.3. Funding and Partnering Opportunities

- Ms. Miller and Mr. Vasiliou will draft a “Yes In My Back Yard” grant application to support the Commission’s work to propose policy and regulatory changes.

6.2.4. Development Opportunities

- Tom Larson will be invited to the next Commission meeting to continue discussion of his potential development opportunity.
- Mr. Fogliano briefed the Commission on correspondence and a followup meeting with Vivian Senft of Coldwell Banker regarding a potential development opportunity on Four Mile River Rd. It was suggested that a special meeting with Ms. Senft included as a guest would be useful for information sharing and brainstorming. Mr. Fogliano will follow up.

7. New Business

- None

8. Election of Officers

- Mr. Belluzzi nominated a slate of Michael Fogliano for Chair and Jenn Miller for Vice-Chair. No other nominations were heard. Mr. Coughlin made a motion to close nominations, which was seconded by Mr. Belluzzi and passed unanimously. The slate was elected in a unanimous vote.

9. Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Bill Belluzzi, second by John Coughlin. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Fogliano