

Minutes of the Meeting of the CICA Housing Committee, June 8, 2010 at 7:15 at the Parish House

Present: Donna Damon, Mabel Doughty, Bob Earnest, Beth Howe, Ruth Slagle, David Whiston and John Wilson

Coming on to the committee: Deb Hall and David Whiston. Going off the committee: John Thaxter

Absent: Linda Ewing

The “Affordable Housing Project’s” name:

Many members agree that the term “affordable housing” has negative connotations of the “feared other” to some people, though David said he thought this was something he thought we should not worry about – it says what the housing is, not “low income projects” but just affordable housing. We had agreed on “attainable housing” several years ago, but it isn’t really explanatory enough. “Workforce housing” suggests housing for the peons who work for the “rest of us”. “Year-round housing” seems a bit to general though it is a useful modifier for “affordable”. Beth suggested that the current project will be year-round rental housing, of which the island has very little, so we might use this for this project. This was adopted unanimously.

Town Meeting:

John described some of the discussion at Town Meeting. Leon spoke against using any Town land for housing. And he may imply and other people may think that we should use only existing housing. Suhail supports affordable housing but is concerned about the implications for the Town’s being involved – will they incur liabilities? Donna had answered that at this point CICA is only proposing to apply for the pre-planning grant for the housing. The relationship between CICA and the Town and the State will have to be developed explicitly as part of the development of the grant. It is unclear exactly what the new Select Board members will want this to be. It is unclear in the State guidelines whether the Town could be a sponsor of the project. But the applicant for the pre-planning grant does have to be the same one as the applicant for the final grant.

John and Deb Hall did the pre-planning grant. It is nearly ready to be sent in except for some information that we still need from MSHA/Genesis about site control and what kind of entities can apply. Liza has reviewed the application as it stands and had a number of additions, but generally she is pleased with it. Some of the things asked on the application may not be relevant to us. For example, Bob suggested that we may not need to include money for an architectural review for a manufactured building; but maybe they need an architect’s stamp. John said it would make more sense to put that money into site planning. We also probably won’t need a construction loan since the building is modular. MSHA’s turn-around time for reviewing the grant is probably fairly quick. We may be ahead of other islands, though the article in the Island Times indicates that Peaks is moving along.

Beth asked if the proposal will need to go to the planning Board. Donna said it would not – duplex in IR on large enough lot.

MOU with Town:

John has talked to Herb about the need for a Memorandum of Understanding between the CICA Board and the Town about the role of each one in the project. He has developed a draft that could be given to the Selectmen at their meeting next Wednesday. Summary:

The Town and CICA will cooperate on the project

The Town owns the land

Who will:

- Develop the project
- Manage and maintain it
- Do the renting
- Cover the costs
- Take over if CICA goes defunct in the future – by CICA bylaws we need to find a similar NGO to take over the work. If such an organization cannot be found, the responsibility goes to the Town.

Control of the land: MSHA requires proof of control over the site for the period of 30 years that the project must be kept affordable. John has several ways that this could be done:

- The Town incorporates the CICA Housing Committee as a subcommittee of the Town. Discussion of this suggested that this might result in the CICA Committee becoming the board of a Town Housing Authority.
- The Town gives the land outright to CICA – since there are people who are opposed to the use of Town land for affordable housing, this might be controversial.
- The Town might be able to give CICA a 30 year lease, if this would be acceptable to the State.

Donna said that this issue worries her. The wording in the warrant adopted at Town meeting said that there *will* be another Town Meeting on the project. If the State requires the Town to give the land to CICA this could be a problem. She suggested having an enterprise fund or a housing authority that would officially control the land. This would legally bind the land to be used for AH even if Town Meeting or the Selectmen wanted to sell it.

Bob read out language from MSHA general guidelines about site control for all AH projects. If the applicant does not own the land, the Town must grant site control through the development process. The bottom line is that the State wants proof of a closing, which suggests that ownership may be the only option.

Eldon has emailed the Selectmen urging them to take the initiative on the AH issue.

Donna suggested that this whole issue should be reviewed by the Town attorney.

Survey of School House Road Parcel:

There are some boundary issues that are not a significant problem but that do need to be resolved. Several of Chuck's buildings are on the lot. There was a second boundary line drawn to deal with this, but it seems never to have been recorded. Also the boundary between this lot and the Munroe's and the lot behind it may be off by about 6 feet.

Draft CICA AH Position Paper:

John said he had also developed a draft of a general statement about CICA's mission, philosophy and goals relative to affordable Housing. He passed it around and asked for input. It says that the target clientele is young families and elders. Donna asked what about people in between? And suggested leaving out this explicit statement, so that all would be covered. Beth said Liza was going to ask Mary to explore whether the islands could have application criteria that would, for example, give preference to people with children or the elderly, specifically.

Ruth said that it was interesting that there were no people at the Town Meeting younger than 30. It would be useful if they were involved in this planning. Several other people said that they have responsibilities for their families and work – time is an issue. Donna said that she and Tom had been criticized because he was involved in some of the meetings and might be a beneficiary. This was seen as a possible conflict of interest. He was discouraged by this. Deb and John were optimistic that the young people on the island are very much interested in the affordable housing issue.

Next Meeting:

Our normal monthly meeting is scheduled for next Tuesday, June 22. If the pre-planning grant needs work, we will meet. If not, there is no need for a meeting. Beth will let everyone know.

Partial Minutes of the Selectmen's Meeting Wednesday June 9, 2010 at 7:00 at the Hall

John and Beth attended the meeting. John gave a copy of the draft MOU to the Selectmen and briefly described its contents. CICA is requesting that the Board set up a Selectmen's/CICA Board workshop to discuss the relative roles of CICA and the Town in the affordable housing project. He said that we still don't have information about several of the State's application guidelines that are relevant to this:

- What kind of site control is required
- Whether the Town could actually be the applicant to build the project.

The Selectmen suggested a workshop on June 23 at 7:00. If no information on these two issues is available by then, the meeting will be postponed.

This arrangement was agreed to by everyone.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Howe