

PROPOSAL FOR HOUSING AT 41-43 SCHOOL HOUSE ROAD

At Town Meeting on February 12 2011, the Chebeague Island Community Association (CICA) will be asking the voters of the Town to give permission for the Town to convey to CICA a parcel of land (I05 lot 3) on School House Road to be used for a duplex that will provide moderately priced, year-round rental units. Last June's Town Meeting gave permission to CICA to proceed with applying to the State for funds for this proposal. Since then the State has approved a preliminary version, and we are now working on the details of a final one.

The building will have two, two-story units. Each will have three bedrooms so they would work for a family, a couple, or single individuals.

This Newsletter will give you information on the financing of the housing, CICA's plans for the land, the nature of the building, and the eligibility requirements for tenants. We hope this mailing will give you enough information to make an informed judgment on this proposal. **There will also be a public informational meeting on Thursday February 10 at 7:15 at the Hall to talk about the proposal.**

Financing

The funding for this housing will come from the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) which is administering a grant program funded by a bond issue passed by the Legislature in 2009 that includes \$2 million for moderately priced housing on unconnected islands, which all face the same high cost of housing that Chebeague does.

The program provides \$175,000 for each unit of housing, so a duplex would qualify for a grant of \$350,000. In addition the Town is expected to provide a 20 percent match. In our case the parcel of land provides most of the match.

CICA anticipates that the cost of the site preparation, such as the driveway and the foundation, can be met and the duplex can be bought and placed on the lot, within the \$350,000 grant so that there would be no other contribution required from either the Town or residents of the island. The parcel, with the added value of the building, will be returned to the Town tax rolls.

The Site Plan

As you can see from the survey, the lot on School House Road is much deeper than it is wide. It is wooded and quite wet in some

areas. There is a path going into the lot from School House Road along the west side. It joins up with another path coming over from Chuck Varney's and then continues over to the Ballard Back 40 parcel.

About halfway into the lot from School House Road there is a knoll that is large and high enough for the duplex and its septic system – the survey shows the contour lines. The duplex will be located so that the front faces south, to get the natural light. There will be a cleared front yard. The site plan shows that the driveway will come in from School House Road, with a curve and a broader “passing place” half-way in where two cars can pass each other. It will come up to the back of the building, with a parking area for five cars (as required by our Zoning Ordinance). The building itself will probably not be visible from the road, and trees will be left as a buffer between the duplex and the Munroe's lot.

We are asking Town Meeting to let us work out an arrangement with the Town to protect the existing paths, though the one coming in from the road may need to be moved somewhat. We would also like to have a conservation easement on the back part of the parcel so that it can remain in a natural state to be enjoyed by all.

Before the Town can convey the land to CICA several boundary issues with abutters need to be straightened out. A triangle of land will be conveyed to Chuck Varney. It was a part of the original purchase of his land but was never recorded at the Registry of Deeds. And 6 feet along the western boundary will be conveyed to the Bartsches and the Vachons because of a discrepancy in the surveying. These are shown in the attached survey.

The Building

The building will be a manufactured duplex. Manufactured housing is not only an economically reasonable means of construction, but also by being built in a controlled environment it achieves construction standards as good as, or better than, stick-built housing. When it is finished, the building will be visibly indistinguishable inside and out from traditionally built housing. In addition, Maine State Housing has its own specific standards both for the structure and for its energy efficiency that must be met by the manufacturers.

Because these MSHA standards are so strict and the manufacturers and the State have to agree on the details, we are still discussing the exact layouts and cost estimates with two different manufacturers – Keiser Homes and KBS to determine which is the most cost effective. The elevation and layouts shown here are those for the basic Keiser Hillsborough duplex. The starting model from KBS is quite similar. Whichever we choose, the final floorplans will probably be slightly modified.

Eligibility Requirements for Renters

CICA owns one rental house now. We developed eligibility criteria for renters when it was bought, and reviewed two rounds of applications before it was rented. A basic requirement is that the individuals/family have an income that is no higher than 120 percent of the median family income for Cumberland

County, adjusted for family size. Therefore a couple can have an income as high as \$59,174, and a family of four could have an income as high as \$73,950, and people and families with incomes lower than these maximums are equally eligible. The rent that CICA charges is 28 percent of annual income. For example, a family of three with an income of \$26,000 would pay \$607 per month. They also pay for heat and utilities, but because of the MSHA energy standards the former is likely to be relatively low.

In addition to income, CICA uses a variety of other criteria to evaluate applicants. Preference is given to people who work on the island, to families who have children in the school, to people who have family or community ties to Chebeague, and to people who are involved in community service on the island.

The availability of the rental units will be advertised on the island. The applications are reviewed by an independent committee of 4 or 5 Chebeague residents that does not include any members of the CICA Housing Committee that builds/buys the housing. The review is completely confidential. References are checked.

Schedule

If this proposal is passed by Town Meeting, CICA will finalize the research on which duplex to purchase and the Town will straighten out the boundary issues. Then CICA will make a final detailed application to MSHA for the grant money. When this is approved, an RFP for a contractor/project manager will go out, and trees will be cut while the ground is still frozen. When the ground thaws, the driveway and foundation can go in. We expect to be ready for the delivery of the building – in 8 large sections -- in mid-July. It should be available for occupancy by the end of the summer.

*Town of Chebeague Island
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