

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
JOINT MEETING WITH BOARD OF SELECTMEN AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

April 29, 2019

Draft

Members Present: Chair Russell Robbins; Vice-chair Sandy Cuny; Clerk Holly Wilson; John Druley; ; Robert Brown; Steve Patton.

Also Present: Carole Sutherland, CP Coordinator

Absent: Nicole Goldman, Paul Glynn

Items on BOS agenda for review and discussion:

- Present State of Affordable Housing in Falmouth
- Roundtable Presentation/Discussion - Continuing to Build an Affordable Housing Production Process that is Right for Falmouth
- Background Information, Challenges, Collaboration
- Improvements Moving Forward

Documents used during meeting:

Falmouth Housing Production Plan Slide Presentation (5 pages)

Chair Russell Robbins opened the CPC meeting at 7:40 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, Town Hall.

Peter Johnson-Staub provided overview remarks regarding the need for affordable housing in Falmouth. He presented information from the 2018 *Housing Production Plan* (HPP) regarding affordable housing development, such as zoning and production strategies.

Carla Feroni, Housing Coordinator, presented information about the Falmouth Affordable Housing Fund (FAHF) using slides that included its history, the addition of the housing coordinator position, the accomplishments she has overseen since 2018, funding activities from 2018 – present, and a listing of short-term goals, one of which was the need to seek additional revenue sources for the FAHF besides CPA funding.

Tom Bott, Town Planner, orally covered information encompassing 40B and 40R projects, the LIP process, zoning issues, and permitting. He said the town needs to “get busy on how to activate LIP in Falmouth.”

BOS Chairman Su Moran asked about expediting the housing application process and clarifying or updating policies that govern it, such as rolling applications vs. funding rounds for applications. Further comment about the application process was offered by Karen Bissonnette from Falmouth Housing Trust and Alisa Galazzi from Housing Assistance Corporation, both of whom advocated for rolling applications. Peter Johnson-Staub offered information on the features of each process.

Other areas of comment were 1) strategies to incentivize affordable housing construction, such as tax abatements to landlords for year round vs. seasonal rentals, and 2) zoning for multi-family housing. Two Falmouth residents commented that 1) it's time for the town to focus on constructing housing instead of acquiring more open space, and 2) it's time to focus attention on who the town's consumers are and that they need housing. Selectman Megan English-Braga commented on the need to dispel fear in the community surrounding affordable housing through laying a better informational groundwork, and being pro-active through outreach to the community. Linda Clark from Falmouth Housing Corporation

thanked the town for all it has done to facilitate the Spring Bars Road housing project (Little Pond Place) and 587 Gifford St., and re-iterated the value of a streamlined application and permitting process. Ms. Clark also listed out the categories of renters (% of AMI) who live in the FHC's mixed use development at 704 Main St.

John Druley, representing the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) and the FAHF Working Group, spoke about the possibility of the town's taking out a bond for housing as it did for open space years ago. He said CPA funding could be used to pay down a housing bond now that the Land Bank debt payoff will be secured through reserved CPA funds after November 2019. But, he added, the biggest problem regarding housing construction in Falmouth is that there is no appetite for it. He said that no matter what changes are made to zoning and other processes, Town Meeting needs to pass it, and there has to be an appetite for it in order to have that happen.

Jessica O'Brien from the Affordable Housing Committee announced a Housing Summit on affordable housing at the Hermann Meeting Room at the Falmouth Public Library in October, 2019.

Chairman Moran thanked attendees for their participation in this joint meeting.

Adjourn: 9:10

Submitted by: Carole Sutherland, CP Coordinator