

Mountain Lakes meeting on Affordable Housing

June 18, 2015

Attending: Borough Planner Paul Phillips, Manager Rich Sheola, Blair Bravo, Steve Shaw, Jim Bailey, Sandy Batty, Mayor Doug McWilliams

Mr. Phillips reported that the Borough Council has directed him to draft a Housing Element and Fair Share plan to be incorporated into the Borough's Master Plan. He has reviewed the Borough submissions for first and second round certification, and the prepared (but not submitted) plan from 2010. He will be updating the information with the 2010 census data.

The group was assembled at the request of the Borough Council because of their present and/or former positions held in the borough, their institutional knowledge, and prior work with the Borough's Master Plan. The group is to assist Mr. Phillips as he develops the plan.

The NJ Supreme Court did not rule out doing a vacant land adjustment. Steve pointed out that the Borough's vacant land list was done recently.

The big question in preparing our report is what will be the number of affordable units that the Borough is responsible for. The latest Fair Share Housing number developed by David Kinsey was 265 for Mountain Lakes. COAH's growth share number before the courts took over, was 7. The huge disparity makes it difficult to decide on a number to commit to. Both Kinsey and Burchell's assumptions and methodology have been questioned. Fair Share will probably challenge the numbers that towns use in the plans filed by the July 8 Court deadline.

We need to do a complying plan that is defensible. Perhaps we don't need to state a specific number in what we submit.

Paul and Blair agreed that we can file a Declaratory Judgment but that Mountain Lakes doesn't have to meet the July 8 deadline because it didn't submit a plan for the third round rules.

In the meantime, Paul will be working on the available land resources.

Steve will ask Cindy for a copy of the 2010 report and circulate it to the group. Blair will provide a PDF of the Housing and Community Development Network's guidebook on Developing Municipal Housing Plans.

We will have a future meeting in about four weeks, after July 8 but before the July 27 Council Meeting. The group will discuss vacant land in the Borough.