

Mtn. Lakes Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
January 12, 2023
Meeting Minutes

Present: Tom Chiang, Mitchell Stern, Bob Oostdyk, Borough Attorney; Sandy Batty, Community Member; Sueanne Sylvester, Community Member and HPC Liaison; Cynthia Korman, Chris Cannon, Khizar Sheikh - Council Members.

Tom Chiang called the meeting to order.

The December Meeting Minutes were approved as written

Discussion Item:

- **ML's Highlands Conformance Implementation Plan and Schedule** - Cynthia stated that the Borough Council will appoint the Affordable Housing planner at its next meeting in January. We will get scope of work for the planner position.

The Borough Council approved the petition of conformance with the Highlands Regional Master Plan. The Highlands Council (HC) developed an implementation plan for the Borough, which will allow us to apply for grants. We agreed that we should ask for funding for our housing plan. Sandy suggested we wait a few months to meet with the planner until the HC position on affordable housing is fully developed.

Bob Oostdyk said we might need to update our vacant land adjustment. Our next plan should include the new veterans housing and the senior housing at Sunrise that was not already accounted for.

Cynthia said the NJ Legislature has a bill to change the Affordable Housing deadlines and the ways the State will determine numbers.

- **Boro Blast Update** - Tom drafted an item for the Borough Blast about the availability of \$20,000 in grant money to support accessory apartments. He sent it to Bob, Cynthia and Khizar and will send to the rest of the committee and Mitchell for approval.

If we don't give out the grant money, it gets rolled over to our subsequent plan. We could change the plan to use the money in other ways to achieve affordable housing.

Sueanne raised the issue of the apartment over Hapgoods. She would like to see if the current occupant would qualify under our affordable housing plan. She will send information to Bob, and he can forward to our consultant.

Old Business

Cynthia said the Borough Council reestablished the AHAC at its last meeting and named Tom as a full member. The Committee is supposed to have nine members – three Council members, one planning board, three public, and two alternate members. Tom will ask the planning board and zoning board for suggestions on who might serve.

The Borough Council approved the CGP&H contract at its Jan. 3 meeting. Cynthia had asked them to provide information on rental rates. She suggested asking them to come to one of our meetings to answer questions, such as rates for apartments, how landlords of accessory apartments can control who rents their space, and other ways to meet our obligations.

The committee discussed if in the future we could reduce the ten-year restriction on accessory apartments – could this be an element in our next Fair Share Plan? Other parameters might help us create accessory apartments.

Landlords have ways to protect their rights. Sueanne said that a potential renter's credit ratings and any legal judgments are available. We can let potential landlords know our consultant CGP&H will thoroughly vet the renters.

The meeting was adjourned

Next Meeting- February 16, 2024, 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.