

Mtn. Lakes Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Meeting
February 16, 2024

Committee members present: Bob Oostdyk, Borough Attorney; Sandy Batty, Community Member; Tom Chiang, Community Member and Chair; Cynthia Korman, Chris Cannon, Khizar Sheikh - Council Members.

Public: Steve Castellucci

1. **Welcome.** Tom Chiang opened the meeting.

2. **January Meeting Minutes.** Corrected to say the Highlands Council “is developing” rather than “developed.” Minutes approved as corrected

3. **Administrative Agent.** Bob will talk with Mitchell about asking our Administrative Agent, CGP&H, to our meeting. We would want their perspective a number of issues, such as the pending legislation and the process for choosing tenants, including what role the landlord might have.

4. **Discussion Item**

- ***Status on Affordable Housing legislation*** The Legislature has proposed to have the courts continue their role in implementation. The state would develop the methodology for determining municipal obligations. It might have minimal or no impact on Mountain Lakes, because our obligation numbers are already so high. However, the legislature might change the vacant land adjustment, which could impact the Borough. We should object if the legislation proposes to change the current environmental protections.

A concern is that the legislation is moving too fast for such a complex issue. Khizar will draft a letter and circulate to the committee to decide whether to send. The law will probably be challenged, which will result in delays in implementation. Municipalities have chosen to opt of the process, and we could do this, but we would lose the immunity from builder’s remedy suits. Mountain Lakes has continued to plan for opportunities for affordable housing to meet its obligation.

It was mentioned that one of the goals of Economic Development Advisory Committee is redevelopment on 46 East. This might be a good place for affordable housing, and we should consider recommendations for EDAC. EDAC is organizing a meeting-and-greet for business owners in town. We could see if they are interested in redeveloping for housing. There are two larger vacant properties on 46 East, currently with no approved plans, but redevelopment possibilities are being discussed

Time line. At this point we should be thinking of housing opportunities, though it’s too early to develop on next plan.

Membership Steve Castellucci was approved by the Borough Council as alternate member #1.

5. **Old Business**

Tom emailed to Cindy Shaw to ask if there was anyone on the planning board or zoning board who would want to serve on the AHAC. Tom will follow up.

6. Other

Steve Castellucci asked about the annual report that CGP&H prepares and files. Plan was filed, and so we should ask CGP&H about the reporting process when they come to our meeting. Numbers are assigned by state, and municipalities need to develop plans to meet obligations. By the end of the current round, if we haven't gotten an accessory apartment, we will have to address how we will meet this continuing obligation in the next round.

9. Adjourn and Next Meeting- March 8, 2024, 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.