

## Housing Subcommittee Meeting Notes

February 1, 2021

6:00 – 7:00 pm (ZOOM)

Members/Public Present:

Pam Brangan, Chair

Alicia Simmons

Julie Gaboriault

Cara Thanassi

Casey McNeil

Dean Pierce, Director of Planning and Zoning, Town of Shelburne

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Agenda – approved upon motion by Casey McNeil and second by Alicia Simmons.

3. Approval of Minutes from November 2 – approved upon motion by Casey McNeil and second by Alicia Simmons.

4. David Mullin – Green Mountain Habitat (GMH) spoke to us about the organization.

GMH is an associate of Habitat for Humanity International. GMH operates on the principle that families deserve decent affordable housing; helping families build equity and break the cycle of poverty. GMH has been around for 36 years. GMH is entirely funded by local donation; VT Housing and Conservation Board is a major contributor, providing grants to keep housing affordable.

Labor on projects is almost entirely volunteer with 300-400 volunteers working on each house. GMH builds housing for families that don't qualify for financing but lack capital, not earning potential. Projects include single family, duplexes, triplexes, and four-plexes, primarily within Chittenden County and, preferably, close to mass transit. Families receiving houses must be at or below 80% of median income; and must be willing to partner (400 hours of sweat equity on a Habitat project, but not necessarily their house). A covenant on each property ensures perpetual affordability. In most cases, mortgage, tax and insurance is less than the owners were previously paying in rent.

What GMH needs:

GMH is always looking for land. Only twice land has been donated; otherwise it is typically acquired at market rate. It is becoming more and more difficult to find land that can be built on. GMH needs outreach efforts that Habitat is looking for land.

Some towns and cities (Burlington, e.g.) waive some fees to make projects more affordable. Some towns have housing trust funds, which can help (Charlotte provides \$10,000 per unit, e.g.). Zoning can be prohibitive.

Communities are limited in what they can do but can reduce minimum lot size zoning requirement. If a town allows a single family house, for example, it would be helpful to allow for duplex on same size piece of land.

The Shelburne housing subcommittee might consider broaching the subject of allowing duplexes on smaller lots in Shelburne. Concern about changing the fabric of an existing neighborhood.

5. Next steps for subcommittee – consider putting forth the duplex resolution to the Planning Commission again.

Continue from January 4, 2021 meeting: Housing subcommittee members will plan to review the town plan and zoning requirements before the next meeting as well as the following reports on Transit-Oriented Development:

[https://studiesandreports.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/VT15\\_TOD\\_complete.pdf](https://studiesandreports.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/VT15_TOD_complete.pdf)

[https://studiesandreports.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/TOD\\_for\\_ChittendenCounty\\_2002.pdf](https://studiesandreports.ccrpcvt.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/TOD_for_ChittendenCounty_2002.pdf)

6. Dean provided an update on housing. No new projects. Act 250 permit in place on former Gardenside Nursery, so that project will move forward. Route 7 Deli project preliminary – 8 units proposed and will need to be subdivided from Deli; some traffic safety issues raised by neighborhood residents.

7. Pam shared an email from Town of Essex Housing Committee, asking for input based on a few questions; Pam will reply to the email summarizing our responses as discussed and cc subcommittee.

8. Meeting adjourned. Next meeting will be held via zoom – Monday, March 1, 2020 at 6:00PM.