

## **Housing Committee Meeting Minutes**

**February 4, 2019**

### *Members Present:*

Pam Brangan, chair  
Mark Brooks, secretary  
Ron Bouchard  
Casey McNeil  
Brian Precourt  
Dean Pierce, Director of Planning & Zoning

*Members Absent:* None

### *Guests:*

Michael Monte, Chief Operations & Financial Officer, Champlain Housing Trust

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm with approval of the agenda and the minutes from the January 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### Accessory Apartment Zoning Amendment

Pam led discussion of the planning commission's response to the recommended accessory apartment zoning amendment. While most of the commissioners appeared to be in favor of the amendment, there was concern that the 1,500 SF maximum size was too large.

Dean pointed out that the town's definition of an accessory apartment states that it will have "... a total floor area of 1,500 square feet or smaller". The definition further states that the floor area will consist of "... all floors within the apartment, plus any affiliated areas intended primarily for the use of the apartment occupant(s). Such areas may include personal storage areas, porches and decks, and garages, or parts thereof". Since inclusion of these affiliated areas essentially reduces the maximum amount of living space, the committee concluded that the 1,500 SF maximum size is not too large. The amendment will be brought to the planning commission for a vote when all commissioners are scheduled to be present.

### Housing Booklet Update

Casey updated the formatting of the housing booklet to make it more readable and professional. Pam recommended keeping a link in the booklet to the ECOS plan as the information it contains is being updated. Pam will also look into providing information from housingdata.org regarding household tenure by age.

Some of the building permit data in the booklet, provided by housingdata.org, was not consistent with permit information that Dean has. The data will be compared to see if the variance is significant and what data is considered the most reliable.

In the tables summarizing housing units and building permits, the Vermont state-wide data will be removed. The population table will keep the state-wide figures. Pam and Casey will continue to work on the update of the housing booklet.

#### Incentivizing Affordable Housing

Michael Monte attended the meeting at Ron's invitation to provide perspective on how developers can be best motivated to incorporate affordable housing units in their projects.

Michael stated that one of the best ways to foster more affordable housing development is through more clarity and certainty in the permitting process. The Town should decide where projects incorporating affordable units should be located. Lowering developers' up-front costs is also important. Ensuring that all necessary infrastructure is in place is a significant benefit to the developers.

Non-profit developers need up-front capital and larger projects are more efficient financially. Density bonuses for affordable housing are recommended. Michael does not think that tax breaks are a good way to incent development as they are not a good precedent and other developers will expect tax breaks.

Providing capital to housing trust funds is best when tied to a percentage of a reliable funding source. A county-wide housing trust fund may be the most efficient as small towns like Shelburne would have trouble raising enough funds to provide adequate incentives to an affordable housing project.

Other Business: None

The next meeting is scheduled for February 25 at 6:00.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.