

AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOARD MEETING
LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP MUNICIPAL BUILDING
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE ROOM

July 15, 2010

The following are the minutes of the Affordable Housing Board meeting, which was held on July 15, 2010, in the Lawrence Township Municipal Building Community Development Conference Room.

Statement of Proper Notice

Adequate notice of the regular meeting of the Lawrence Township Affordable Housing Board has been provided by filing an annual meeting schedule with the Municipal Clerk, and by filing the agenda with the Municipal Clerk, posting prominently in the Municipal Building, and mailing to the Trenton Times, the Trentonian and the Lawrence Ledger.

The roll was called as follows at 7:30 PM:

Present: Chairman Kevin Van Hise, Skip Conover, Christopher Pangaldi, Theresa Birch, and Vice-Chairwoman Barbara Lavine

Absent:

Excused Absence: Rachel Cotrino and James Kownacki, Council Liaison

Also Present: Andrew Link, Principal Planner/Business Advocate

Approval of Minutes

The May minutes were approved as submitted.

Public Comment

None

Overview of Affordable Housing in NJ– Kevin Van Hise

Chairman Van Hise updated the Board on the changes in affordable housing at the State level. The Senate quickly passed its bill eliminating COAH and turning its responsibilities over to the Office of State Planning. The Assembly bill is stalled in committee until at least August. Whatever happens, COAH and Regional Contribution Agreements will be eliminated. There is dissension among the Senate and Assembly Democrats. The delay in the Assembly allows the uncertainty to continue. Developers are reluctant to proceed with commercial projects until they know if they will be assessed development fees for affordable housing. Also, the Courts are reluctant to proceed with hearing challenges to the existing regulations. If they void the regulations then they will be in the position of having to devise alternative approaches. Whatever happens, Lawrence Township is in a good position since it already has more than 7-1/2% of its housing stock in affordable housing, has multiple housing types, and has COAH approval. These are the three criteria, anyone of which may be used to validate affordable housing programs.

Affordable Housing Resources

Chairman Van Hise asked Andrew Link if there were any likely issues that may be brought to the Board from the public. Mr. Link replied that the annual recertification has been completed. A series of four letters were sent out to applicants. Those that did not respond are being taken off the list. This is likely to generate some future complaints. In regard to vacancies of affordable units, Mr. Link noted that it has become more difficult for sellers, especially at the high end of the price range. This may reflect the increased difficulty in the ability of buyers to get a mortgage.

Other Business

The Board canceled the August 19 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

The next meeting will be held on September 16, 2010.

J. Andrew Link
Principal Planner