

Affordable Housing Board Meeting
Thursday, October 18, 2012
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The following are the minutes of the Affordable Housing Board meeting, which was held on Thursday, October 18, 2012 in the Community Development Conference Room, located in the Lawrence Township Municipal Building.

I. 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.

Present: William Capell, Peter Ferrone, John Masso, Susan McCloskey, Kevin VanHise, Jean Washington, Walker Ristau

Absent: None

Excused Absence: None

Also Present: James Kownacki, Council Liaison, Andrew Link, Liaison;
Susan Snook, Secretary

II. Approval of Minutes:

The July 19, 2012 minutes were approved as amended by unanimous vote.

III. Public Comment:

None

IV. Housing Rehabilitation Program

Mr. Link stated that the Township took \$350,000 from the Affordable Housing Trust fund and made it into a grant to rehabilitate units for income eligible households. The Township hired a consultant to manage this rehab program and is sending out applications and reviewing applications and has one (1) household that is ready to move forward. The first step is to have the Township in-house inspectors go through the unit and identify the deficiencies and code violations; health and safety issues and the Consultant will have another person do the same type of work and will transfer that into specifications to be bid out.

It is set up as a ten (10) year forgivable loan; the first \$10,000 is forgiven after 10 years and anything in excess of that will be paid back when the property title is transferred.

V. Status of Changes at State Level:

Chairperson VanHise explained the appellate division did not grant an injunction to the State to cease taking the funds; however, that COAH needed to provide the process, where it is to send a letter out to the Township and asking how much money was at issue, allowing the Township to demonstrate how it was committed to spend those funds and it had to provide due process for the Township's to contest it.

Status of Changes at State Level (continued):

The State sent out letters to the Township's and it stated that the Townships had to provide to them some information and records showing how much that particular Township has at risk; have to show there is a commitment and here are some ways you can do that otherwise you can transfer the funds by August 12th or 13th.

However, the State was sued by the League of Municipalities, including other Townships, the Fair Share Housing went back to the appellate division and was successful in getting an opinion that COAH had no authority to send the letter out because COAH as a board, never met and to seize the funds. If COAH wants to do this, they have to meet and as of today, this has not happened.

The Supreme Court is going to host argument on November 7th regarding all the COAH rules.

VI. Other Business:

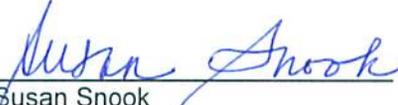
Mr. Link explained how the sales of affordable units are doing. Mr. Link stated the key is to be flexible with the asking price. The maximum price is set as when the unit is bought and the purchase price. Every year the State issues an increase which is applied to every year that someone has owned a unit to establish the new maximum sale price. There is never a negative increase. An owner is allowed to sell it for that maximum price; they cannot take anything over the maximum sale price that is set.

Units that are high moderates are very close or even more on the open market; buyers in that price range have a lot of choices, also in the regular market. Therefore, it is a lot more difficult to sell those types of units. Those buyers have to be flexible in their pricing to get their units to move. The low units, especially in the lower category, sell more readily.

Overall houses are selling; still issues on foreclosures because of not paying Homeowners Association dues; so liens are being applied against the units for failure to pay dues to economic climate.

VII. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40. The next meeting will be held on November 15, 2012.


Susan Snook
Secretary

SJS

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