

**Affordable Housing Board Meeting**  
**Thursday, January 16, 2014**

The following are the minutes of the Affordable Housing Board meeting, which was held on Thursday, January 16, 2014 in the Community Development Conference Room, located in the Lawrence Township Municipal Building.

**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.

**Opening of Meeting/Roll Call:**

**Present:** Peter Ferrone, Susan McCloskey, Kevin VanHise, Jean Washington, Walker Ristau

**Absent:** John Masso

**Excused Absence:** None

**Also Present:** J. Andrew Link, Principal Planner, James Kownacki, Council Liaison; Susan Snook, Secretary

**Election of Officers:**

Mr. Link opened up the floor for nominations for Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson:

Peter Ferrone nominated Kevin VanHise as chairperson, seconded by Susan McCloskey. No other nominations, Kevin VanHise was unanimously elected Chairperson.

Susan McCloskey nominated John Masso and seconded by Peter Ferrone. Mr. Masso was unanimously elected Vice Chairperson.

**Approval of Minutes:**

The October 17, 2012 minutes were approved as submitted by unanimous vote.

**Approval of 2014 Meeting Schedule:**

The meeting schedule was tabled. The current meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month; however, in order for Mr. VanHise to be chairperson, because of another conflict with a meeting; the Board decided to move the meeting night to the fourth Thursday of each month.

Therefore, the next meeting will be held on February 27, 2014.

**Public Comment:**

None

Affordable Housing Board Meeting  
Thursday, January 16, 2014  
Page 2

**Hardship Waiver Application and Criteria:**

Mr. Masso prepared an application, see attached.

Chairperson VanHise questioned about the applicant that was supposed to come in front of the Board. Mr. Link stated he did not hear from them since his last e-mail and stated they asked to come to the January meeting. Mr. Link told them it was a reorganization meeting and did not think the Board would be ready to hear them at that meeting and Mr. Link suggested the February meeting which was back in December and has not heard from them yet.

Mr. Link did not think that a motion had to be made to adopt the application and that as we go along the Board members might see changes that have to be made.

Mr. Link will send it to the applicant and have them complete it and try to get some feedback to see if they intend to go ahead with it.

Chairperson VanHise stated the only change would be a change to the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday and if the Board members have any suggestions or changes to shoot Mr. Link an e-mail. The application will be a work in progress.

Ms. McCloskey asked if an applicant did come in and it is discussed; do we then pause the meeting and look it over or talk about it and get back to the applicant. Mr. Link stated the application must be submitted at least 20 days before the meeting and then Mr. Link will circulate it to everyone for the Board members to review it.

Chairperson VanHise stated that we could not go into a closed session; it is where the applicant would make their case and would we be granting it that night or would it be on a case by case basis. If they have all the information, then the Board could grant it that night. Chairperson VanHise stated that we would not want to really codify a policy; we would just want to react as we need to.

Mr. Link stated he feels the Board is not compelled to do it at that meeting and should take whatever time is necessary to consider the application.

**FHA Loans and Affordable Units:**

Chairperson VanHise stated that one of the last hardship waivers request that we received there was some dissatisfaction that the Township Board did not counsel the homeowner that a potential purchaser would not be able to qualify for FHA loan because of the restrictions that were in place. They were also not satisfied with the answer that says all we do is qualify a purchaser and it is up to the purchaser can pay cash, an inheritance and it is really on the purchaser. They may qualify through a credit union and that has nothing to do with the Township.

It is not something that we can do because we do not have contact with banks. It is on the purchaser and then they were applying for a hardship waiver because they could not find a purchaser who qualified for a mortgage. Are there programs that the Township is willing to entertain, whether it is a down payment assistance or a mortgage; but with the development at the State level; the Township may not be in a position to comment funds to those things until we know what the rules are going to be and what the requirements are going to be because we need those resources for construction of new units and anything else the Township might have.

Affordable Housing Board Meeting  
Thursday, January 16, 2014  
Page 3

Chairperson VanHise explained that if the Township has a down payment assistance program there is a lot that goes into it; like will it have to be paid back and if so, when and is it like a second mortgage. If you create it as a mortgage based program then does that affect the real number because they have the first mortgage and now the municipality has the second mortgage and it is not something that you just create. Once you allocate the funds for a program, now the funds are not available.

**Status of Changes at State Level**

Chairperson VanHise stated that the New Jersey Supreme Court did come out with its ruling; invalidate the rules and for the reasons of the Appellate Division did. So under the Fair Housing act, the statutes that are in place growth shares a methodology is build as you go is invalid. However, as a methodology, they are not going to rule on, it's for the legislature to enact changes to the statute which would actually allow those types of methodology.

COAH has until the end of February to come out with the new rules. COAH is still processing the paperwork for the Affordable Housing Trust Funds submissions that were done in the summer. At the end of December, the Fair Share Housing filed a motion with the Appellate Division seeking to have a special master appointed to create rules for COAH because COAH is not doing anything and also seeking in conjunction with or in lieu of that all of the builder's lawsuits be negated.

Chairperson VanHise continued to discuss the changes at the State level and COAH. Councilman Kownacki stated that we have met the third round and we have more units that we were supposed to have and have a surplus. The Township would not have to worry unless the number changes.

**Other Business:**

Councilman Kownacki thanked the Board members for their service on this Board.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:26 p.m. The next meeting will be held on February 27, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

  
Susan Snook  
Secretary