

**Affordable Housing Board Meeting
Thursday, July 23, 2015**

The following are the minutes of the Affordable Housing Board meeting, which was held on Thursday, July 23, 2015 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, and the Trentonian.

I. Opening of Meeting/Roll Call:

Present: Peter Ferrone, Susan McCloskey, Kevin VanHise, Jean Washington

Absent: Murali Mallampati, Jessica Ann Clifford,
James Kownacki, Council Liaison

Excused Absence: Susan Snook, Secretary

Also Present: J. Andrew Link, Principal Planner

II. Approval of Minutes:

The June 25, 2015 minutes were approved as submitted by unanimous vote.

III. Public Comment:

None

IV. Housing Rehabilitation Program Update:

Mr. Link stated that there are no changes and there are three units under construction. There will be three additional projects in the future plus there is 217 Fountayne Lane that the Township owns and will be rehabilitating it in the future.

Chairperson VanHise asked Mr. Link what our obligation was in this current round. Mr. Link stated it might be 100 and not positive and stated we have been active doing rehabilitation work and if that counts for something then we are okay.

Mr. Ferrone asked how in the past it was done. Chairperson VanHise stated you had a defined period of time and had the 6 year round or the 10 year done and during that time, as long as you had the funds available and were showing you were marketing it and they gave you credit for the active program and when you did the units, that would count as your obligation. The problem is now that the rounds started in 1999 and if it goes 10-years from new, if you did something in 2000, it gets rehabilitated again, the Courts are not able to ask those types of questions at the present time. It is a revolving type of program, funds are available and they have to apply. All the efforts are satisfaction toward the obligation; however, we will see when the Courts move forward.

V. Township Actions (53 Joyner Court and 12 Mendrey Court):

Mr. Link stated:

53 Joyner Court is still for sale. There was some interest and had one offer; it was pretty low and we counter offered what Council has approved from the previous person who was interested; their offer was \$92,000 and we counter offered at \$110,000 and we are asking \$116,000.00 and we never heard back from them. In the meantime, there is more interest from some people on the list recently.

12 Mendrey Court stated it is the one that the homeowner is not living there and is checked every now and then and it doesn't seem that anybody is living there. Our attorney sent them a letter recently stating that they have to correct the violation of the ordinance within 30-days or the Township will take action against them which gives them to August 19, 2015 to correct the issue. Ms. Washington asked if they are paying for every month. Mr. Link stated he believes they are current with their taxes and homeowners association fees, so it not understood why they want it to remain vacant. Mr. Link stated they were renting it. Ms. Washington stated that is illegal.

217 Fountayne Lane is another unit the Township owns and we are still in the process of preparing the write up. There was problem because the owner built a deck in the back, which they applied for the permits, our Construction Office had a lot of comments to their application and they never replied to the comments, but went ahead and built the deck. In order to get the house to pass inspection, we had an engineer to inspect the deck to determine if it was built soundly and he will prepare a report. It sounds like the deck is reasonably okay. Once the report is completed and the work items are done, it will get it out to bid and sell to an income eligible person, which is a 3-bedroom low unit located in Liberty Green and is a popular development. There should be no trouble trying to sell this unit. Ms. McCloskey stated there was a Township lien against it and Council approved cancelling it and once signed it will be sent to the County for filing.

VI. Status of Changes at State Level:

Chairperson VanHise stated not much has occurred. The Township did file an action seeking protection. The idea is that Townships can apply to the court that we want immunity and we have a plan and to certify it or we need some time to fix the plan and will submit the new plan and if the Judge is satisfied with the plan and obligation then we will get immunity from the builder's remedy for whatever period of time the Judge is setting and anticipating it will be the 10-year period.

All applications were filed between June 8th and July 8th. The Township filed with July 7th. There were a lot of debates what the forms looked like; we heard little back from the Mercer County Judge Jacobson. The problem currently there is no COAH or rules and trying to fit rules for 20 – 30 years ago. Chairperson VanHise explained to the Board members about the system and procedures.

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Chairperson VanHise stated that one of the builders in Ewing Township has filed a suit against Ewing Township over the Mount Laurel stuff, so if one Town files it could be a detriment to the rest of the Townships. Mr. Roskos, who represents Lawrence Township, filed a letter in the Ewing Township matter stating before you proceed on that, because what is decided on there could impact Lawrence Township and Chairperson VanHise is also doing the same for Princeton, Hopewell Township, Hopewell Borough, Pennington Borough as well as other Attorneys for other Townships. There are no procedures, no practices, no rules, and no laws just that the Supreme Court has indicated that these cases should move very quickly.

Chairperson VanHise spoke about Dr. Robert Burchell is being retained for a group of about 200 municipalities and attorneys who is asking for \$2,000.00 and have created a fund and been hired to come up with a new methodology somewhat similar to what was done under COAH. The Builders Association is not hiring their own experts and will be relying on Dr. David Kinsey. Dr. Burchell calculated a statewide need of about 50,000 units over the next 10 year period on the calculations he ran for COAH. Dr. Kinsey did a calculation for the next 10 years of an obligation of about 202,000 and in the practical sense that means over the last 30 years the state wide produced about 50,000 affordable housing units and under Dr. Kinsey's methodology he is anticipating the need will be for 200,000 units for the next 10 years. Putting 20% aside that would generate a million housing units in the State over the next 10 years when we have a declining population and jobs. These are some of the issues that the municipalities are struggling with.

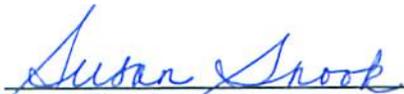
Mr. Link stated we are in pretty good shape because in the last third round growth share we produced a plan and got approved and always tried to stay ahead of the game and followed the rules. The thinking is because we have done that and historically we have been providing our fair share of affordable housing that we are in a good position and could comply with whatever it turns out to be or our obligation is.

Other Business:

None

The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.



Susan Snook
Secretary

SJS

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