

**BARNSTEAD PLANNING BOARD**

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2015 @ 7:00**

**BARNSTEAD TOWN HALL**

**WORK SESSION MINUTES**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Nancy Carr, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.
2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** All present rose and joined in the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag.
3. **ROLE CALL:** Nancy Carr, Chair; Elaine Swinford, Vice Chair; Karen Schacht, Secretary; David Kerr, Selectboard's Representative; David Allen, Member; Katherine Preston, Member; Chris Carazzo, Alternate; Dana Frenette, Alternate; Sharen Hodgdon, Alternate.
4. **SENIOR HOUSING INFORMATION: PRESENTATION BY GEORGE O. REAGAN, NEW HAMPSHIRE HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY (NHHFA) AND SAL STEVEN HUBBARD, LACONIA AREA LAND TRUST (LALT)**

Mr. Reagan presented that the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority (NHHFA), the organization he represents, is involved with a number of housing issues and programs in New Hampshire. This includes a home ownership program, a tax credit program for construction of multi-family housing, assisted living housing, and a rental housing voucher program. He explained that the NH Center for Public Policy Studies (NHCPPS) has done a lot of research about the housing needs in New Hampshire and is keeping track of both historic and developing demographic and housing trends. According to their study the population in New Hampshire is aging, and NH has the fourth oldest median age in the country. It is projected that the NH population between the ages of 65 and 74 will double within the next 20 years. This will have a major impact on the housing needs of a changing population. NH has also experienced changes in available housing stock, due to the over building of 3 and 4 bedroom homes in the 1980's. Surveys have shown that most people over 45 years of age would like to remain in their homes as long as they can or at least to transition to a more supportive and affordable, "down sized" living arrangement within their community. These options are referred to as aging in place and aging in community. Mr. Reagan explained that options to be considered include: accessory dwelling units for multiple generations of families to share a property and financial and maintenance responsibilities; retrofitting large houses to duplex or

multi-unit dwellings, while maintaining the rural character of the property; co-housing, where a mixed age group would share a property with individual private living spaces and shared common areas; open space development, incorporating universal, one floor design and more.

There was some discussion on the issue:

- a. Ms. Swinford expressed that there have been some successful conversions of Victorian homes to multi-family housing with no change to the outward appearance of the property.
- b. Ms. Preston stated that there would need to be an upgrade to the septic systems in order to convert a single family home to a multi-family dwelling.
- c. There was a question. Mr. Reagan explained that the difference between multi-unit housing and co-housing is that multi-units are individual independent units, where co-housing is a combination of individual units within a common property with shared spaces for such things as dining and recreation.
- d. Mr. Shearer stated that he was part of the 2002 Master Planning effort. He explained that the concept of co-housing came from Scandinavia, and has been practiced on the west coast.

Ms. Sal Steven Hubbard, the Housing Development Coordinator for the Laconia Area Land Trust (LALT), presented the work that the Trust does in developing affordable housing options in the Lakes Region. The Trust has projects in Meredith, Tilton, Wolfeboro, and Franklin. The LALT is looking to work on local housing projects in additional municipalities in the lakes region. She concurred with the issues expressed by Mr. Reagan relative to changes in the demographic make-up and housing needs in NH. She explained that her program works with municipalities to develop affordable housing solutions for mixed ages. The Trust recognizes that many older people are on a fixed income and ready to down size. Also, there are many younger people in the population that require housing options, but may not yet be ready to buy a home. She explained that these housing needs could be addressed by a mixed age housing project. Most LALT projects utilize Universal Design Standards and include single floor housing. Ms. Steven Hubbard explained that the type of project that she was describing would only be feasible for at least 18 units. The LALT is interested in working with the Town of Barnstead to explore potential elderly or mixed age housing options.

There was discussion on the issue:

- a. Ms. Swinford noted that Barnstead is the grayest town in the state of New Hampshire.
- b. Ms. Carr inquired as to whether the housing units would be individual or attached within a joint building. Ms. Steven Hubbard responded that a variety of options can be considered, based upon community assets and priorities. An LALT project in Wolfeboro received an AIA award for design.

- c. Ms. Preston commented that mixed age housing would be positive, as many older people would welcome the opportunity to live with younger people.
- d. Mr. Shearer spoke that he feels that co-housing is a positive option. He served on the 2002 Master Plan Committee. He noted that co-housing was a Scandinavian concept that has worked very well there. He cited #6 in the zoning ordinance.
- e. Mr. Allen asked about the time frame within which LALT would be able to work with the Town of Barnstead. Ms. Steven Hubbard responded that they are currently working on a number of projects in different towns. The time frame for working with Barnstead would be dependent on the schedules for their other projects, funding availability, and the time that it would take to secure local approvals in accordance with the requirements of the zoning, site plan review and subdivision regulations. It could be possibly a year and a half after local approval of the project to ground breaking. It could possibly be another year and a half for occupation of a project. Mr. Reagan explained that the scoring criteria for NHFFA funding for a project includes access to transportation for medical and shopping needs. These services are limited in Barnstead.
- f. Ms. Schacht asked if LALT works with sustainable design, and incorporating energy efficiency in their projects. Ms. Steven Hubbard explained that there is solar hot water and the common lighting is solar powered for the project in Tilton. The project in Meredith has been awarded a Leadership in Energy and Environmental design (LEED) Gold certification, and LALT has been recognized as a green organization by a national group.
- g. Ms. Hodgdon inquired as to how rent is determined in these projects. Mr. Reagan responded that rents are determined by income status. Builders of these projects usually rely on taking advantage of the Low Income Housing Tax Credits. This limits incomes to at or below 60% of the median income. The rent would be by 30% of the highest income in that range.

Chair Carr asked for questions or comments from the members of the public that were present at the meeting.

- a. Mr. Lane explained that he is faced with financially challenging issues He lives in his home alone. He is a Senior Companion in Barnstead, and provides valuable services to the residents of the town. He wants to be included in the community and is willing to serve on a housing committee.
- b. Mr. Shearer asked about ownership of the property. Ms. Steven Hubbard replied that for LALT projects, there is a limited partnership, where the Land Trust maintains control over management of the property. There would most likely be restrictions on use of the property. The discussion turned to which type of housing would be preferred by the citizens of Barnstead, funded housing with restrictions vs. privately funded housing without restrictions.

- c. Ms. Swinford inquired about Section 8 Housing. Mr. Reagan responded that current applicants for that type of assistance are on an 8 year waiting list. Rural Development funds have not been available for low income housing for about 3 years.
- d. Mr. Allen inquired as to how to get information about the different low income options for the Town of Barnstead and to find out what the citizens of Barnstead would like to pursue. Mr. Reagan suggested a town wide survey. He mentioned that the City of Franklin held a community forum.
- e. Chair Carr asked what the members of the public would prefer as future housing options. The Wheelers and Mr. Miller stated that they wish to remain in their homes for as long as they can. The Wheelers have a written agreement to jointly share their property with family members, so that they can remain in their home. Mr. Lane expressed that he would like to remain in his home, but was overburdened by the local property taxes. Ms. McConaghy expressed the desire to down-size, and believes that a number of aging Barnstead residents would also like to do the same.
- f. Ms. Steven Hubbard made reference to the Moore Center in Manchester, NH. The Center has a program that matches older people with younger people for mutually beneficial housing agreements.
- g. Chair Carr explained that having the housing discussion at the work session was the idea of the former board member Mr. Andy Houle. She would like to form a committee to study the issues further. Ms. Swinford, Mr. Shearer, Ms. Preston, Mr. Lane, Ms. Hodgdon volunteered to serve on that committee. Others who are interested in serving on that committee should contact either Ms. Hodgdon or Mr. Shearer.
- h. Mr. Foyne mentioned that he works with the Friends Program. Tim Rice with that Program has a Foster Grandparent Program that the Planning Board may wish to check out.

5. **CORRESPONDENCE:** There was no correspondence for discussion.

6. **OLD BUSINESS:** There was no old business for discussion.

7. **NEW BUSINESS:** There was no old business for discussion. a

8. **ADJOURNMENT:** Mr. Allen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Ms. Preston. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Francesca Latawiec

Recording Secretary