

**TOWN OF BARRINGTON
HOUSING BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Tuesday, April 17, 2012, 7:00 PM

Present: Steve Martin, Chairperson

Matt Amaral

Steve Boyajian

Carla DeStefano

Molly Lee

Richard Staples

Kenneth Satterley

Mike Winitsky

Also present: Kate Weymouth, Town Council Member, and Seth Milman, Planning Board Liaison.

MINUTES OF MEETING

- **Mr. Martin called the meeting to order.**
- **Mr. Martin announced that we new members joining the housing committee, Molly Lee and Mike Winitsky as a new Alternate member.**

And that Seth Milman will replace Inna Suuberg as the Planning Board Liaison.

- **Mr. Martin called for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2012 meeting, motion made by Ms. DeStefano, seconded by Mr. Staples, vote was unanimous to approve.**

- **Mr. Martin spoke about the proposed Sowans Nursery development. He stated that any development of this nature is a long process that involves the general public, especially the residents adjacent to the property. Numerous meetings will be held which will allow the public to engage in a dialog with the developers.**

- **Mr. Martin then introduced Mr. Donald Powers and Mr. Frank Spinella. Both Mr. Powers and Mr. Spinella were representing East Bay Community Development Corp. in their quest to develop the Sowans Nursery into a multi-unit affordable housing complex.**

- o **Mr. Powers showed the committee a drawing of the proposed site. Mr. Powers explained to the committee that the drawing is only preliminary. It's intent was to only show the character of the project and should not be taken as a final plan.. Mr. Powers went on to explain that the drawing was done for a CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) application.**

- o **Mr. Spinella spoke about the 9 acre site, reporting that the property**

extends from Sowans Road all the way to the Palmer River. He stated that because of the wetlands that border on the river, any site development would require CRMC involvement. Mr. Spinella said it would be at least a year before they could expect to break ground due to the lengthy approval process. Ms. DeStefano said CRMC approval could take up to 2 years.

o Ms. DeStefano asked about the affordability of the homes. Mr. Spinella stated that the plan calls for 100% of the homes to be classified as affordable, with rents in the \$500 to \$900 range. Ms. Lee asked if all the units would be rented. The range is based on 50% of the median; total rent is 30% of income utilities included. Ms. DeStefano stated that in many cases, a project of this type may require a number of the houses be rented at fair market to improve the bottom line.

o involvement to involvement to The committee asked the question if any money was left at the end of the project, could it be used to install bathrooms in the master bedrooms. Mr. Martin said this was unlikely as Rhode Island Housing's standard limits one bedroom per floor, so any money left over would be returned to them. Richard Staples stated even if we could find non RHI money, RHI would object to this idea.

o Mr. Martin asked if some of the homes would be restricted, for example for seniors only. Mr. Spinella said there were no plans to restrict any homes and that all the homes would be available to

renters of all ages.

o Throughout the meeting, many members of the public in attendance wanted to ask questions. However, they were told that the Open Meetings law does not allow questions, unless this process is posted in the agenda.

o Several times throughout the evening Mr. Martin, Ms. DeStefano and Lee thanked the public for their interest in attending the meeting. Mr. Martin said he would hold the next meeting in the council chambers and that the meeting would be open to the public. He also stated that the Barrington Housing Trustee's meetings are normally held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

• Mr. Martin asked Mr. Amaral to update the committee on his progress in finding a piece of property for Habit for Humanities:

• Mr. Martin began a discussion about the Walker Farm Lane development. He said there has been no movement regarding the buy back of 19 Walker Farm Lane. However, talks are ongoing between the owner and West Elmwood Housing Development Corp. Amaral showed the committee a list of vacant properties that he had compiled from the tax rolls. From this list he is looking for at least one land owner that would be willing to donate the property to Habit for Humanities.

o Mr. Martin stated that WEHDC has sold 5 homes, has 2 more under

contract and expects to close those by the end of May. The 4 remaining homes will be sold to buyers with an income at 100% of the median.

o Apart from some minor landscaping, WEHDC expects to complete the project by the end of May. Amaral will contact Habitat for Humanity for their thoughts on this approach, possibly they may have developed a template that we could use., however

• Mr. Martin posed this question to the members-how should the committee proceed with the development of the George Street site; should the committee seek a RQF for design or a development RFQ. With regard to Walker Farm Lane, the development route was chosen.

o Mr. Staples would like to pursue the development route but in doing so, challenge the developer to control the design costs but also encourage a sense of creativity. Mr. Martin would like the committee to have more involvement in the design of the homes and in the selection of building materials. used either the

o Ms. DeStefano stated the need to figure out the number of units. Mr. Martin said he felt that with a R-25 zoning the number should be 14. Ms. Weymouth said that perhaps some of the homes could be sold at

market rate, thereby enhancing the ability for the developer make a profit.

o Mr. Staples stated he would like to see the developer bring to the table the development costs and the availability of development money.

o Mr. Martin challenged the committee to think of the things that are important in this development and to be prepared to discuss them at the next meeting.. suggested.

• Mr. Amaral told the committee that Habitat for Humanity (East Bay Chapter) made an offer to purchase the ranch house and land for \$10,000 but that the town council rejected the offer. According to Ms. Weymouth if Spencer funds were used to purchase the land then only a Barrington resident can take ownership of the land.

• Mr. Martin called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, motion made by Mr. Staples, seconded by Ms. DeStefano, committee voted to approve the motion.

Next meeting is scheduled for May 15, 2012 at 7pm