

TOWN OF BARRINGTON
HOUSING BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Tuesday, November 19, 2013, 7:00 PM

Present: Steve Martin, Chairperson
Steve Boyajian
Chris Brady
Ben Copple
Molly Lee
Kenneth Satterley
Richard Staples
Michael Winitsky

Also present: Kate Weymouth, Town Council Member.

MINUTES OF MEETING

- Mr. Martin called the meeting to order. Mr. Martin announced that he thought the Affordable Housing forum panel members were very knowledgeable and that a lot of good information was presented. The turnout, however, was poor. Mr. Martin also announced that after 6 years he was stepping down from the chair position of the Barrington Housing Board of Trustees. He will remain on the board.
 - Mr. Martin's other announcement was regarding the suggestion that the board take a more active role in the use of the Spencer Fund. Mr. Martin felt that the lack of a response by the Town Council concerning the use of Spencer Trust funds to facilitate the purchase of affordable housing units was tantamount to their refusal.
 - Mr. Staples pointed out that this idea was first voiced by council member Dewitt at a previous meeting of this board. Mr. Staples stated that the board's role could be in an advisory capacity.
 - Mr. Martin could envision this board helping other non-profit organizations with the judicious use of Spencer Trust, to find permanent housing for low income households.
 - The committee then discussed how best to approach the Town Council on how this board could get involved with the Spencer Trust, whether as an independent body or in collaboration with other non-profit organizations.
 - The question was raised on how much seed money would be required to fund purchases of more affordable housing units or help home owners remain in their homes. Mr. Martin said \$500,000 in a revolving fund should be sufficient for this purpose.

- Mr. Copple suggested that we approach the Town Council with the idea that the role of this committee regarding the Spencer Trust could be in an advisory capacity. Mr. Staples felt that in an advisory capacity we could be instrumental in improving the quality of life for many of the residents in the town.
- Both Mr. Copple and Mr. Winitzky spoke about the possibility of amending our mission by working with senior groups and other non-profits whose goal is to improve the life of residents in the town.
- Ms. Lee distributed a draft of a letter addressed to the Town Council requesting their support in taking a more active role in the production of more affordable housing. Ms. Lee expressed concern about the progress in developing more affordable housing units. Mr. Martin said that the stumbling block is the lack of funds, combined with town opposition for more affordable housing units.
- It was suggested that Mr. Martin approach Mr. Hervey to ask him to contact the Attorney General and obtain a ruling as to whether Spencer Trust funds can be used to fund affordable housing. Ms. Weymouth suggested that before contacting Mr. Hervey, that Mr. Boyajian craft a list of questions for the AG based on the language of the trust.
- Mr. Martin then called for a motion to approve the minutes from the October 15, 2013 meeting. Ms. Lee made the motion, seconded by Mr. Staples, vote was unanimous to approve.
- Mr. Martin asked whether anyone would be interested in taking over the chair position. As no one volunteered so he said we should shelf that decision until the next meeting.
- Next Mr. Martin went over the goals for the committee:
 - A number of ideas were discussed: one being the need to broaden our mission, another to request that the Town Council become more involved in helping with financial support. None of these goals were voted on.
- Ms. Lee moved to adjourn the meeting. Vote was unanimous to adjourn

Next meeting is scheduled for December 17, 2013 at 7 pm