

Affordable Housing Committee Meeting
October 24, 2018

Members present: Mary Ann Ricker, Patrick Colgan, Margaret Leonard, Ellen Flannery-Schroeder

Members absent: Betty Russ

Guests present: Stephen Colgan

Call to order at 6:06 pm

Minutes of September 26th meeting accepted as written.

8-215 Ordinance (tax abatement ordinance) Update: Margaret Leonard, Mary Ann Ricker, Mike Urgo, and Juliet Hodge met to discuss. They were unable to get it in time for upcoming town meeting so will work for May's town meeting. Neither of two existing samples (one from Harford and one from Ledyard) seemed fitting for our purposes. Mark Branse will look over the samples and tailor them to No. Stonington needs.

November Awards breakfast – Our committee was given an award for excellence in affordable housing by the Connecticut Mortgage Banker's Association, Inc (CMBA). Other awardees (e.g., Waterbury) have significantly more resources than we. We have a table paid for by the town. The breakfast is to be held on Nov. 8th, Hilton Garden Inn, 1181 Barnes Road, Wallingford, CT at 8:30 am. Members Margaret, Mary Ann, Betty, and Patrick will attend. Ellen is unable to attend. Mary Ann will reach out to John Olsen to invite him to attend. Sean Murphy will be invited (by Margaret) if John is unable to attend. Maybe will meet someone at the spaghetti dinner to invite as well. Kate Rotella/Shawn Mastroianni were identified as other individuals who might be invited.

Survey (advisory committee sent out survey in past): was discussed in KNSA group. It was last completed in 2007. Committee members questioned whether it was beneficial to send out another survey. Margaret suggested to send out a survey online with a few printed copies, noting that the survey could be used as a marketing tool. Mary Ann suggested that it could be put on back burner now and considered as actionable later on. She noted that it would involve resources/costs and may not be worthwhile at the moment. Mary Ann also suggested identifying the objectives of the survey and doing a cost/benefits analysis. Margaret noted that the main benefit is to help those opposing affordable housing to become more aware of the pertinent issues (e.g., wording the questions in a way to get the survey respondent to think differently about the topic, asking "Have you ever received a housing subsidy?"), then following up with questions to help respondent identify that they have in fact received a housing subsidy).

Monthly events:

Spaghetti dinner – 4 committed (plus 2 people called yesterday -- both registered with guest), 27 going/interested.

Patrick put up 28 posters announcing the event. Margaret will invite Kate Rotella and Shaun Mastroianni to the dinner. Margaret noted that she will be trying out powerpoint (created for the CMBA Award breakfast) at the spaghetti dinner. For the awards breakfast, the presentation will include a 15-20 min history of organization, what has been done, and what is planned. Last Tuesday, committee members met to create the powerpoint.

Spaghetti dinner starts at 5 pm. SECHA presentation at 6 pm followed by question and answer period. Banks will be available throughout dinner in side rooms off of the main room (except when invited to eat at 6 pm).

KNSA is doing a January party. They plan to have good food and invite folks to come to library to introduce self to community in a festive manner.

Should we do another event? Margaret wants to put her focus on ordinance and other activities. She'd like to ease off events for the tie being (the committee has held four events). Mary Ann suggested the possibility of doing another event in February, 2019. Mike Urgo wants to get Wintechog property subdivided. When that comes more in focus, perhaps that is a good time to hold an event.

Committee members discussed possibility of targeting the parents of school-aged children/teens for an future event. Ideas included exploring contacts with Shannon Curioso's Civics class and/or senior projects (for next year, too late for this year). (Could we do a presentation in the class, possibly bring in habitat for humanity?). Mary Ann will reach out to Habitat (via Sue Latourette); Ellen will reach out to Shannon. Ellen will invite her to November's meeting; Mary Ann will try to get Habitat to attend November's meeting.

November's meeting on the 28th was cancelled, and a special meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 27th.

Meeting adjourned at 7:43 pm.