

Present

Charles Bonenti, Kim Burnham, Van Ellet, Cheryl Shanks, Cathy Yamamoto
Absent: Bilal Ansari

Also present:

Jaimee Bairstow (Willinet)
Robin Lenz (Higher Ground)
Lauren Shuffleton (Williams Student)

Business

1. The minutes of the February 15 meeting were approved.

2. Affordable Housing Trust

The committee compared the state Affordable Housing Trust establishment language (MGL 44/S55C) with the language adopted by the towns of Grafton, Lenox and Stow to determine what the towns had added, subtracted, or expressed differently.

A. Towns varied along several dimensions

1. Number of trustees
2. Composition of trustees
3. Powers of the trust
4. Dissolution of the trust
5. Frequency and regularity of meetings
6. Ability to “join with” other organizations in carrying out tasks
7. Prohibition of compensation and benefits for trustees

B. The committee discussed various possibilities in each of these categories, and settled on the following combination, approved in a 5-0-0 vote.

1. Number of trustees: five.
2. Composition of trustees: one selectman, one member of the Affordable Housing Committee, and three community members with relevant expertise
3. Powers of the trust: the sixteen articles from the state statute, without additions or deletions
4. Dissolution of the trust: an article should be added that allows the trust to be legally dissolved via town meeting (or other) and directs where any remaining funds would go
5. Frequency and regularity of meetings: the trustees should at a minimum meet quarterly
6. Ability to “join with” other organizations: would be useful. It is unclear whether this would be a clarification/amendment of one of the 16 powers or would appear elsewhere

7. Prohibition of compensation or benefits for trustees: trustees should not receive compensation for their time, though they would be eligible for reimbursement of expenses.

C. Cathy will forward these on to the selectmen, with the additional comment that accessible language, such as that used in the Grafton law, would be welcome.

3. Relationship between the Affordable Housing Committee and the Affordable Housing Trust

A. Should we keep both? Yes

B. How would they differ

1. Affordable Housing Committee

- a. create a housing plan
- b. establish a framework for action
- c. initiate development at one or more specific sites
- d. get guidance from public officials and townspeople
- e. do due diligence

2. Affordable Housing Trust

- a. implementation of development/rehabilitation/subsidy of property
- b. follow-through

C. Mission statements & action plans

1. AHC will now work on its distinctive mission statement and housing plan
2. AHT is on its own!

4. Outreach and publicity

A. Lauren Shuffleton showed the committee an effective, short presentation she created on the need for affordable housing and the town warrant articles.

B. April 3 public meeting at the Williams Inn co-hosted with Higher Ground

1. sequence of events: WGBY footage, warrant proposals, data about need, Shuffleton presentation, Q&A
2. handouts: Charles will modify the Lenox Q&A handout, and we might want to distribute other information in take-away flyers
3. refreshments: drinks from the Williams Inn and cookies from the girl scouts
4. AHC members need to publicize this for their designated groups and to give email contact information for those groups to a central publicizer
5. working title: solving Williamstown's affordable housing needs: what your town meeting vote can do

- 6. unresolved issue: whether we will come out with a position about the accessory apartments warrant article, and if so whether this should be part of the presentation
- 7. open meeting: since 4 of 6 members will be in attendance, this needs to be posted as an open meeting

5. Overlooked self-congratulation

A. doing such an awesome job of winning over the CPC, getting two warrants endorsed, and setting up an AHT: permanent, revolutionary changes

B. looking so fine on Willinet

6. On our plate: aims and plans

A. Mission statement

B. Goals from 2002 Master Plan

C. Housing plan

D. Accessory apartments position

Next Meeting: Tuesday, March 13, 7:00 pm (day after selectmen's meeting)