

Town of Agawam
Housing Committee
Minutes
April 23, 2019

Members Present: Mildred Parzychowski, Paul Jenney, Mark Paleologopoulos, Vincenzo Ronghi, Corinne Wingard.

Members Absent: Gail Mathes, Joseph Mineo.

Other Present: Mayor William Sapelli

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Vice-Chair Paleologopoulos, as Chair Mineo unable to attend.

1. Approval of Minutes of March 26, 2019:

Motion by Member Jenney, Second by Member Paleologopoulos. All in favor.

2. Update on Zoning regulations related to housing:

Member Wingard reported that funding to draft ordinance for accessory dwellings is on the Agenda of the CPA meeting the next night. Members discussed other housing related ordinances that had been recommended by the committee. Member Parzychowski made a motion for the committee to send a memo to Planning Director Strange to proceed with the ordinance for infill housing. Second by Member Jenney. All in favor.

Member Ronghi made a motion to suspend the agenda and go to Any Other Business because the Mayor could not stay for the entire meeting. Second by Member Wingard. All in favor.

9. Any Other Business:

Member Ronghi stated that in requesting 70% local preference for the Wayfinders development at 586 Mill St., the burden of proof is on the town and that given the Housing Plan and knowledge about housing, the housing committee should put the argument together. Member Wingard agreed that housing committee assist, as Planning Director would be working on this. Mayor Sapelli stated he had sent a letter to the Chair of the ZBA asking that they ask for 70% local preference. Member Wingard had suggested to Planning Director Strange that information on the number of homeless students in Agawam be included. Mayor Sapelli said there is also a large number of students receiving free and reduced lunch in the school system, and suggested contacting Rob Clickstein, business manager for all information. Tel: 821-0550. Member Ronghi stated that committee should supply the narrative, and offered to draft statement. Member Wingard offered to work with Member Ronghi on draft. Members Ronghi and Wingard will write a draft and send to members to review, then set up

special meeting. Members will not reply to email, but will discuss at special meeting. Mayor Sapelli suggested contacting Atty Hardee regarding timeline for requesting local preference. Member Ronghi questioned if could do this as Atty Hardee is the Atty for Wayfinders. Member Wingard stated should not be a conflict in contacting Atty Hardee, as this is a condition both agree on and Atty Hardee would advise if not able to help.

Member Paleologopoulos brought up concern that has only been five members out of seven present at meetings. Concern shared by all.

Member Ronghi made motion to return to Agenda. Second by Member Parzychowski. All in favor.

3. Review recommendations of Manisha Bewtra, Massachusetts Housing Partnership consultant on community outreach, and request MHP to continue with another consultant:

All members agree need to request MHP consultant to continue. Discuss recommendations at next meeting.

4. Update on Joint Workshop Mayor, City Council, Planning Board, and Housing Committee re: Implementing Housing Production Plan:

Member Paleologopoulos stated no invitation had come to Planning Board. Member Wingard reported that City Council Clerk had advised the Housing Committee is a committee of the Mayor's office, and the Mayor requested the Housing Committee plan and set up the Joint Workshop. Members agreed best to obtain outside housing expert to lead Joint Workshop. Discussion of possible venues, which would allow for seating that number of people, and for more interaction. Member Wingard suggested cafeteria at Jr. High. Member Paleologopoulos noted there would be a problem with acoustics and suggested senior center. Try to schedule toward end of June after MHP Spring Housing Institute, and Town budget. Member Wingard will follow up and report back to committee.

5. Update on housing related legislation supported by Citizens Housing and Planning Association (CHAPA).

Member Wingard stated that legislative amendments CHAPA is supporting since amendments have been filed are different from original recommendations, and provided copy of recommended legislative amendments. Noted housing hearings will be held in the legislature and importance of input. Member Ronghi stated things are doing fine with housing, noting Governor has done a lot to support housing, and concern is local – money not flowing this way. Stated issue is inside our town, noting taking over a year to get zoning ordinances, and focus should be local. Member Wingard stated focus should be both local and state, as tremendous shortage of housing and financial resources needed when zoning in place. Member Jenney stated has seen some success with Home Base program. Member Paleologopoulos noted that town Boards as well as City Council now have laptops, Board PAC's, a Town of Agawam "Library" with information for Council and Boards and Commissions as way to keep information

organized and preserve for posterity. Wondered if it would be possible to have housing committee information on this, for example, the report from Manisha Bewtra, so City Council could easily look at it, and will talk with Planning Director Strange to see if this can be done.

6. Date of Next Housing Committee Meeting:

Member Wingard noted fourth Monday of the next month is Memorial Day, so ZBA meeting will probably be Tuesday, the same day as Housing Committee, and Public Hearing on 586 Mill St., may be continuing at that date. Committee agreed to still meet on that date, but start at 5:30 p.m.

7. Suggestions for Next Agenda:

Buyer Class for town residents.

MHP Recommendations.

Joint Workshop – Discuss strategies of Housing Production Plan more in depth, and recommend priorities.

Motion to adjourn at 6:50 by Member Parzychowski, second by Member Wingard, all in favor.