

SALISBURY AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING

JANUARY 4, 2024 – 5:30PM (VIA ZOOM)

Call to Order. Present: Jennifer Kronholm Clark, Lee Sullivan, Pat Hackett, Abeth Slotnick, Katie White, Vivian Garfein, Jim Dresser, Jon Higgins and Mary Close Oppenheimer.

1. Discussion of the Salisbury Housing Trust's (SHT) site plan for the Grove Street school lot.

J. Kronholm Clark gave a brief introduction about the purpose of the meeting, regarding the SAHC; she pointed out that this was not a public hearing, but a presentation from the SHT. She noted that there would be a limit of 2 minutes per person for public comments. She explained that the "Grove Street" lot is owned by the Town and has been identified in the Affordable Housing Plan since 2018. The process is for the SAHC to ask the Board of Selectmen (BOS) to refer the project to the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC); the BOS will vote on that; PZC will issue a report, considering the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD); the BOS would then call for a Town Meeting, regarding the transfer of the property to the SHT. Next, the PZC Special Permit process will include Public Hearing(s); this meeting is just the beginning of the process. There is a very preliminary site plan, just for the vision of this property.

John Harney (SHT) gave a brief presentation and overview of the project. He pointed out that it is important to build on town-owned parcels with water and sewer. The SHT needs donated or leased land, in order to build. The SHT is trying to build 2 housing units, maintain public parking and preserve the oak trees. The plan was cut back to 2 houses from the 3 originally proposed, based on hearing neighbor's concerns. He expressed the need for more affordable housing. Neighborhood input will be welcomed.

SAHC member comments:

- J. Dresser asked about the number of parking spaces now and what is proposed; Mr. Harney answered that the SHT has tried to limit the parking space component to protect the trees, but that will be decided by the PZC and others.
- L. Sullivan asked if setbacks had been considered when siting the houses; Mr. Harney answered yes, the property is in the multi-family overlay, so there is a lot of flexibility to site the houses.
- J. Higgins asked if there had been any discussion with the White Hart; Mr. Harney answered no, just with the neighbors.
- P. Hackett mentioned that this conceptual layout was done years ago, when there was less parking use there; more parking spaces could be planned on the ultimate site plan, following public hearings. He pointed out that the proposed houses are the same size as the ones proposed and approved for Perry St.
- L. Sullivan noted that the updated Affordable Housing (AH) Plan was reviewed and approved; this proposal furthers the AH Plan.

2. Public Comment

There were a number of comments, both in favor of and opposed to the proposal.

Comments included:

- Support for the proposal and the need for as much public parking as possible
- Opposition to the plan; the proposed units and spaces aren't marked; what has changed since 2008; the impact to neighbor's houses; the area is very small for the (proposed) houses and driveway
- Appreciation for the work being done by the SAHC and others towards housing needs.
- The proposed parking is a huge issue and impactful to the neighbors; the need to keep open space and amenities favorable for public use in town
- The measurements used were inadequate; better to preserve the space as a park and open space for the neighbors
- The lot is much too small, too close and too crowded; will the driveway be paved; who will pay the expenses, the Town or the developer
- Opposition to the plan from a neighbor; the lot is too small
- Concern about encroachments on the closest neighbors; too tight; not feasible for the neighbors

(The Zoom recording of the meeting is available at: <https://www.salisburyct.us/boards-commissions-committees/affordable-housing/>)

3. **Vote to Recommend to the Board of Selectmen that they Refer the SHT Project to P&Z for an 8-24 Review: The Motion was made by V. Garfein and seconded by P. Hackett.**

J. Kronholm Clark asked for comments from the SAHC. J. Dresser suggested that the transmittal email to the BOS should include the details about this meeting. L. Sullivan suggested it is important to mention that this is a conceptual plan, not a final design. J. Higgins asked if there are deed restrictions; J. Kronholm Clark answered no. J. Higgins pointed out that the plan could change when reviewed by the PZC; he also wanted people attending to understand this process. V. Garfein also wanted people to understand that this is a necessary part of the preliminary process, to move the project further. J. Kronholm Clark re-stated that this meeting is for the SAHC to vote on recommending the Housing Trust request to the BOS to refer this proposal to the PZC for review, with regard to the POCD, which is a necessary step so that the Town can transfer any property. The BOS has to ask the PZC to do a report; the BOS can then call for a Town Meeting, when every eligible voter can vote on whether or not to transfer the property to the Housing Trust. The SHT would then have to secure funding and get PZC approval through the Special Permit process which would include Public Hearing.

J. Kronholm Clark called for a **Vote on the Motion on the floor: SAHC Recommendation to the BOS to refer the Housing Trust request to P&Z for an 8-24 Review. The vote was unanimous in favor; Motion passed.** J. Kronholm Clark thanked everyone for their work tonight.

4. **Adjournment. So Moved** by J. Dresser, seconded by L. Sullivan and unanimously **Approved.**