

SALISBURY AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

JUNE 20, 2024 – 5:30PM (VIA ZOOM)

1. Call to Order. Present: Jennifer Kronholm Clark, Vivian Garfein, Lee Sullivan, Jon Higgins, Mary Close Oppenheimer, Jim Dresser, Abeth Slotnick, Katie White and Hannah Pouler (Communications Consultant). Absent: Pat Hackett
2. **Approval of Agenda. So Moved** by A. Slotnick, seconded by J. Dresser and unanimously **Approved**.
3. **Approval of the Minutes of May 16, 2024.** J. Higgins asked for a correction to a typo under Item 5: “L. Sullivan asked P. Hackett if he needs any help....” A **Motion to Approve the Minutes of May 16, 2024, as amended**, was made by V. Garfein, seconded by A. Slotnick and unanimously **Approved**. **Approval of the Minutes of May 30, 2024. So Moved** by A. Slotnick, seconded by L. Sullivan and unanimously **Approved**.
4. Salisbury Housing Committee (SHC) Application for SAHF / Funding for Consultant  
L. Sullivan introduced the application for \$13,800 of pre-construction funding to hire an Energy Efficiency Consultant for the Dresser Woods project. A. Slotnick described the details which would cover the design phase “Step 1” and “Construction Documents” of the Consultant’s proposal. It was noted that David Berto had advised the SHC to focus on energy efficiency, as there could be some rebates and tax credits, if the buildings get the right certification. J. Dresser pointed out that there had been the possibility of a donor for these funds; there was a meeting with him a few weeks ago, but they haven’t heard back from him yet. A **Motion to Approve Recommending the SHC Request for \$13,800 from the SAHF** was made by V. Garfein, seconded by M. Close Oppenheimer and **Approved with 2 Abstentions** (J. Dresser and A. Slotnick are SHC members.) The Recommendation will go to the Board of Selectmen for final approval. It was noted that the SHC might not follow all of the recommendations from the Consultant.
5. Discussion: 2024 Goals and Subcommittees
  - Housing Committee Properties – there were no further updates; all are in progress.
  - Pope Property – About 40 people had attended the site visit on June 13<sup>th</sup>, but no update yet; any notes from the visit will be shared with this Commission. A positive letter of support from Tom Morrison in the Lakeville Journal was mentioned also. (The discussion was paused at this time and continued after Rep. Maria Horn left the meeting)

6. Guest Speaker State Representative Maria Horn

Rep. Horn gave an update on the State Homestead Property Tax Exemption – it was passed and is law. As in Massachusetts, it has to be approved by individual towns to go into effect. The towns can decide to give between 5% and up to 35% of property tax relief to certain property owners. The towns can set limits, such as length of residency, and can limit what limitations to use. Deductions only go to the primary homeowner / occupant. V. Garfein asked if there will be certification; Rep. Horn answered yes, there will be certification. H. Pouler asked about increases to the property tax base; Rep. Horn replied that there was not much debate about that and mentioned that increased taxes could be balanced out. L. Sullivan commented that some people create AH without credit; Rep. Horn responded that if it is the primary home for the renters, maybe the credit would apply. There were a number of questions about caps and if towns could set them; Rep. Horn indicated that it is not written in the legislation, but she will find out. Rep. Horn pointed out that some places are not interested in this and it really doesn't help renters at all; the purpose is to help long-time homeowners and it is a concern. Rep. Horn noted that the tax exemption would have to apply equally and primary residence would be determined by a required declaration; the criterion is to be determined. V. Garfein mentioned that local property tax is handled through the Assessor's office. Rep. Horn will share the answers to these questions, perhaps in July. J. Kronholm Clark commented that this would be a great topic for a future newsletter. Rep. Horn was thanked by all for attending this meeting.

Discussion: 2024 Goals and Subcommittees continued

- Housing Trust Properties – J. Kronholm Clark talked about the PZC Public Hearing on the Grove St. property; the SHT agreed to another continuation on July 1, 2024. The issue of what percentage of the property SHT will take control of will be considered; the property might be divided to create the 2 homes and save the trees. Further details may be in the newsletter next week. J. Kronholm Clark indicated that the SHT will meet with PZC Chair Michael Klemens before July 1<sup>st</sup> about his concerns; there are a lot of questions and it is complicated legally. Further information about the existing trees is also needed. J. Higgins asked why the SHT is coming to the PZC now. A. Slotnick pointed out that the SHT does not have site control yet and this is not an official site plan. J. Kronholm Clark commented that it is a confusing process, but the PZC is the first step. There is public concern over partial public access and the SHT is a private non-profit to create homes, not maintain public parks. A. Slotnick commented that if a public park is critical, then consider dividing the property into 2 spaces. Fun fact: There will be a SHT fundraiser dance at the White Hart on August 1<sup>st</sup>; details are coming!
- Advocacy for AH – J. Kronholm Clark asked if anyone still had any postcards left and noted that the Subcommittee talked about the FAQs and the newsletter. M. Close Oppenheimer will try to get interviews from residents at Sarum Village and Sharon Ridge.

- Fundraising/Alternative Funding Sources – J. Dresser had no updates and suggested finding examples from other towns. M. Close Oppenheimer will try to come up with dates for a subcommittee meeting.
  - Explore Additional Properties – L. Sullivan noted that a recent meeting of this subcommittee was recorded and there will be minutes posted; no one from the public attended. The next meeting will be in the fall. None of the public properties reviewed have potential for AH; private properties were not reviewed and are very high-priced now, but send her a list. J. Dresser suggested making more efforts about the “second cuts”.
  - Sustainability – Previously discussed under SHC funding request.
  - Housing Affordability Committee – Nothing now
7. Communications Consultant Update / Newsletter Items – H. Pouler talked about an editorial topic around selling property below market value, if potential for AH, and other items for the newsletter.
  8. Public Comment – None
  9. Chairman’s Comments – Thanks for all of your work and support.
  10. **Adjournment. So Moved** by A. Slotnick, seconded by M. Close Oppenheimer and unanimously **Approved.**