

**Princeton Housing Board Minutes**  
Monthly Meeting  
**July 8, 2014**  
Monument Hall – East Meeting Room  
One Monument Drive, Princeton, NJ 08542

**Present:**

**Board Members:**

Carol Golden  
Lance Liverman  
Alvin McGowen  
Omar Nishtar  
Ruth Thurmond Scott  
Mary Agnes Procaccino  
Kate Warren

**Staff:**

Christy Peacock  
V Bea Snowdon  
Ed Schmierer, Esq.

**Guests:**

Ed Truscelli, PCH  
Arnaz Yousafzai, PCH

**Absent:**

Marilyn Rovira  
David Schroyer

**I. Open Public Meeting Statement**

At 5:41PM, Alvin McGowen called the meeting of the Princeton Housing Board to order by reading: "Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided as required by the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice was provided of the date, time, and location of this regular meeting by posting a copy of the adopted schedule of the regular meetings with the Clerk's office and by mailing copies to the Trenton Times and Princeton Packet."

**II. Minutes**

The minutes from the June 2014 Board meeting were reviewed. Kate Warren requested that a unit be identified in the legal status report, requested name clarification for the Municipal Trust fund in the housing report, and requested clarification on the origination of the engineer's report for Griggs Farm. A motion was made by Carol Golden to approve the minutes with the clarifications added. Lance Liverman seconded this motion. With all voting in favor, the minutes were accepted.

The Board discussed and agreed to a complete list identifying those voting "yes", "no" or "abstain" for the record, whenever votes are not unanimous.

### **III. Princeton Community Housing (PCH) Report**

A copy of the complete PCH Affordable Rental report was distributed to those in attendance. 9 new rental applications have been received. 4 of those applications were certified and 5 were found to be incomplete. This creates a total of 233 applicants on the waitlist. 2 units, that are presently available, will be filled by August 1<sup>st</sup>.

There are 12 total units at COPPERWOOD. Qualified tenants are signing leases now for August 1<sup>st</sup> occupancy. There has been a slight delay in finishing. There are 6 moderate income and 2 low units still available at COPPERWOOD.

Regarding the 16 affordable units at MERWICK STANWORTH, 6 households are already settled in their new apartments.

### **IV. BUSINESS**

#### **General Board Discussion**

Regarding concerns about additional fees for parking and pets at COPPERWOOD, Board inquiry was made about possible subsidies from the Municipal Trust fund for such fees. Mr. Schmierer feels that a parking allowance might be possible, due to the necessity of transportation. He is less optimistic about consideration of pet fees.

Mr. Truscelli reports that he discussed fees that are beyond the 30% adjustment, with COPPERWOOD representatives. The owners of COPPERWOOD are not interested in adjusting or waiving fees for those needing assistance.

Mr. Schmierer suggests we wait until all units are occupied. We will then discuss this matter formally, if needs for fee reduction are expressed. Shirley Bishop may be asked to address the affordability factor. We may consider providing remedy in the form of a loan or grant, in the event that COPPERWOOD does not accommodate tenant needs.

#### **Legal Status Report**

The balance of the affordable housing assessment has been received from COPPERWOOD, in the amount of \$595,000. Two lots in this development have been conveyed to the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, for permanent preservation. A detention basin has also been subsidized and enlarged, to benefit Princeton Community Village, as part of the Copperwood developer's agreement. COPPERWOOD management has met all contractual obligations in advance of deadlines.

The family of the previous tenant at 105HA is seeking the legal determination that will qualify them as estate administrators. Follow up with the family is an ongoing process, to secure the property for sale or rental.

### **Affordable Housing Report**

The rehab loan approved last month has been released, making replacement of the air handler possible this week. This timely rehab work will improve the family's health enormously. While \$12,000 was approved, the actual cost and amount released is \$8,342.

An offer of \$100,466 has been received, for a one bedroom moderate unit in Griggs Farm. The minimum that can legally be accepted for this unit is \$97, 331. A letter from the prospective purchaser was distributed to the Board for consideration. The offer comes from a Princeton resident at 62% of median income, with funds for a 3% down payment. The resident needs to borrow an additional \$5,000 for the down payment and closing costs. If this unit is not sold, Princeton will continue to carry it. The property has been carried since 2011, while the unit has been listed with a realtor who has found no buyers.

Mary Agnes Procaccino motioned that the offer of \$100,466 be accepted. Lance Liverman seconded the motion, with all voting in favor of the sale.

Ruth Thurmond Scott motioned that the request for the \$5,000 down payment and fees loan also be approved. Carol Golden seconded Ms. Scott's motion, with all voting in favor of the loan for fees.

Griggs Farm hot water heaters that are over ten years must be replaced, as required by the condominium association. Tindall & Ransom has offered to install new 40-gallon hot water heaters and drip pans for the reduced price of \$775.00. The Affordable Housing Department is attempting to negotiate a reduced municipal permit fee for these replacements. Kate Warren suggested that the town exercise its authority to waive fees. All Board members present agreed that efforts should be made to advise owners with regards to the HOA requirement, to make clientele aware of the reduced

installation fees offered by Tindall and Ransom, and to pursue the waiver of permit fees. Mary Agnes Procaccino suggested that a letter be crafted to clearly address these matters. Further, all Board members present support measures that may waive all Princeton permit fees, for subsidized affordable housing units, in the future.

Given the many business matters at hand, Board members agreed to schedule an additional meeting on Tuesday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30PM. Ruth Thurmond Scott seconded Mary Agnes Procaccino's motion, for acceptance of August 12th on the meeting calendar. All Board members present voted in favor of scheduling this August meeting.

### **Public Comment Period**

A public comment period was announced. All public opinion was welcomed and was particularly requested on the 20% development set aside currently in place for the provision of affordable housing. A packet of newspapers articles and comments from Board members and Princeton officials was distributed.

Dr. Daniel Harris, a former Trustee of Princeton Citizens for Sustainable Neighborhoods, shared a letter he hopes will be published in the local papers. He addressed the history of Princeton's residential planning and the need for future development in the John Witherspoon and Princeton Shopping Center neighborhoods. Dr. Harris further detailed the "undisputed need" for affordable housing in Princeton and supports the 20% set aside.

Mr. Paul Driscoll, a Princeton resident, expressed the opinion that "Princeton should maintain the 20% set aside" requirement. He feels this solution is "the most practical one" and also one that builders and developers are able to sustain while making a profit. Mr. Driscoll feels that the design standards for the hospital site were very vague. He suggests refinement of design standards, for all future projects, to ensure better design quality in future local developments.

Ms. Minnie Craig, of Princeton, spoke of the "great need for affordable housing", based on "the size of the current waiting list". She is in favor of the 20% set aside for affordable housing in Princeton. She expressed gratitude to the Affordable Housing staff, for the assistance given to her Princeton neighbors on housing matters. She also shared their concerns about the lack of advance disclosure of extra fees required for such things renter's insurance and necessary services.

Mr. John Heilner, of Princeton, expressed strong support for maintaining the 20% set aside. He emphasized that "socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic diversity are valued" in Princeton. He feels that Princeton's government must support all community "values not protected in a free market". He

asks that Princeton's attorneys take on this task, to ensure the current set aside remains in place. He believes positive action now will have a positive impact on the community in the future.

Ms. Bernadine Hines, a Princeton resident, strongly encourages the town to continue the 20% set aside. She feels the provision of affordable housing "is a moral issue". To ensure diversity and to support our working population, Ms. Hines believes maintaining affordable housing opportunities to meet community needs is essential.

Yina Moore, of Princeton, spoke in favor of Princeton's current affordable housing set aside. Aware of their constituency, Princeton University and other institutions in Princeton "have done their part", in this regard. The demand for affordable housing is great in Princeton, as rising housing prices threaten to push out families at lower income levels. Ms. Moore expressed concern about COAHs standards. She supports efforts by the Board and Princeton officials to ensure conscientious action, to meet the needs of our citizens and to ensure diversity.

A group discussion about the history and the future of housing opportunities in Princeton ensued. Mr. Schmierer shared that if Princeton opts out of COAH inclusion, we may preserve Princeton's ability to build community in a self-determined manner. He suggests that it might be possible to petition the Court, to approve community plans that align with the Fair Housing Act.

Dr. Harris requests that Town council and municipal representatives ensure that all actions and ordinances maintain socioeconomic justice.

With no further public questions, the comment period and open discussion concluded at 7:39PM.

### **Board Chair Report**

Mr. McGowen shared that he enjoys discussing and promoting affordable opportunities for home ownership in Princeton. The group discussed the need to better incorporate such opportunities into town ordinances and processes. Affordable housing inventory of all types must be discovered and explored. It is the Board's charge to make recommendations, to Town Council, in this regard.

### **Ordinance Review**

Specific meanings and appropriate language of the articles of the Housing Board Ordinance were discussed at length.

Revisions to the draft ordinance were further defined:

Section 348 stays the same.

Section 349 becomes Section 352.

Section 350 becomes Section 349.

Section 350A becomes Section 349A.

Section 351 becomes Section 352.

Section 352 becomes Section 351.

Section 368 is removed.

Section 369 and 370 are placed before the severability clause.

Section 351 needs to include development and method of financing.

Language regarding Administrative Agents needs to be clarified. The municipal housing liaison was referenced in this discussion.

## **Comments On COAH**

### Deed Restrictions

Questions regarding foreclosures were covered. Affordability controls currently extend beyond foreclosure. The new COAH rule threatens these affordability restrictions. The Board supports deed restrictions surviving foreclosure, in the name of the Affordable Housing Board.

### Middle-Income

Middle-income information was briefly discussed.

### 20% Set Aside

The Board members present are unanimously in favor of the 20% set aside. There is also support for the opinion that the new rules should more closely follow the second round rules methodology.

### Buildable Limit Capacity

Those present discussed an OPRA request for the information used to generate this number.

### Rehab Component

The rehab of units is supported. An OPRA request for the addresses that support this number at 151 should be made. The cost, value, and timeframe for exterior drive-bys required were discussed. While

Kate Warren feels drive bys, as described in new rules, may be useful, the remaining majority of Board members present do not support the drive by assessment process. The cost of rehab at 8K and the recapture of funds are good ideas. The recapture funds definition and the 95/5 rule were discussed.

#### Developer's Fees

Regarding developers fees, Princeton uses the equalized assessed value process. The non-residential fee should remain at 2.5%. On residential projects, Princeton collects developer fees at 1.5%.

#### Housing Options

The list of COAH eliminated housing options, which address such things as: rental obligations, rental bonuses, accessory apartments, family requirements, affordable housing opportunities, market to affordable programs, permanent supportive housing, minimum densities, assisted living residences, and extension of expiring controls was reviewed for comment. These options are not thought to dilute inclusionary zoning.

#### Second Round Rules

Those present agree that all compliance techniques of round two should remain available, with the housing options discussed included.

#### Land Adjustment

It was also agreed that there should be no comment on the vacant land adjustment.

The Board comments and decisions above were accepted, along with those shared at the public meeting. These will be shared with Shirley Bishop, for comments on formatting, to complete the Board's formal response, by July 29<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Schmierer will assist the Director with this process, to meet the State's July 29<sup>th</sup> electronic filing requirements.

#### **V. Adjournment**

A motion by Mary Agnes Procaccino to adjourn was seconded by Alvin McGowen. All present voted in favor of these motions. There being no further business, the Board meeting concluded at 9:55 PM

Respectfully submitted, V Bea Snowdon