



# TOWN OF MEDFIELD

Office of the

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST

MEETING OF:

**June 10, 2021**

MINUTES

**Members Present:** Jim Brand, Chair; Newton Thompson, Brett Heyman, Ann Thompson, Kerry McCormack; Michael Marcucci

**Members Absent:** Greg Sandomirsky

**Staff Present:** Sarah Raposa, Town Planner

**Others Present:** Brad Harris, Chad Wolcott, Cliff & Joanne, Jame Murphy, Joe Scier, Lesley Scier, Meg Femino, Nathan Bazinet, Sharon Loewenthal, Bob Borrelli, Robert Truax, John, Caroline Abernethy, Deborah Bero

**Location:** Virtual Meeting via Zoom

At approximately 7:30 pm, Chairman James Brand called the meeting to order and announced the meeting is being recorded. Chairman Brand read the following:

*Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Medfield Affordable Housing Trust is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to listen to/view this meeting while in progress may do so by following the instructions on the agenda and meeting notice.*

### **Hinkley South Updates from Development Team**

Mr. Murphy gave an overview of the changes that have been made to the Hinkley South plan. GLM has incorporated the extra parcels of land that were approved at the May 17th Town Meeting into the site plan. This increases the number of units from 20 to 24. There is an intention to use a cul de sac and to provide a larger buffer to the homes on Bishop Lane. Mr. Murphy turned the presentation over to Mr. Truax of GLM Engineering. He shared his screen to show the site plan. He showed the parcels of land that are being incorporated into the plan, one is part of the senior center property and the other is part of the Kingsbury area. The plan shows 24 units in 12 buildings, and an access road coming off of the cul de sac. Mr. Truax cut down on some of the spacing between the units, especially between units 17-22. The cul de sac is now 45 feet from the edge of the property, rather than 35 feet. On the Kingsbury side, he also moved the units so that at the closest point to the neighbors, the unit is 85 feet from the neighbor's property. He also is providing an 85 foot buffer on the Bishop Lane side. Mr. Truax was thinking that they could leave a natural buffer at the end of cul de sac (of 30-35 feet) that they would not cut. In the areas of the buildings, they only need to cut 15-20 feet around the perimeter of the building, which offers a larger buffer. They are proposing to plant arborvitae green giants around the perimeter of the cul de sac so that the neighbors will not see the construction and to provide

screening of headlights to any cars. The site plan also shows that units are within the one hundred foot buffer from the wetlands, and they are trying to be as conservative as possible to protect the wetlands.

Mr. Marcucci asked how far away the units are from the houses on Bishop Lane. Mr. Truax said that the bottom unit on the site plan is roughly 45 feet from the neighbor's property line, and the neighbor's house has some buffering on the left-hand side of their property. The unit on the top of the site plan is also roughly 45 feet from the neighbor's house, which does not have any screening.

Chairman Brand asked how far away the units at the top of the site plan are from the nearest house. Mr. Truax said it is approximately 130 feet away from the nearest house. The units at the bottom of the site plan are likely a little farther than 130 feet from the nearest house.

Mr. McCormack asked if Mr. Truax has started looking at the drainage or if there are any retaining walls. Mr. Truax said that they have not done a site survey of the topography yet.

Chairman Brand asked Mr. Truax what he would think of adding a fence in addition to the arborvitae trees for an additional barrier. Mr. Truax responded that they are going to see what the landscape architect thinks.

Mr. Thompson asked if the elevation of the proposed property is the same as the houses. Mr. Truax said he is unsure.

Mr. McCormack asked if there would be an issue with providing pedestrian connectivity so that pedestrians could access the senior center by walking through the neighborhood. Mr. Truax said it is not an issue for him, but he would like to hear the opinions of the neighborhood before proposing that.

Chairman Brand asked if the turning radius on the cul de sac is enough for fire trucks. Mr. Truax said yes. Chairman Brand asked what the plan was for street lights. Mr. Murphy said that there is no intention to add streetlights.

Mr. Marcucci requested that there be an agreement from the developers to continue to focus on creating a significant buffer between the units and the neighbors, as well as between the units and the vegetation.

Ms. Raposa opened up the meeting to questions from members of the public. She first promoted Ms. Femino is an abutter to the north side of the proposed property, near units 15 and 16. She is in favor of this project, but she would like to see a 150-foot buffer since Ms. Femino has nothing on the driveway side of her house. She suggested that the number of units be reduced back to 20. She is not in favor of a pedestrian path through the cul de sac because the neighborhood would have to deal with more cars parking on their street to get to the senior center and the Kingsbury Club. This could be challenging for the neighborhood, especially since there are many young children running around.

At 7:45 PM Joe Scier wrote in the Q&A: "The Neighborhood preferred Norway spruce, we recommended that to the builder at the meeting. Arborvitae are not preferred. Deer eat them. They do not eat spruce."

At 7:47 PM Joe Scier wrote in the Q&A: "The neighborhood would prefer a fence. 2 reasons: we don't want a walk through to the neighborhood. Also we don't want people cutting through property, especially 3 Bishop to get to Kingsbury from units 17- 20"

At 7:48 PM, Joe Scier wrote in the Q&A: “We stated both of these at the meeting with builder”

Ms. Raposa then promoted Mr. Scier to a panelist. He lives on 3 Bishop Lane. He is in favor of the project, but like Ms. Femino, he was under the impression that the town would use the additional land as a buffer, when in the end the town decided to use it for an additional unit. He suggested that the developers further decrease the distance in between the units to provide a larger buffer. Mr. Scier also had a conversation with the rest of his neighborhood and they came to the conclusion that they were not in favor of the arborvitaes because deer eat them. They would prefer spruce to be planted instead. The neighborhood also agreed that they would like a fence to be built around that area. Mr. Scier is in favor of this in particular because he jogs around that area. His property has a natural cut through to the Kingsbury Club, and so he would like there to be more of a buffer on the corner of the development so that people will not cross through his property to get to the Kingsbury Club. Adding a fence could also prevent people from cutting through his property. For similar reasons to Ms. Femino, he is not in favor of connecting the neighborhoods through a path. There is already a cut-through on the side of Copperwood Road that connects to the Bay State Trail.

Ms. Raposa then promoted Ms. Bero to a panelist. Ms. Bero lives on Copperwood Road. She agrees with Mr. Scier and Ms. Femino on a lot of their points. She asked if the wetlands had been delineated. Mr. Murphy responded that they have not yet gone to the site and marked the wetlands, but that is on the agenda, and they will make adjustments to the plan accordingly. Ms. Bero asked who drew the lines that delineate the wetlands in the plan. Mr. Truax said they were drawn by a professional. Ms. Raposa said that the person who drew the lines is a wetlands scientist named Briscoe Lang.

Mr. Marcucci asked if Mr. Truax or Mr. Murphy had any issues with installing the fence and having a different kind of tree. Both said no.

Ms. Bero asked what the developer is looking for in terms of a waiver with respect to the detention ponds near the Kingsbury Club. It is her understanding that those detention ponds are part of the stormwater plan and system that serves the Copperwood/Bishop area. She wants to know if the ponds will be impacted. Mr. Truax said that they will have to adhere to stormwater management standards, and so they will not seek a waiver. Ms. Bero mentioned some of the water issues that Copperwood and Clayton have had and asked if this development could lead to a higher water table, flooding in people’s basements, and other related issues. Mr. Murphy said that they are still in the preliminary stages and they still need more data to determine their plan to mitigate this issue. However, they do not plan on intruding on anyone’s property or water. Ms. Bero asked if they had identified the detention basins, and if they would be building anything near the basin on lot 3. Mr. Truax said no. Ms. Bero suggested that they think about these issues sooner rather than later to avoid the issues she mentioned down the line.

Chairman Brand made a motion to endorse the plan forward to the Board of Selectmen based on the expectation of the good faith effort to continue trying to improve the plan as it goes through the LIP process to the point of decision by the Board of Selectmen. Seconded by Mr. Heyman. Roll Call Vote: Jim Brand = yes; Newton Thompson = yes; Michael Marcucci = abstain; Brett Heyman = yes. The Vote: 3-0-1. Mr. Marcucci abstained because he typically votes as a selectmen on such matters. There was some discussion of the voting threshold for AHT votes as Ms. Thompson’s audio was not working and Mr. McCormack stepped away from the meeting.

At 8:25 PM, Meg Femino wrote in the Q&A: “How can others vote that were not here for the discussion?”

At 8:26 PM, Deborah Bero wrote in the Q&A: “Sarah, how can the missing member vote if he was not present to hear and how can Ann vote if she is not able to hear the discussion? And good question about the need for a majority of all voting members to approve/deny a project.”

At 8:36 PM, Deborah Bero wrote in the Q&A: “Sarah, the town bylaw provides that "a majority of the number of authorized Trustees shall constitute a quorum and shall all be required to approve any motion. This is found at the town by law at 15-18. Am not sure Kristine is correct. Perhaps I am misunderstanding. Thanks. Deb”

### **Review/Approve Minutes from 06/03/2021**

Mr. Heyman made a motion to approve the minutes from 06/03/2021. Seconded by Mr. Thompson. Roll Call Vote: Jim Brand = yes; Newton Thompson = yes; Brett Heyman = yes; Michael Marcucci = yes. The Vote: 4-0.

### **RFP**

Mr. Marcucci restated his proposal to repurpose existing buildings in town to affordable development. Based on guidance from Mr. Sandomirsky and the bond counsel, the AHT would need to acquire a deed restriction. Then, the AHT would put out an RFP asking people to bid on the amount of money they would need to provide a certain number of affordable units. The lowest bids and lowest AMIs would win. It would be structured as the acquisition of an affordable deed restriction to contribute to the renovation. This would spark interest in people who would be willing to take part in this. In the RFP, it would say that the AHT is looking to do 16 units, and the AHT could offer approximately \$350,000-400,000 per eight units.

Mr. Thompson asked if there was a way to figure out what the deed restriction would be worth and if there was anyone who could help us calculate this. Ms. Raposa said that we could examine the project audits from the North Street projects to get a sense of the cost requirements for this kind of project.

Mr. Marcucci made a motion that the AHT ask the town planner to prepare an RFP to request for proposals to sell the town a deed restriction for rental apartments and to convert existing buildings into SHI eligible rental apartments to be submitted to the Board of Selectmen. Seconded by Mr. Thompson. Roll Call Vote: Jim Brand = yes; Newton Thompson = yes; Brett Heyman = yes; Michael Marcucci = yes. The Vote: 4-0.

### **Hinkley South – continued discussion**

Since not enough members were present to vote to endorse the Hinkley South plan forward to the Board of Selectmen, the AHT will reconvene next week.

Mr. Marcucci added that on the Board of Selectmen next Tuesday, they will be talking about spending some of the American Rescue funds. He would like to discuss creating a rent relief program to put the ARPA funds to good use.

**Adjournment** – At 8:48 PM, Mr. Marcucci made a motion to adjourn. Roll Call Vote: Jim Brand = yes; Newton Thompson = yes; Brett Heyman = yes; Michael Marcucci = yes. The Vote: 4-0.

### **Respectfully Submitted,**

Lily Maranci, Administrative Assistant