

Selectboard & Planning Board Housing Subcommittee Meeting via Zoom
Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Approved

1. CALL TO ORDER HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING – Chairperson Leigh Davis called to order the Selectboard and Planning Board Housing Subcommittee meeting at 5:30 pm.
2. Chairperson Davis called the roll: Leigh Davis, “present,” Malcolm Fick, “present,” Jeremy Higa, “present,” Garfield Reed, “present.”
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –
 - a. Ms. Davis suggested amendments to correct erroneous dates on the draft minutes for the July 25 meeting. Mr. Reed moved to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Higa seconded the motion. All voted yes.
4. SUBCOMMITTEE’S ANNOUNCEMENTS/STATEMENTS
 - a. Mr. Fick reported that the Planning Board would begin discussion of zoning for congregate living at the next meeting.
5. NEW BUSINESS
 - a. Real Estate Transfer Fee Update
 - Mr. Reed noted opposition to the proposal. He noted that many opposed are saying they want no new taxes. Ms. Davis said that the proposal is a way to raise local funds that supplement state and federal funds that have been used for many housing projects. She further expressed the importance of listening to and learning from those expressing opposition.
 - Ms. Davis reported that she has been invited to speak with leaders in neighboring towns about establishing a local transfer fee for funding housing.
 - b. Housing Initiatives Worksheet discussion
 - Ms. Eileen Mooney requested and was granted time to speak on the issue. Ms. Mooney pointed out that there may be duplication of effort between the subcommittee and the Affordable Housing Trust.
 - Ms. Davis suggested that Affordable Housing Trust members be asked to attend the next meeting to discuss overlapping issues. Mr. Garfield, who is a member of the Trust, said he would invite the Trust chairs to attend.
 - Ms. Davis reported interest in the issues related to aging in place. Mr. Reed noted programs and funding for rehabbing housing. Ms. Davis said the programs have paperwork requirements that can be overwhelming to homeowners. Mr. Reed suggested that the Senior Center might be enlisted to help people with applications.
 - Mr. Higa suggested that Sam Nickerson or another developer be invited to speak about what is preventing the development of new housing in Great Barrington.
 - Members agreed that the Affordable Housing Trust be invited to the next meeting and that another meeting be scheduled for early November to invite one or more builders to discuss the impediments to new housing.

6. Next meeting dates:
 - a. Wednesday, October 25, 2023, at 5:30 pm.
 - b. Wednesday, November 8, 2023, at 5:30 pm.
7. Citizens Speak
 - a. No citizens requested time to speak.
8. Subcommittee's Time: Members had no further comments.
9. Media Time: No media members requested time.
10. Adjournment: Mr. Fick moved to adjourn. Mr. Higa seconded. All voted yes. Ms. Davis adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Malcolm Fick, Vice Chairperson