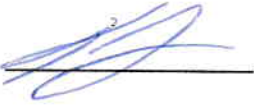


**Housing Committee
Town of Pelham
Meeting Minutes for April 6, 2021**

Meeting conducted remotely via Zoom

Approved: 

Committee Members in Attendance:

Tilman Lukas, Ruth Elcan, Amy Spalding-Fecher, Gail Kenny, Jim Lumley, Barbara Cooper

Guests in Attendance: Jane Porter, Linda Spink

Meeting called to order at: 4:33 p.m. by Tilman

Minutes Approved:

Minutes of January 5, 2021: Motion to approve by Gail, second Barbara, Unanimous.

Minutes of February 2, 2021: Motion by Barbara, second by Gail, Unanimous.

Votes Taken: HC voted unanimously to endorse the effort to extend the Amherst Rd. sewer line into South Valley Rd., Jones Rd., and Cadwell St., and applying for state funding. TL will compose a letter. BC will deliver it.

Action Items:

Committee Discussion Topics:

Tilman updated the committee on 8 Amherst Road. Eversource cut some of the remaining frontage trees. Habitat volunteers boarded up the garden shed down the slope to avoid it being a attractive nuisance. Kestrel had asked for this to be done. Habitat has donated the 18,695+/- to Kestrel. Contractors that are removing the existing garage started the work. The Planning Board approved the ANR for two building lots. Habitat is going to start construction on both houses at once. Both houses will be 3 bedroom, one being fully handicap accessible.

Amethyst Brook Apartments:

Tilman updated the Committee on the various dates of the Conservation Commission(CC) and Zoning Board of Appeals: ZBA hearings on 4/21, 4/28, 5/5, and 5/18. Most of these will be at 6:15 p.m.

BC: The first meeting was extremely long because Home City made a full presentation.

TL: ZBA stated that their major concern will be the environment. CC will keep their hearing ongoing until the ZBA completes their review. Major issue continues to be stormwater management. CEI, the peer consultant for the CC, wrote a comprehensive report identifying all aspects of the project they feel need to be addressed. Issues brought up by the public include the need for a plan for staging demolition. Berkshire Design will have staff on site.

GK: Asked about the role of Judi Barrett, consultant for the ZBA, and if she had any negative comments about the project.

BC: Role of Judi Barrett is to inform the ZBA about proper 40B procedures. Any conditions the ZBA may impose are limited to issues involving or affecting five areas: public health, public safety, open space, design, and environmental impact.

TL: At the ZBA hearing there was additional discussion about traffic, parking, access to public transportation and school busses. I contacted the Select Board member Bob Agoglia to provide information as to what the town is proposing. Town is proposing speed bumps and will be putting up a radar warning sign. Berkshire Design can't respond to traffic on Amherst Road. Town should start working on possible designs for a sidewalk to the Community Building/Library. HCDI has offered help in looking for resources. Judy Eiseman had said that PVPC might be able to provide some assistance.

BC: Planning board, when the Village Center bylaw was approved, said that the PB would take on the responsibility to look at how to get sidewalks built. Currently no response from the PB. HCDI cannot build sidewalks on property that it does not own.

GK: Once project is built sidewalks will become a high priority.

GK: What is the status of the Peterson House? Has demolition been approved by Mass. Historical Commission? HCDI is proceeding as if approval has been approved even though that has not happened.

GK: Concerned about impact of project on the abutters such as the Weinbergs.

TL: HCDI met with the Weinbergs several times and HCDI is trying to implement some of their desires into the project. Weinbergs are being very professional. Other abutters are being pretty reasonable with their comments and questions.

Housing support for Pelham residents:

TL: Federal stimulus funds and Commonwealth of Mass. funds will become available to help renters and those with mortgage payment problems. Not sure how the HC can provide assistance due to privacy matters. Maybe we can put a notice in the Slate that the HC is willing to help identify resources that might be available for town residents.

BC: Will be attending a meeting on 4/7 that specifically addresses the federal Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). Expect Wayfinders, Inc. to attend. Maybe Wayfinders can be identified as a possible resource. Will try to identify a contact person.

TL: Maybe we can put a notice in the Slate about Wayfinders and the willingness to help find resources.

BC: Will be meeting with COA to see how we might get a better idea as to need in town.

RE: Kathy Martell will be a good resource.

JL: Has been trying to talk to Connie Kruger to see if she can help get demographic info.

Other matters: PB will be meeting on 4/12 to further discuss ABA and the Tower Road solar array.

BC: Sewer should be extended onto S. Valley Rd, Jones Rd. and Cadwell. If the town of Amherst is going to put in new water lines as planned, then Pelham should try to get sewer installed simultaneously. There is currently a sewer stub on South Valley in front of the Police station that is capped for future use. A group of neighborhood residents are working with Bob Agoglia and the PVPC to get funding for the design and construction. Massachusetts has a new grant process called "One Stop" that includes funds for rural development infrastructures.

RE: Will this really be a Town of Amherst project. Will they contribute?

BC: Amherst will not provide funding. DPW has put off repaving these roads to see if funding for a sewer might become available. Once the road is re-paved it cannot be opened again for 5 yrs.

BC: Bill Pula has been very helpful. The group would like endorsement from the HC because once sewer lines are installed, there is the possibility of developing more affordable housing. SB has already endorsed this and expect the Bd. of Health will also. The Planning Bd. also supports sewer extension into Village Center neighborhoods.

Ruth Elcan makes a motion that the HC endorse the installation of a sewer line on S. Valley, Jones, and Cadwell Street. Seconded by GK. Unanimous.

TL: I'll put the motion together with an endorsement. BC will send the endorsement to PVPC.

Further discussion regarding tiny houses and accessory apartments. Do they need to be attached or detached? GK will look up the zoning to see what is allowed.

Meeting adjourned: motion to adjourn by Barbara, seconded Ruth. 5:50 p.m.

Next meeting: May 4, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Tilman Lukas

References:

ABA: Amethyst Brook Apartments (20-22 Amherst Road)

ANR: Approval not Required

CC: Conservation Commission

CDBG: (Community Development Block Grant)

CPA: Community Preservation Act

CPC: Community Preservation Committee

DHCD: MA Dept. of Housing and Community Development

HC: Housing Committee

HD: Highway Department

H4H: Habitat for Humanity

HCDI: Home City Development Inc.

MHC: Massachusetts Historical Commission

PVPC: Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

PB: Planning Board

VCDC: Valley Community Development Corporation

ZB: Zoning Board