

PLYMPTON HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 20, 2017 Large Meeting Room

Attendance: Carolyn DeCristofano, Dawn Hastings-Ely, Sharon Housley, Christine Joy

6:05 –Meeting called to order

Agenda Items:

1. Discussion of informational platforms and press release prior to the release of the survey –Contact with publisher of town newsletter was initiated and we are waiting to hear back. Thoughts were shared about advertising prior to the release of the survey and where the advertisements would be. The committee discussed the town website as the main source of information, but utilizing informational forums and other available tools to get the information to the town residents, will be employed. The survey release date will be in the fall. The group discussed the possibility of focus groups after the information sessions and the completion of the survey. The committee may look at the Plympton Library Management Plan and the tools that were employed to develop the plan including, but not limited to, the survey questions that were used. Additionally, the committee is hopeful that the new consultant (TBA) from OCPC will be willing to help with informational sessions.

Caroline will put together a press release, so that the same information is used no matter the format/ medium for sharing.

2. Discussion of Housing Production Plans submitted by other communities with similar demographics and trends to Plympton – The towns that were reviewed with similar demographics included: Hubbardston, Harvard, Berlin, Merrimac, and Phillipston. Though all of the aforementioned towns did have similarities to Plympton, there were also significant differences, including, but not limited to: population size, land size, military base, town sewer, and industry. Having said that, there were commonalities as well, including, but not limited to: size limits, septic issues, wells and water concerns, a desire to meet the needs of an aging population, and the future possibility of slowed growth and construction.
3. Discussion of affordable housing councils in the area –
 - ❖ South Shore Housing – Dawn will contact
 - ❖ Neighbor Works, Southern, MA – Sharon will contact

4. Discussion of strategy relative to consultant's departure from OCPC - When a new representative is identified we will schedule a meeting and determine how that consultant will be assisting the committee with the survey and informational sessions.

APPOINTMENTS:

Jen MacDonald & Mike Lemieux – 7:00 PM. Jen discussed housing trends in Plympton and other potential opportunities to explore:

- ❖ Price range in town for homes is generally \$350,000 and under
- ❖ There is an aging population in town
- ❖ The availability (the inventory) of homes for sale is low
- ❖ Generally, properties are moving quickly
- ❖ Generally, millennials are busy trying to save for purchasing and are looking for affordable rentals
- ❖ In Plympton it is tough to build two family and multi-family homes.
- ❖ Some towns use something called affordable overlay district, wherein there are by-laws and ordinances specifically for those areas to ensure affordability. For example, smaller lot sizes.
- ❖ Fixer uppers were discussed as a way to mix older and younger age groups, but that can be tough to achieve with regard to architectural guidelines, land costs, taxes, etc.
- ❖ Foreclosures in town amount to 7 – 8 per year, which may worsen for a bit with respect to the 2006 over valuation of land and the loans incurred, with respect to homeowners.

The committee discussed other options with Jen, including, but not limited to:

- ❖ Tiny homes
- ❖ Mounded septic systems
- ❖ Communal/community settings – citing the example of the Art Community in Chelsea, MA
- ❖ Deed restrictions - pros and cons
- ❖ Donating deed restricted land as affordable – pros and cons

CORRESPONDENCE:

The South Shore Community Action Council sent a letter to inform the town and the committee that the new CEO is Jack Cocio.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM

Next Meeting: To be determined.

