

Town of Agawam
Housing Committee
Minutes

January 7, 2020

Members Present: Vice Chair Mildred Parzychowski, Mario Tedeschi, Vincenzo Ronghi, Corinne Wingard.

Members Absent: Gail Mathes, Paul Jenny

Others Present: City Councilor Rosemary Sandlin, James Linfield, Project Manager, Wayfinders.

Meeting called to order at 6:15 p.m. by Vice Chair Parzychowski.

Member Wingard stated had asked Councilor Sandlin to attend meeting in order to have a quorum for the meeting, noting that Councilor Mineo had stated that according to Council rules, a Councilor could fill in at committee meetings to make a quorum.

1. Approval of Minutes of November 26, 2019:

Motion by Member Ronghi, Second by Member Tedeschi, All in favor.

2. Update Homeownership/Housing Workshops – Member Parzychowski:

Member Parzychowski reported Home Ownership meeting for tonite cancelled. Next meeting is Aging in Place, then reverse mortgage, and others such as options in state. Second meeting at Senior Center during the day. Councilor Sandlin stated there are grants through the Planning Department for Aging in Place. Member Ronghi suggested that something be added for people not eligible income wise for programs – 0% interest loans. Can bring materials. Member Wingard asked how meetings were being advertised or publicized. Committee members suggested Media Center, Town Forums, Creating Facebook Event, and The Reminder in addition to Agawam Advertiser News.

3. Update CHAPA Stakeholders meeting – Member Wingard:

Member Wingard reported that meeting is scheduled for Jan 21st and stakeholders have been invited.

4. Planning Meeting with Mayor, Landlords, Housing Committee:

Member Wingard suggested may want to re-think meeting, as committee had done for meeting with City Councilors re: Inclusionary Zoning, deciding to discuss first with Council President, since Laura Shufelt of MHP had told Committee on September 25, 2018, it is extremely difficult to turn existing apartments to count units on SHI because of cost, and only seen done once with a single house. Raised question of what could tell landlords in a meeting to get to convert apartments to affordable units to count on SHI. Member Jenney suggested see if existing landlords would want to sell.

Councilor Sandlin suggested talking with assessor's office to get list of big apartment complexes in town, noting there is a new development on Corey St – offer tax subsidy of sorts to new developer. Member Ronghi stated can use affordable housing tax credits to rehab and tell apartment owners if you're selling, new buyer may want it, noting that investment companies are cash flush right now. Member Wingard stated most landlords would not be aware of what required for affordable housing development and suggested giving them this information. Member Ronghi stated this not necessary, and can give apartment owners information about tax credits, telling them this is the process you need to follow and you have to set this up. Member Ronghi offered to draft letter to owners of apartments. Stated investors are looking for developers. Member Parzychowski stated could create a brochure, and Member Ronghi said would get wording to Member Parzychowski to create brochure. Committee agreed to review brochure at next meeting.

5. Wayfinders CPA application:

James Linfield, Project Manager, Wayfinders requested letter of support from housing committee for Wayfinders application for CPA funds for Rosewood Way development at 586 Mill St. Member Ronghi stated that Chair Kozloski of CPA wanted CPA administrator to send application to housing committee, to be sure people are on board, noting that historical stuff is sent to historical commission. Mr. Linfield stated CPA application not yet submitted, but ready to go, and need letter of support by next Friday to submit with application. Member Ronghi offered to draft letter of support for CPA to give Wayfinders as much funding as possible. Motion by Member Ronghi for Housing Committee to support CPA funding application for Rosewood Way, Second by Member Wingard. All in favor, except Member Tedeschi who abstained. Mr. Linfield asked housing committee members to come to CPA meeting if possible.

6. Tax Credit Information – Member Ronghi:

Member Ronghi stated sorry but not able to put information together in time for meeting but would have for next meeting.

7. Review committee priorities established at prior meeting and establish responsibility for carrying out:

Member Wingard stated priorities had been established by committee at August 28, 2018 meeting and gave copy to members, noting did not need to decided tonite, but begin to think about where are with priorities and responsibility for carrying out. Also stated that as with recommendations in Housing Production Plan, not prioritized. Member Tedeschi stated this is first time he has seen these, and Member Parzychowski suggested talk when committee re-constituted in full. Member Ronghi stated that Mayor has no flavor for Housing Trust, and that the only two priorities on list that committee could actually do that were within control of committee were to "Support Planning Department to create new Ordinances re: Housing," and "Plan and sponsor Housing related seminars". Member Wingard stated committee could also work on "Community Engagement". Member Ronghi disagreed stating this was not necessary,

and could be done under Housing related seminars. Member Wingard stated Community Engagement was a different thing, noting that the two major organizations in the state for affordable housing CHAPA and MHP both have whole departments for Community Engagement. Member Wingard also stated that Ordinance creating Housing Committee specifically called for attention to affordable housing.

Announcements:

Member Wingard reported there are a number of housing bills in the State Legislature and expectation that some may be enacted, including bills related to zoning.

Councilor Sandlin stated she is on the town Zoning Committee and suggested inviting Director of Planning and Community Development Strange and representative of Zoning Committee to a meeting. Member Parzychowski suggested inviting Director Strange to meet with committee quarterly re: zoning and what is going on with housing in Agawam.

Member Parzychowski suggested elect new officers when full committee appointed.

Next Agenda:

Update Home Ownership/Housing Workshops – Member Parzychowski .

Update Stakeholders Meeting – Member Wingard

Information on Tax Credits and Review of Brochure – Member Ronghi

Motion to adjourn at 7:25 p.m. by Member Ronghi, Second by Councilor Sandlin. All in favor.

AGAWAM HOUSING COMMITTEE
Town of Agawam
36 Main St., Agawam, MA., 01001

The Agawam Housing Committee will hold a meeting as follows:

Date: February 25, 2020

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Agawam Library, Peirce Conference Room
750 Cooper St. Agawam, MA. 0100

AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of January 28, 2020 meeting.
2. Update Member Jenney on possible property sale by local landlord.
3. Update Member Ronghi Tax Credit Information and Review of Brochure.
4. Update Member Wingard Housing in Agawam Stakeholders Group.
5. Update Member Parzychowski Seminars for Homebuyers.
5. Review City Council response to Wayfinders application for CPA funds. implications, and possible follow up by housing committee.
6. Update Director Housing and Community Development.
7. Announcements.
8. Next Agenda.
9. Any other business that may legally come before the committee.