

AHTFC MEETING AUG 14, 2023

**Town of Stockbridge Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee Meeting held in person and via Zoom, August 14, 2023**

**Members in Attendance:** Chair Warner, Vice Chair Ackerman, Member Mills, Member White, Member Wheeler, Member Auerbach, Consultant Karen Sunnarborg  
Online: Member Donovan

**Approval of the minutes** of the meetings on July 7 and July 14. Member Mills made the motion to approve and Member Ackerman seconded. Both were approved.

**Michael Canales - update on the playground:** Review of O'Brien's and PCA Zoom meeting on designs.

There is \$30,000 available from ARPA funds approved by the Selectboard. Could possibly have some work donated for additional value. Area being proposed is not big enough for PCA requests. Would PW's consider a separate location for swings? Need 32 feet back and from and 6 on each side. Roughly 30x32 needed. Construct has been asked to respond to this request. Funding coming from ARPA, must comply with their regulations for use and distribution.. Current designs are priced as low as \$50,000. Looking for volunteers or more funding to reach that goal. Working within \$30,000 funding we have now.

**A motion was made by Member Ackerman to modify the \$10,000 granted for the playground project.** A vote was proposed to pay for the playground project a sum of \$10,000 for a total of \$40,000.

**Clarification** of how funding from the AHT is used and distributed as well as municipal funds and grants by Town Administrator Canales and Member White.

**Discussion about new playground equipment at Pine Woods.**

\$10,000 more will be offered to Construct for additional swings  
Ackerman proposed the extra money go to O'Briens and she made a motion to add the \$10,000 (to be distributed) through the town and all voted in favor.

**Discussion of the Summary from the HHP meeting with Karen Sunnarborg**

**Committee discussion of housing needs and actions and biggest obstacles related to new housing:**

**Discussion with Member White about zoning:** Make a simple change in 6.12 bylaw. It uses the word "may". If not changing the footprint of the house, not more non-conforming than it is presently, not adding more square footage, not changing setbacks, a special permit is not needed. The Planning Board and Selectboard would be the ones to change the bylaw wording

so it is easier to get a special permit and cut costs to home owners. Must be approved at town meeting.

Member White: Affordable home ownership. Preserve AH housing by restricting the amount of sale of it in the future. Looking at possibly 30-50 new units during the AH tenure.

Member Mills: We can have a small impact in our community. Zoning of 2-4 acres makes it so younger people just can't get started. Need to think about ADU's, two family homes, rehabilitation of older properties etc... need to be addressed.

Member Auerbach: Old bylaws don't apply to today's housing needs. Look at the Adirondack project. Could acquire a large property and build 40-50 units.

Member Ackerman: What are the three highest priorities of each of the AHT members? Zoning is going to be involved in each decision that is made. Our committee does not need to focus on this with separate exclusionary laws for each property. Ie: Friendly 40B

Chair Warner: Our ideas for regulations from a housing point of view

**Focus on the objectives and suggestions by each committee member:**

Member Ackerman:

1. Work collaboratively with the town and Construct for needed renovations at PW's
2. Identify a property that has enough acreage for a development that includes affordable housing, both A and small a.
3. Work to identify a few houses that we could rehabilitate with Habitat for Humanity to be done I've the next five years. Maybe 3-5 houses.

Member Auerbach:

1. Identify a parcel to build something like the development in the Adirondacks. 40-50 Single family homes. Move to home ownership with restrictions for AH in perpetuity.
2. Habitat will need additional contributions where we could include the "sweat equity" option.
3. Make sure anything we do addresses the issue of our workforce being able to live here. Prioritize the lottery.

Member Donovan:

Statement. We need a shared vision of what this town is. The small town feel and nostalgia of it is important. Acknowledge the world and where we are now. How do we all address the housing crisis? All of the boards should be involved in this conversation. Get more expert voices in the room. We should be engaging Michael from the presentation on the 17th in this conversation.

1. Adjust 6.12
2. How we use our parcels and utilize them to be an example to other communities.
3. Acknowledging the preservation of the town's charm. Find a way to consolidate that would fit the aesthetic of the town.

Member Mills: Everything has changed since the older generation in Stockbridge and around the country was brought up with. We need AH units:

1. Increase the ability to have two family homes without changing the character of the town.
2. ADU's with a non-short term rental clause.
3. 30-40 units built in one place is a stretch. Think more about pocket developments 6-10 units. (Karen has examples she can share). Great for starter housing and downsizing. Specific proposals for specific sites. Not change all the zoning but see where we run into zoning problems. Have a specific proposal for a specific site.
4. Finding one house at a time with Habitat for Humanity.

Member Warner:

1. To find a larger piece of land. It can be used to develop a 30-50 units development. IE: land on 102 with 28 acres with possibly 7 acres that could be developed.
2. We need to do something. We need a project that is real. Action first priority
3. Establish a good ADU bill as a secondary and two family homes as a right.
4. Do something like GB is now with Habitat. IE: the project on North Plain Rd.

Member Wheeler:

Ask others to be advisors to AHT IE: Michael(?) from the community housing meeting, Linda Shapiroff.

1. Have Construct come to us when they are ready for help.
2. We need affordable rentals as well as affordable homes to buy.
3. Bring the community together with a town event. Get to know each other and those who live here for a better understanding of who we are together and what is really happening in town. Bring the character back without the separation of residential and second home owners.

Karen mentioned her town cordoned off a private street, had a few bands play, food and things for children to do face painting, etc.. and local organizations there to represent themselves. Events do bring people together.

Member White:

1. There is a high percentage of homes here that were built before 1980. Give qualifying homeowners help to fix their homes. Money could come from Residential Inclusionary Bylaw money from developments. Blind application process. Source out the administrative seat to another town. Community Block Grant discussion.
2. Need money to leverage PW's issues at the state level. Renovation tax credits.
3. Make sure properties have water and sewer or are planned for in the future. Master plan for water and sewer is being planned this year by the town. Long term goal. Must be approved at town meeting.
4. Pocket homes
- 5 Heaton Court - mix of market and subsidized added.
- 6 We can get ADU's, STR's and two-family housing passed. Only need 50% majority vote to do this for affordable housing. Stockbridge is run by a consensus government.

**Summary and Report:**

Member Ackerman will summarize the highest 5-6 priorities from today's meeting. What are the next steps? What do we need to find out about? Next meeting will focus on the results of the town survey.

**Timeline:**

Survey will be completed by residents who participate by September 15.

Next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 21 at 4:00 to focus on results of the town survey and tonight's board member survey.

Member White made a **motion to adjourn**, Member Wheeler seconded. All in favor.  
Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Elisabeth Wheeler

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee and Planning Board Member

Full meetings of the affordable housing trust fund committee can be viewed at [ctsbtv.org](https://ctsbtv.org). Go to "government" in the search bar, type in Stockbridge, then look for the date of the meeting you want to listen to.