

***Town of Stockbridge Affordable Housing Trust Meeting held in person and via Zoom,  
December 21, 2023***

**Members in Attendance:** Chair Warner, Member Mills, Member Donovan, Member White.

**Online:** Member Wheeler, Vice Chair Ackerman, Member Auerbach, Counsel Donna Brewer and Hans Morris

**Residents at the meeting** - Elaine and Bill Markham, Tom and Coke Forbes, Peter Barenski Jr, Jackie Harris and Nikki Amdur

**Approval of Meeting Minutes** approved by someone and Bruce

**Discussion of the Letter of Donation for Land**

- Counsel Brewer reviewed the generous donation of 34 acres located off Glendale Middle Road to the town. Primary purpose will be developed for Affordable Housing. If 5 years go by without housing being built then the property must be offered to the town for Open Space. The acquisition must be approved at Town Meeting if it's not to be used for AH. If not approved, it will go back to the donors. Due diligence will be scheduled to be completed by May 1, 2024. If moving forward, the closing will be on May 15, 2024. The Morris's will be included in reviews of plans and their finalization. Homes are expected to be built consistent with the character of the town. Wording of the agreement will be changed to "with prompt review and approval within 10 days of ..." Typos will be changed to reflect actual intention. See document when finalized.

**Mr Morris** speaking to the neighbors on Glendale Middle Road - Stockbridge needs affordable housing.. Fundamentally affects the future of Stockbridge. Mix of public spaces as well as some houses built at a higher density similar to East Main and Park St. Modest sized and nice looking. Retaining natural elements, trails, playground for everyone's use. Not sure of the number of units that can be put there at this time.

**Member Mills** - there will be minimal impact to the neighborhood wherever it is built. Not a low-income development. The town has gone through many changes in terms of affordability. Middle age, middle class is missing. Many homes have been bought as second homes. The AHT doesn't know how this will be financed yet. The AHT understands the neighbors may have issues with it and wants to make sure the neighbors have their input too.

**Neighbors:** Would like more information. How many homes could be put on the property? We only have preliminary information about water and sewer. Water could be a problem there.

Suggested it makes no sense since they lost their house due to water suppression being an issue.

**Member Mills:** The water and sewer department have been contacted about these issues. Have preliminary answers but nothing solid yet.

AHT encouraged neighbors to come to our meetings.

- Neighbors mentioned the Glendale Middle Rd people have had a dump, rats, dust, cell tower, solar, affecting the character of the neighborhood. They report they have given up a lot already and feel it's happening again. "We've made a lot of sacrifices." The land has been explored in the past and access may not be wide enough or the amount of water might not be enough. Number of tree to come down? What's really going to happen on the Northwest of the property? Hoping this project won't have a negative impact on their neighborhood and the reason they want to stay. Would like this project to be done with everyone in mind.
- **Chair Warner** - AHT is aware of the issues with the property, access, wetlands, forested, access to the property, etc... It's a challenge. This would be a major addition to the town. Want it to be positive for the neighbors and the community. Let us know what they would like to participate in.
- **Member Mills** - Survey will determine whether it is feasible.
- **Member White** made a motion to accept, with changes, the offer and to authorize the chair to work with Michael Canales directly to hire the surveyor. All in favor, unanimous vote.

#### **Where the AH plans are at this time:**

**Scope of Services:** 4 areas 21E Evaluation of the land for environmental issues

Phase One: Do historical review of the land and concerns

Phase Two: Testing for samples if needed

**Wetlands:** Only have very preliminary information. Do we want a reconnaissance survey (\$800-\$1000) or a delineation survey (\$3000) or boundary line survey? What level of boundary line survey? Simple or detailed, cost can be up to \$10,000-\$20,000. **Member White suggested** sticking to due diligence for now with a standard survey. More depends on how complicated the title is.

**Topography:** Lidar or full topographic survey? Get the first step done then decide where to go with this.

**Hire an Engineer:** ask for preliminary first steps in all areas and determine whether we need more information. If we find the land is not desirable we will not close on May 15 and decline the offer. Set 60 days time to get this accomplished.

- Get competitive bids. We have three/four bidders. The AH Trust cannot talk directly to the vendors until the vendor has been selected. AHT authorized Chair Warner to work with Michael Canales in choosing the vendors to save time. She has more experience in this field than most on the committee. If questions come up she can request a quick Zoom meeting.

- Michael Canales will rewrite the scope of bids to get costs of everything we may consider for the survey in the future.

- **Neighbor Harris** (former deputy executive director of the NY Planning Dept) would like to know if they can get a copy of the scope of work. What can we do there? Review of what was discussed earlier.
- **Chair Warner** -The AHT is going to see what we can do in terms of mixed use housing. We can only, as this committee pursue affordable housing.
- **Member Mills** - recap of what has to be done next...survey etc...
- **Member Donovan** - There is a need and the AHT would like the neighbors to be part of it.
- **Neighbor Harris** - would like to be part of the shaping of this proposal. Concerned they heard about this in the paper.
- **Member Mills** mentioned he made calls to neighbors to alert them and left messages if there was no response. And to keep their eye on the calendar for our upcoming meetings so they can be a part of the process.
- **Member White** - in responseNeighbor Harris's question... do we have experience with this kind of building in the town? Heaton Ct, Pine Woods, Riverbrook. Stockbridge is missing middle housing and is trying to offer workforce housing. \$70,000-\$100,000 income range. Can't flip the house. But for a first time homebuyer it's a great opportunity. Have the benefits of homeownership. Trying to fill this gap in Stockbridge of the missing middle. There may be small subsidies to help them get into a house they can own. Not a giant development or apartment houses. We don't know if they will be single family or duplex in a cul de sac. Want it to look like the rest of the neighborhood. Flexibility in when they can sell and for what percentage more than they paid for it. But this is way ahead of where the AHT is now in the process.
- Surveyors will access the property from the Solar Field.
- **Neighbor Amdur:** What protection will there be from developing more housing down the road?
- **Member White:** In response.... The team has a good sense of how we are committed to doing things in the character of the town. The team is well rounded and has the town and the neighbors back. The AHT is trying to make sure there will be families here in the

future to keep this a viable town. Sewer and water might be expanded if it can be done which would benefit the neighborhood.

- **Neighbor:** Who will carry those costs? Just want to make sure what is done makes sense, not build this project on stilts in a wetland.
- **Member Donovan:** wants to make sure we are doing our research and it is done properly building wise and environmentally.
- **Member White:** The AHT is committed to use best building practices.

#### **Update on CDC Funding - Member White**

- Request for Funding from CPC this year. Roughly \$850,000 available.
- Apply for \$25,000- \$50,000 for community block grants (CBG) to help keep housing stock well kept where residents may not be able to do so due to financial restraints.
- Since Bailey Boyd's project is in progress, AHT might apply for a small grant. We are a partner in the application with Gt Barrington and Sheffield. Gt Barrington is the lead.
- Put aside a little money from CPC (Community Preservation Committee) so AHT can help with knob and tube removal.
- And a bigger ask for the AH project to be used in the future. \$50,000-\$75,000. The AHT will use its money to cover the first phases. 20% of money for a project has to come from a local source.
- Ask for money in the future for architects....\$400,000. Prepare the AH proposal for \$450,000-\$460,000.

#### **Next Meeting Date:**

January 11, 2023 4pm to review the draft of HPP, update of due diligence and Application to the CPC.

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn by Member White, seconded by Member Mills.

***Respectfully submitted,***

Elisabeth Wheeler, Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee Member

A full meeting 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 Affordable Housing, then look for the date of the meeting you want to listen to