

**NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
Monday, April 30, 2018**

**Regular Meeting 5:00 PM** Tracy Hall – Multipurpose Meeting Room

**Members Attending:** Lubell, Hybels, Shepherd, Manganiello

**Members Absent:** Moffatt, Goodrich

**Clerk:** Shepherd, Phil Dechert, Director of Planning and Zoning

**Others/ Public:** Stuart Richards

Ralph Hybels, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

1. **Approve Agenda** -- Approved.
2. **Comments from the Public** –
  - a. Stuart Richards mentioned a possible sale of property, to be followed up after septic testing, etc. He hopes for public support. Lubell offered help from the Planning Commission. Richards recommended listening to the talk by Andrew Winter, Director of Twin Pines Housing.
3. **Minutes** of April 2, 2018 were approved.
4. **Announcements, Reports & Correspondence**
  - a. Correspondence – none.
  - b. Updates --
    - i. Status of the Town Plan – The Town Plan is still with the Select Board, assigned to a subcommittee for review; completion date not known. With lack of a Town Plan, Norwich has already lost out on about \$100-200 K in grants to compensate for the storm of July 1, 2017. If the Town Plan is not approved within a calendar year, which began July 2017, then it will be necessary to rewrite it.
    - ii. Manganiello read from an article, “Why we need social housing in the US.” (by Matt Breunig, The Guardian, April 5, 2018). It raises the question about how we could get public funds and work with Twin Pines to develop AH?
    - iii. Manganiello presented ideas about alternative wastewater treatment. <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/publicroads/00mayjun/vermont.cfm>  
[http://www.toddecological.com/data/uploads/casestudies/jted\\_i89-case-study.pdf](http://www.toddecological.com/data/uploads/casestudies/jted_i89-case-study.pdf)
    - iv. Dechert said that now only municipalities can use alternative wastewater methods, as the state takes on responsibility for pumping and maintenance. All other treated effluent must go into the land. Should we approach the Dept of Environmental Conservation about alternative wastewater treatment?
    - v. Lubell reminded us that the job of the Affordable Housing Subcommittee is to gather ideas about solutions; the committee is not a developer.

**5. Affordable Housing Listening Sessions**

- a. Topics raised at past sessions included the feasibility of accessory dwellings and the apparent lack of tax incentives to do them. Zoning is already in place to use a barn or outbuilding if there is adequate septic.
- b. To find an easy way to calculate the tax advantages of having more children in the school, Lubell will seek help from the Tuck School.
- c. The next listening sessions have been posted on the Norwich listserv. Two more sessions are offered on Saturday, May 5 from 3-4:30 at Marion Cross School, and Thursday, May 10, from 7:00-8:30 at Tracy Hall multi-purpose room.

**6. Other Business –**

- i. Moffatt, absent due to illness, offered to prepare a brief history of the efforts of the Affordable Housing committee in order to avoid retracing the same territory.
- ii. Moffatt requested a status report on the funding for AH raised from the community in early 2000's. Dechert said there were private contributions but most of it was a line item passed by town meeting. The town missed the required renewal date to maintain the fund, but later put it back on the warrant and the fund was at \$45K. Time has elapsed again to renew the fund, so should be placed on the ballot for the next election, such as the August primary, Nov. 3, or Town Meeting in March 2018. Committee should find out from Bonnie Munday how it needs to be presented.
- iii. On May 9, the Selectboard will elect Lubell as a member of the Planning Commission and endorse Goodrich for TRORC.

**7. Comments from the Public --** Stuart Richards suggests setting a goal or reference point for AH. For example, CT and MA require 10% AH in new developments. A review of Norwich assessments may provide a baseline and the goal could be a minimum number over a period of time, so we can measure progress. Attachment A is a document created by Stuart Richards showing percentage of assessed values of residences broken down from the 2017 Norwich Grand List.

**8. Parting words from Phil Dechert:** After the 1980's there was a sharp decline in building permits, which has continued to the present. He observed that properties assessed at an affordable \$200 - \$300K, when sold, are improved extensively beyond that price. In the transition following Phil's retirement, Pam will continue to prepare agendas and minutes.

**Meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.**

Kathleen Shepherd for Phil Dechert, Clerk

*APPROVED 7-16-18*

**Future Meeting:** TBD

*Affordable Housing Subcommittee Agendas and Minutes available at:*  
<http://norwich.vt.us/Affordable-Housing/>

**ATTACHMENT A – CREATED BY STUART RICHARDS**

Residences assessed at \$175,000 or less: 59 or 5% of all residences  
Residences assessed at \$200,000 or less: 81 or 6% of all residences  
Residences assessed at \$225,000 or less: 113 or 9% of all residences  
Residences assessed at \$250,000 or less: 155 or 12% of all residences  
Residences assessed at \$275,000 or less: 208 or 16% of all residences  
Residences assessed at \$300,000 or less: 265 or 20% of all residences