

**MINUTES**  
**AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE WORKING MEETING**  
**Town of Peterborough, NH**  
**Friday, February 3rd, 2023, 8:30 a.m.**  
**Select Board Meeting Room, Town House**

**Present**

Committee Co-chairs Pelagia Vincent and Carol Nelson, members Stephanie Hurley (liaison to Planning Board), Bonnie Tucker, James Kelly, Town Planner Danica Melone. Guests Dori Drachman, co-coordinator of Peterborough Renewable Energy Planning (PREP) team, and Bob Haring-Smith, also co-coordinator of PREP.

**Not present**

Members Sharon Monahan and Sadie Halliday.

**Welcome and Call to Order**

Co-chair Vincent welcomed those in attendance and began the meeting at approximately 8:35 am.

**Overview of PREP Committee**

Guests Dori Drachman and Bob Haring-Smith explained how PREPs mission and ours can support each other. Pelagia gave an overview of our mission to create the awareness of what affordable housing is and what the affordable housing needs are for our area, and to partner with and support affordable housing for this area as it relates to rental housing.

Dori and Bob gave an overview of BlocPower's pilot program to install sustainable, comfortable heat in low-to-moderate income households. BlocPower developed a program evaluating homes for energy efficiency: installing insulation and weatherization, and installing heat pumps. Dori and Bob wanted to know what our level of interest is in possibly participating with BlocPower. They're looking for a cross-section in town that would include one multi-family home. The decision of who gets ultimately chosen for the pilot program lies with BlocPower, who will be in Peterborough for a visit on February 21. Dori asked if we'd be interested in meeting with them and the committee agreed that was a good idea. The BlocPower contract is for 10-15 buildings in Peterborough to be electrified, with BlocPower's first target home type being low-to-moderate income households. Once Dori and Bob find out what the goal of BlocPower's visit is, they will be in touch. Carol offered to put Dori and Bob in contact with Alice Altman, executive director of Contocook Housing Trust.

Bonnie outlined the questionnaire project we're working on with rental owners/managers and suggested we add in the BlocPower question. Everyone agreed that would be a good idea. Carol to run the questionnaire by Dori and Bob for review.

Bob pointed out that an important element in housing costs is energy costs. PREP would like to see buildings use energy efficiently and, ideally, rely on reliable energy to do it. The basic strategy is to make buildings efficient, then convert them to electric heat pumps. In the meantime, PREP is working on getting the electricity supply to be based on renewable sources. Dori followed up on that idea by stating that the issue with energy efficiency and efficient heat sourcing through heat pumps, while the actual usage is very cost-effective, the upfront cost is expensive. We now have a source of funding through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) from the federal government.

Bonnie asked what the incentive is for the landlords to install heat pumps when utility costs are the responsibility of the residents. Dori responded that there's very little upfront costs to the developers for these units to be installed. This led to a discussion of determining what utilities renters in Peterborough actually pay. Dori is looking for this research as it's her understanding that renters pay for the electricity but the landlords pay for heat. We agreed to add that question to our rental development questionnaire. Bob asked that we also ask what the fuel source is and the delivery method; forced hot air or forced hot water as that effects installation of heat pumps.

Stephanie asked if there's any goal within the PREP to limit landlords from raising the rent after efficient heat sources are added to their buildings. Bob pointed out if we're reducing the energy costs for the landlord, then the same rent produces more profit. Pelagia stated if they're getting help with the upfront costs, then there should be an agreement that the landlord doesn't raise the rent for x number of years.

Dori also provided information about an upcoming webinar from the Monadnock Sustainability Hub on energy efficiency targeted to landlords. We agreed to put an announcement of this webinar in the February issue of Neighbors Together. Dori will send the information directly to Danica.

### **Review minutes**

Working meeting minutes of December 2, 2022 were reviewed. Motion made by James; seconded by Stephanie. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

Working meeting minutes of January 6, 2023 were reviewed. Motion made by James; seconded by Stephanie. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

### **Review rental property manager/owner questions and assignments**

Rental property manager questions were reviewed and adjusted to include the new questions from PREP. Carol will update the questionnaire and send it to Dori and Bob for review.

### **Status of employer interviews/consider adding two employers**

It was agreed that SoClean and Monadnock Paper Mills were important employers to add to our research project. Regarding SoClean, Bonnie pointed out that if they're allowing employees to work remotely from anywhere, that relieves the housing stress here. If they have to be remote but local, the housing need is still an issue. Carol agreed to add SoClean to her list of employers

to contact. The reason Monadnock Paper Mills was added is because CHT gets calls from their employees frequently, looking for housing. Danica commented they were desperate for employees. Stephanie agreed to contact them. There was discussion about who will reach out to MCH as Sadie isn't responded to our requests. Bonnie had offered to take MCH; Danica will send Laura Gingras' contact information to Bonnie.

Pelagia asked who was assigned to NHBB; which is Stephanie. Bill Farr called Danica to see if there's anything the Town can do to help with housing. Stephanie sent him the questionnaire and they plan to talk about it after he's completed it.

### **Discuss working meeting schedule through June**

It was recommended that the committee continues to have working meetings once a month through June, which is when the ADU seminar is being held, then the group will take the summer off from working meetings, reconvening in October (possibly September, depending on whether or not a critical issue arises).

Working meeting dates were set for March, April, May and June.

Carol shared the ADU seminar dates: Wednesday, June 7 and Saturday, June 10.

### **AHC web components on the submenu**

Time was spent going over the AHC section of the web site. Right now, the Minutes and Neighbors Together links are populated, however the Shared Statement and FAQ pages are "under construction". Carol suggested adding a link to the Glossary, the comic book, and then a submenu of ADU information. Pelagia suggested that we should put the ADU dates up now. Stephanie suggested linking to the ADU portion of the zoning code.

### **Assignments from the November 4, 2022 Working Meeting**

The meeting ended before this could be discussed:

- Danica to determine the flood restrictions for the Sterling Business property.

### **Assignments from December 2, 2022 and January 6, 2023 Working Meeting**

The meeting ended before this could be discussed:

- Sadie to follow up with the hospital to ask if there's something in the zoning code, as its written, that's preventing them from building.

### **New Assignments**

1. Dori and Bob to be in touch with the committee regarding the BlocPower's visit on February 21
2. Carol to put Dori and Bob in contact with Alice Altman
3. Carol to add fuel source and the delivery method to rental questionnaire
4. Carol to run the rental questionnaire by Dori and Bob
5. Danica to put an announcement about the landlord webinar in the February issue of Neighbors Together

6. Carol to contact SoClean about the employer questionnaire
7. Danica will send Laura Gingras' contact information to Bonnie
8. Carol to resend the final rental questionnaire to the committee, with the new edits
9. Danica to add the following links to the AHC submenu: Glossary, the comic book, and ADU information.
10. Danica to link to the Shared Statement and the FAQs
11. Danica to put the ADU seminar dates up now and also add a link to the ADU portion of the zoning code

Stephanie made a motion to adjourn; Pelagia seconded. All in favor; motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 am.

**Future Meetings – all take place at 8:30am in the Select Board meeting room, unless otherwise noted**

Friday, February 24, 2023 – regular meeting

Friday, March 3, 2023 – working meeting

Respectfully Submitted:

Carol Nelson and Pelagia Vincent

Co-Chairs of Affordable Housing Subcommittee, Peterborough, NH