



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

375 MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON, NH 03257 • WWW.NL-NH.COM

NEW LONDON HOUSING COMMISSION

July 11, 2022, 6:00PM

Whipple Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Nichols, Amy Kaplan, Marilyn Kidder, Michael Quinn, Nancy Rollins

MEMBERS ABSENT: Randy Foose, Steve Theroux, Winfried Feneberg, Tom Vannatta, Tim Lund

OTHERS PRESENT: Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator, Mark Fougere, Bob Bowers, Marilyn Soper

Chair Peter Nichols called the meeting to order at 6:11pm.

Review of Minutes – Deferred until the next meeting

NH State Infrastructure Grant Update

Mark Fougere and Mike Quinn are working on funding that is coming from the state. There are two grants, one relates to municipalities and planning purposes and the other relates to the \$10,000 per unit for municipalities. There is no new update at this time.

Developer Panel Planning

Colby-Sawyer College has agreed to allow the Housing Commission to use Wheeler Hall for the Developer Panel discussion. The panel discussion will be held at 6:00pm and proposed dates that are available are September 15, 19, 20, 21 & 29. The Commission agreed to try to plan for the September 29, 2022 date.

Andrew Winter, Executive Director of Twin Pines Housing Trust has agreed to attend and present at the panel discussion in September. He has been asked to show other projects in other towns that might be consistent with the town character we have in New London. In 2019, Mr. Winter provided a similar presentation to the Citizens Advisory Committee. He will not be discussing the Criscenti project that is being proposed as that is not the purpose of this meeting.

Mark Fougere has been in contact with Rob Tourigny of NeighborWorks of Southern New Hampshire. They have done a lot of development projects around affordable housing, similar to Twin Pines. He is willing to be a part of the panel. Mr. Fougere has also spoken with Harry Snow who is also willing to participate.

Panel questions that were suggested included asking about the things that preclude builders and developers from wanting to venture into affordable housing development? What prevents building

and what are the roadblocks? Selectman Rollins stated another important question is how do they work with the community? If they were met with opposition, how did they overcome it? What zoning methods have they seen in other municipalities that attracted them and made it easier to do workforce housing? What does the timeframe look like from start to finish?

Amy Kaplan stressed that it's important for people that attend this discussion to understand that the Housing Commission is taking into consideration what people would or wouldn't like to see in town. People should be pleased with the aesthetic of the development wherever it is located. Selectman Rollins suggested putting together a "cheat sheet" of language that should be routinely handed out so the community understands the meaning of terms like affordable, workforce and low income housing as well as other topics such as density, cluster developments etc.

Chair Nichols suggested characterizing what we would like the presenters to show us and that includes examples of other projects that fit small New England towns in New Hampshire. Mark Fougere stated we should be asking the developers to present facts for everyone to consider. Getting into the details as far as community character in New London is a separate discussion. The discussion with builders and developers should focus on the process and the obstacles they have to overcome.

Chair Nichols distributed handouts that were used for the recent employer panel that was held in July. These could be used as examples of what to use for the developer panel. We would want to make sure it was advertised in *Municipal Matters* and the *Intertown Record* and also would want to do a press release to get the word out. The group also discussed what the title of the session should be.

Discussion: What does "preserve the town character" mean?

Chair Nichols stated he has re-read the master plan as this document is really what should be instructing and directing them as a Housing Commission. To him, the town character relates to how the town works and looks. Mark Fougere stated it is common for communities in this state to want to preserve their rural character and this is almost always stated in their Master plan. It's a challenge though because if you don't allow multifamily housing in your community and a multifamily project gets proposed, the first thing people will say is "that is out of character". It's out of character because you've never allowed it. A lot of it has to do with aesthetics, size and location.

Other Business

Bob Bowers attended the meeting. He thanked the Housing Commission for all of the work they are doing. He discussed the possibility of providing a number of smaller housing projects that are in or abut neighborhoods so there is integration of people mixing in so it is not separate. Also, the closer the housing is to Main Street will allow people to walk to work, shop in town or go to restaurants.

He also discussed how the town can participate. He asked if a town can give a developer money or buy a piece of property to be developed. He stated if so, the town might start looking at pieces of

property that might make sense for this. He also noted he thinks people would be interested in hearing from developers and getting their perspective.

Mr. Bowers asked what defines success and what is the goal of the Housing Commission with regards to workforce housing? Chair Nichols explained that one of their goals is to deal with the regulatory environment to invite a better balance of housing in New London. Amy Kaplan stated it is not the job of the Housing Commission to make deals but they are there to ascertain the information and review zoning regulations so people can make their own decisions regarding development.

Future Meetings

The next meeting will be held on July 27, 2022. There will not be any meetings held during the month of August.

Adjournment

IT WAS MOVED (Amy Kaplan) AND SECONDED (Marilyn Kidder) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson

Recording Secretary
Town of New London