

LAWRENCE TOWNSHIP AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOARD
Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 26, 2017

Present: Peter Ferrone
Susan McCloskey
Kevin VanHise
Jean Washington
Andrew Meltzer

Absent: Jessica Ann Clifford

Excused Absence: Murali Mallampati

Also Present: Andrew Link, Liaison
Christopher Bobbitt, Council Liaison
Susan Snook, Secretary

Statement of Adequate Notice:

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act, N.J.R.S. 10:4-10, specifying the date, time and place of the meeting.

Election of Officers:

Peter Ferrone nominated Kevin VanHise for Chairperson and seconded by Susan McCloskey and approved per unanimous vote.

Susan McCloskey nominated Andrew Meltzer for Vice Chairperson; however, Mr. Meltzer commented he would like to learn about the Board. Susan McCloskey nominated Peter Ferrone and seconded by Jean Washington and approved per unanimous vote.

Minutes:

The October 27, 2016 minutes were unanimously approved.

Public Participation (for items not on agenda):

None

Expiring Rental Unit Controls:

Mr. Link stated there is nothing new to report. The situation is the same as last time.

Township Actions:

Mr. Link gave a brief summary of the following units that the Township has purchased in foreclosures:

- 217 Fountayne Lane was sold in October of 2016.
- 301 Talon Court is on the market now.
- 319 Colts Circle is on the market now.
- 34 Chamberlin Court and in the process of having a work right up done to put it out to bid to have it rehabilitated.

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Housing Rehabilitation Program:

Mr. Link stated there are no new rehabilitations.

Updated Status of Changes at State Level:

Chairperson VanHise stated that the trial in Mercer County started and have been through direct testimony of Peter Angelates, who is the expert at E Consultant, who was hired by the municipalities to set the municipal obligations. They have started cross examination and after the start of trial the Supreme Court issued its gap period decision about that 1999 to 2015 period. They redefined the need, you had your prior round of obligation, which was through 1999; you have your present need obligation, which is necessary now and your prospective need, which is for the ten year period.

They agreed with the Appellate Division that you could not count it in prospective need because that is a defined term, so they included in the present need and is now up to the experts to figure how to re-proportion all of that in. The municipalities stated it was unfair because you can't move numbers from Column A and move to Column C, so you have to redo the methodology. As you redefine the present need it is going to up to certain caps and assumptions get changed, certain implications get changed and you have to model that.

The proposal was to continue with this phase of the trial, which is about the next ten year period and once through that and take a break, it will give the experts to do their reports and reconvene the trial to figure out this new present need calculations and at the conclusion of that, hear from the Courts special master and the judge could make a ruling. The Judge is accepting comments on how they think the schedule should be worked out. All eyes are on the State because we are the first to go to trial.

Two issues have a risen and the first is the cost. In Mercer right now, Lawrence, Princeton, Hopewell, E. Windsor and W. Windsor are proceeding, while Robbinsville settled out, so the five municipalities are paying for the cost for the State, around \$1,400 to \$1,500 an hour. The trial for a month is about \$200,000.00. Mercer attorney's met and analyzed what this is costing and the additional report will be around \$80,000.00 plus expert times. A meeting of the State wide consortium, and it is a state wide report and all of the municipalities will be asked to pay for this report.

The continuation of the trial will go on and will try to figure out what the perspective need is and take a break or work on the reports. The Mayor in Hopewell and Vanessa floated out the idea of a summit of governing body officials in Mercer. It is to share stories and recognize that everybody is in the same boat. It is a way to get the feel if there really a commitment to continue to litigate or with mounting litigation costs with 2% caps, trying to set budgets. No one anticipated the costs that are being spent.

Councilman Bobbitt stated we cap off at a 1,000 in Round 3; then what happens in Round 4, do we still carry those. Chairperson VanHise responded that the balance is hanging over your head. Lawrence number is 1,800 and the 1,000 cap is still in play. E Consultant was at a couple hundred and Redding has it at 275 without the gap and with the gap is at 340. While Kinsey in the third round was at 1,110 and was revised to 1,797. Lawrence and Princeton are in the position of settling; however, not sure if the incentive is there. Council is looking at fighting, not pulling out and stay with the 500 units.

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Other Business:

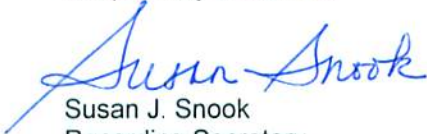
None

Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Digital audio file of this meeting is available upon request.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan Snook". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

Susan J. Snook
Recording Secretary

Minutes approved: Feb 23, 2017