

'23 NOV 13 8:25AM
Jessie Higgins
ORLEANS TOWN CLERK

**Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes
Town of Orleans
Tuesday, October 3, 2023 at 4:30 pm
In person in the Nauset Room and
on Orleans Channel 18 on the Town website and cable television
Joint meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee and the Affordable Housing Trust**

In attendance: Nancy Renn, Susan Carlson, Scott Flood, Fran McClennen, Maria Smith, Bill Stoeckert, Marsha Allgeier (Housing Coordinator) and Andrea Reed (Select Board liaison)
Absent: Elizabeth Paine

Call to Order – Ms. Renn called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

Housing Needs Assessment

Laura Smead (in-person) and Jen Goldson (via Zoom) of JM Goldson LLC presented their report's draft of thirteen (13) goals and strategies as ideas for a possible short list to include in the report's ten-year plan.

Questions and discussion from committee members followed the presentation on each goal.

Regarding **#2 Amend the zoning bylaws to allow and encourage smaller homes in single-family districts**, a member of the Trust noted that Orleans' bylaws already protect a lesser square foot allowance than 40,000 square feet – that in the center of town, there is no minimum lot size. Ms. McClennen asked if we would add information about what already exists in Orleans to this goal. Narratives in the report could more fully flush this out. She asked if the Planning Board might be amenable to further zoning changes and Ms. Reed indicated in the positive.

Regarding **#3 Incentivize the development and preservation of financially attainable year-round rentals**, the question was raised as to whether there could be a property tax abatement – is it legal or is there home rule petition involved? Ms. Goldson thought the latter. A member indicated that a deed restriction is required for a lower assessment and indicated that we could partner with another agency to oversee such a program to assess low-income qualifications. Perhaps a full-time housing coordinator would be needed.

Regarding **#4 Accommodate alternative housing such as seasonal, transitional, and congregate housing**, the question was raised as to who has the authority to move in this direction. Ms. Smead and Ms. Goldson indicated that their final report would outline more of the specifics, keeping things in the report that we can already do, but we are not doing.

Regarding **#6 Create and preserve more deed-restricted affordable housing serving low-income housing**, a member referenced our agreement with Housing Assistance Corporation (HAC). Are there any changes that should be made to that contract. Ms. Goldson was asked to review that.

Regarding **#8 Support the housing stability of year-round low-income renter households**, a member noted that Orleans offered emergency rental assistance during COVID, but we never

had to draw monies from that. We have never been eligible for Community Development Block Grants, unlike Truro that qualifies due to income levels.

Regarding #11 **Sustain and increase as needed dedicated and experienced Town staff to continue coordinating the Town's housing efforts and partnerships, including the Housing Coordinator and Planning Department staff, with consultants**, a member again asked if there would be capacity implications for a part-time Housing Coordinator given the goals we have. Ms. Reed suggested that a group such as an Orleans Housing Roundtable would need to meet at least twice yearly to be active around town meeting initiatives – that four times yearly would be more effective. A member noted that we would need a specific business plan to identify who is responsible for what, when and how. A plan would need to be revised annually, setting new priorities going forward.

Regarding #12 **Increase funding for Trust, with accountability for implementing the 10-year Housing Plan**, a member asked what are the requirements for use of CPA monies? Could we change the amounts given to affordable housing such as 10% given to affordable housing, 10% given to environmental/land acquisition, 10% given to recreation, etc. We would need approval at town meeting. Most towns like the flexibility to use the monies as needs arise.

Next steps

Ms. Goldson asked the Committee and Trust to consider the following questions:

1. What goals and strategies do we most agree with?
2. What goals and strategies do we have more questions about?
3. What additional goals and strategies do we want to suggest?
4. What goals and strategies do we want to eliminate or revise?

Ms. Goldson will flip these questions into an online survey for Committee and Trust members to complete. Feedback should be given by 10/10. A revised 10-year Housing Plan will be available in November. In December, data points and indicators will be shared around how to keep our data fresh over time. In early January, the final report will be available.

Members indicated that the plan needs to be flexible and adaptive to changing needs. We also need to explore the successes of projects in similar towns. Our goals should be our guiding principles.

A Trust member suggested that we group the 13 goals into 3 categories such as 1) Strategies to support people in current housing situations or 2) Capacity building.

Ms. Goldson indicated that there were very involved and invested participants at the Community Forum. Key themes that emerged were: need for financial strategies and incentives, creation of more ADUs, looking at commercial vacancies as potential for housing units, and tensions between rental units for year-round rentals versus short-time vacation rentals.

Deferred agenda items

Given time constraints, joint AHC/AHTB follow-up discussion re: action plan for short-term housing needs was deferred until a later joint meeting.

Update on Governor Prence site

40-50 companies took out RSPs regarding development of the site for housing. Offered opportunity for companies to come for a site visit; only two parties showed up.

Approval of minutes from September 5, 2023

Mr. Flood moved to approve the minutes from 9/5/2023.

Ms. McClennen seconded the motion.

Five voted ayes; one abstention. Motion carried 5-0-1.

Adjournment of AHC meeting

Ms. McClennen moved to adjourn the AHC meeting.

Mr. Stoeckert seconded the motion.

All voted ayes. Motion carried 5-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 pm.

Next AHC meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Carlson, Clerk