

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING  
December 7, 2021**

**Present:** Colin Moll - First Selectman, Kathie Harrington - Board of Selectmen, Erin Golembiewski – Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC), Jeff Girard - PZC, Dave Colangelo - Suffield Community Aid Board of Directors, Kevin Goff - Suffield Community Aid Board of Directors, Kerry O’Brien - Housing Authority Executive Director, Jack Henrie - Economic Development Commission, Robin Zatony – Social Services Commission, Marcia Dufore – Social Services Commission, Mark Messenger – Suffield Housing Authority

Mark Winne – PZC Chairman, Glenn Chalder - Planimetrics, Bill Hawkins - Director of Planning & Development, David Berto, Housing Enterprises, Inc.

**I. Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM as a hybrid in-person and Zoom video/teleconference meeting and Mr. Hawkins took the roll call of members and others present that comprise the advisory committee.

**II. Discussion with David Berto of Housing Enterprises, Inc.**

Mr. Berto explained that he has lived in town for the last 38 years and has served on various boards and commissions in the past. He has been following the progress that the town has been making with the affordable housing plan and reached out to offer his assistance. Mr. Hawkins asked him to attend the meeting to lend his perspective on affordable housing from a developer’s point of view.

Mr. Berto described his company, Housing Enterprises, Inc. and that they generally work with small non-profit groups to develop affordable housing in the state. He explained that building affordable housing takes a team approach and almost all projects need multiple funding sources to be built. Mr. Berto went on to discuss that developers assess the risk with projects including whether there is town support, land use commission support, determine whether the approval process is straightforward or if there are roadblocks. He also explained that affordable housing can be seen as an economic development tool and some municipalities are viewing it that way and that providing incentives and/or density bonuses have to make sense for the developer to work. Mr. Berto answered questions from Committee Member Zatony and Glenn Chalder of Planimetrics. With nothing further, Mr. Hawkins thanked Mr. Berto for attending the meeting and providing his insight into affordable housing for the committee.

**III. Affordable Housing Plan Discussion**

Mr. Hawkins explained that the draft housing plan was distributed via email to the members one week ago and that we are here tonight to review it with Planimetrics. Consultant Glenn Chalder explained the process that led up to the draft plan and asked the committee if they would prefer to go through the document page by page or discuss general comments. Committee members

Harrington, Colangelo, Goff, O'Brien, Zatory, Henrie, and Moll had questions, comments, and suggested edits on multiple sections of the draft plan. After discussion, Mr. Chalder recommended going through each page of the draft plan to make sure all comments were captured. Mr. Chalder handed out verb charts to the committee and explained that the choice of wording is critical to any planning document, including this one.

Committee member Golembiewski commented about some of the wording on Page 5 related to what is considered a family structure and suggested removing some text. There were several comments related to the "housing ladder" graphic on Page 5 as well. Commission Members O'Brien and Zatory discussed the pictures showing examples of affordable housing and suggested revisions.

Committee Member Harrington suggested edits to the wording on Page 8 entitled "Reasons for Addressing Housing". Mr. Goff questioned the charts on Page 9 regarding the percent of income spent on housing for renters and owners. Mr. Winne also commented on the tables.

Chapter 4 of the plan entitled "Community Input" gives an overview of the results of the on-line survey that was conducted in June and July. There were several comments on how the responses to the survey were presented in the plan.

Section 5 of the plan contains the strategies that are presented with priority levels and which group would be the leader and/or partner in implementing the strategies. A lengthy discussion about the strategies, the priority assigned to each strategy, and wording used for the strategies took place. Mr. Chalder explained that he will revise the draft plan based upon the comments received and circulate the plan to the committee members prior to the next meeting on January 4, 2022.

Mr. Hawkins explained the proposed timeline going forward in order to have the plan adopted by the grant deadline of March 31, 2022.

#### **IV. Adjournment**

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 9:33 PM.

Submitted,

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Bill Hawkins, Director of Planning & Development

cc: Town Clerk