

## 4-23-14 Westport Affordable Housing Trust Fund

### Regular Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m., with WM arriving at 4:17 p.m. Present: Chair Elizabeth Collins (LC), members James Sabra (JS), Elaine Ostroff (EO), Catherine Williams (CW), Warren Messier (WM), Housing Specialist Leonardi Aray, recording clerk Robert Barboza. Absent members: Brian Corey, Craig Dutra.

The minutes of the April 2, 2014 meeting were reviewed and approved unanimously.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE OFFICE: Invoice dated 4/21/14 from LA in the amount of \$2,957.50, and expense reimbursement requests totaling 4175.78, approved unanimously. Voucher from clerk Robert Barboza in the amount of \$248.00 was approved unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 4:15 p.m., LC asked for a roll call vote to enter executive session pursuant to Open Meeting Law Executive Session provision #6: To consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body, regarding an application to the Housing Opportunity Purchase Program (HOPP). Motion by CW, second by EO. JS, aye; EO, aye; CW, aye; LC aye. The minutes of the 4/2/14 executive session were reviewed; EO motion, LC second, approved unanimously; LC aye, EO aye, CW aye, JS aye. The Trust Fund returned to public session at 5:00 p.m.

ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY (RWU) COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PRESENTATION: LA introduced the 5 p.m. program as being concept plans from architecture graduate students from the RWU for two parcels of town-owned land (behind 666 State Road, 278 Drift Road) which might be suitable for future use as affordable housing. The secondary purpose of the public presentations was "to start a conversation about the use of under-utilized town properties for affordable housing" sometime in the future, LA said.

Professor Ulker Copur, RWU faculty advisor, said the program theme was "Westport: In Between Water, Land, and the Villages." After three and a half weeks of research on the parcels, and site visits, students began designing individual concept plans for a minimum of 24 affordable duplex units on the two parcels; the project ends May 6, she said. Three primary focuses: sustainability, affordability, and (full) accessibility. Energy efficient designs were considered a primary component of each village concept; sustainability features to include concepts like rain gardens, bioswales and living machine water purifiers to minimize runoff and wastewater treatment issues. Arnold Robinson, director of RWU Community Partnership Program, said it is designed to give students the opportunity "to work on real sites, and deal with real people who are working in their communities on these projects."

#### STATE ROAD SITE:

##### 1. Eric Figueredo: MOLI Village

Eric's concept featured three housing clusters surrounding green space and a community center, designed for minimal use of land, and low impact on the environment. Buildings use passive solar to minimize heating and cooling expenses, metal roofs to reduce heat effect and A/C costs.

## 2. Kyle Baron: 24 Unit Concept Village

Kyle's concept featured 24 housing units in three duplex buildings on three buildable acres, with the proposed entrance off Mount Pleasant, and one-way traffic exiting to State Road. He proposed using advantage of the natural terrain by building terraced rain gardens and bioswales to control surface runoff; he located his living machine in the community center to support a greenhouse instead of elsewhere on the property.

## 3. April: 24 Unit Cluster Village

April also proposed entry through Mt. Pleasant, leading to an oval cluster of buildings housing a total of 24 duplex units. All ground floor units would be ADA compliant for greatest accessibility, on level ground at northern part of property; multi-bedroom units on the second floor; maximum 70 residents in 1,2,3 bedroom units. Open space and community center in middle of oval.

## 4. Joe Cardella: Village of the Vine

Joe's plan would have the community "like a grapevine" with housing clusters hanging off the central vine of an access road. Four apartments per building, six buildings, with 12 of the 24 units being fully ADA compliant to promote the idea of aging in place. Focus on sustainability to reduce heating and cooling costs, living machine at lowest part of site.

## 5. Jack: Crescent Hill Housing: Using southern exposure for building sites to reduce heating costs, and shade trees for summer cooling; 24 units and community center on a one-way road to reduce paving costs; low maintenance exterior siding. Integrate the new housing with the older Westport Housing Authority development.

## 6. Colby Karambelas: Hillside Court

Colby's concept plan also called for three multi-story buildings clustered around a central village green, anchored by a community center. He also designed his buildings so all the ground floor units would be fully handicapped accessible, meeting ADA standards.

## DRIFT ROAD CONCEPT PLANS

## 7. Jake: A Modular Model

Jake's concept involved using two acres of the 30-acre parcel for 30 units of housing of modular design (pre-fab concrete panels) accessed by the existing roadway. Community center, community garden, and living machine proposed; a ring road would surround central green space.

## 8. Heather Gillock: Nexus Habitat

The Nexus Habitat concept was uniquely tied to the special features of the site, proposing a community garden, orchard and farmer's market site adjacent to the housing, and a leasable oyster farm at river's edge. Solar panels on all residential buildings, and a living machine to purify runoff and wastewater for the gardens and orchards.

## 9. Evan Mazner: Riverside Community

Evan's concept was for a 45-unit apartment community of row houses in 14 buildings, all with photovoltaic panels on the roofs for maximum solar power collection. The orientation would be to the waterfront, with walking paths leading to the river.

#### 10. Tim Pranaitis: Aviary Way

Tim's concept was based on "the nest" idea, a good metaphor for a community of 32 apartments anchored by a town green. All ground level units would meet ADA accessibility guidelines; other units include 1,2,3 bedroom arrangements. The clusters of units in each building would share central mechanical systems to help keep units more affordable.

#### 11. Chris: Eco Village

Chris proposed 26 units in 16 duplex buildings, with a community center and an agricultural area supported by a living machine. Photovoltaic solar panels, southern exposures, and prefab construction of modular units would increase affordability and sustainability; ground floor units are ADA compliant and closer to parking areas.

#### 12. Ben Horst: Modular Model

Ben also proposed using pre-fab modular components for his housing complex of 30 units, clustered in three buildings off a loop road, with a community center in the middle of the loop. A pond and three rain gardens would help control surface runoff on steep slopes, and a waterfront park would provide amenities for residents

#### 13. Jake Wheeler: Water's Edge

Jake's concept plan called for 30 units divided among 10 buildings, with the community center surrounded by the duplexes as the hub of the development. A farmer's market near Drift Road would be accompanied by pick-your-own berry fields and a community garden to increase engagement with the neighborhood. A kayak and canoe pavilion near the water was proposed as another way to promote village engagement with the larger community. Solar panels and other energy conservation techniques addressed sustainability components of the assignment.

The presentations concluded with a question and answer session for students and advisor; EO noted several suggestions that could make the final proposals even more supportive of residents with disabilities. LC applauded the "very impressive" presentations; LA cited the wide diversity of concepts employed by the student architects and suggested more "public benefits" to community at large like boat rentals or community gardens in addition to the affordable housing component. The session and the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.