



TOWN OF MEDFIELD

Office of the

PLANNING BOARD

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MEETING OF:
June 3, 2021
MINUTES

Planning Board Members Present: Teresa James, Seth Meehan, Sarah Lemke, Jim Brand
Planning Board Members Absent: Paul McKechnie, Blake McDermott, Associate, James Sullivan, Associate
AHT Members Present: Jim Brand, Chair; Greg Sandomirsky; Newton Thompson, Brett Heyman
AHT Members Absent: Ann Thompson, Kerry McCormack; Michael Marcucci
Staff Present: Sarah Raposa, Town Planner
Others Present: John Harney, Bill Massaro, Jenn Goldson, Kevin Stoddard, David Casey, Gontar Vogel, FL, Nathan Bazinet
Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

At approximately 7:35 pm, Chairman James Brand called the AHT meeting to order and Chair Teresa James called the Planning Board meeting to order. Chairman James Brand announced the meeting is being recorded and read the following:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Medfield Affordable Housing Trust and Planning Board is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to listen to/view this meeting while in progress may do so by following the instructions on the agenda and meeting notice.

Housing Production Plan Kick-off

Ms. Goldson of JM Goldson Consulting gave a presentation with information on the firm, the timeline for the Housing Production Plan, and background documents.

Ms. Goldson took a poll from the all of the meeting participants asking questions which they answered on their phones:

- 1) "The Selectboard's goals include housing production. What led to the selectboard's leadership on housing and how have you seen it manifest?" Most of the participants answered that they think that the threat of hostile 40B proposals led the selectboard to want to finish the HPP. Two participants mentioned the need for affordable housing and desire for senior housing as factors.

- 2) “To what level does your community agree on housing needs?” (rated on a scale from 1-9) Results were in the middle to upper middle range.
- 3) “Explain your response to the prior question.” Participants responded that there have been notable differences in Medfield residents as to whether or not to prioritize affordable and senior housing. Some Medfield residents have concerns about increased density and more school children. One participant noted the varied sizing of 40Bs and improvements to dilapidated buildings could be leading to the town having difficulty agreeing on housing needs.
- 4) “To what level does your community agree on housing solutions?” (on a scale from 1-9) Answers were in the middle to lower range.
- 5) “Explain your response to the prior question.” One participant responded that residents have difficulty understanding the rules around affordable housing. Another responded that residents will tend to be supportive of affordable housing projects until concrete and specific plans for the housing project are made. Several participants agreed that while many residents support affordable housing, many of them do not want it near their homes. Two participants responded that public engagement in the planning process is low.
- 6) Ms. Goldson then asked participants about some of the ways that residents agree on housing solutions. Participants mentioned multiple successes that the town has had in getting a consensus around supporting housing needs. Successes included the town’s vote to fund the AHT, the approval of the zoning changes to the Medfield State Hospital, the town’s support of the HPP, the backing bond of one million dollars to enable housing projects, and the promising appearance of Hinkley South. Ms. Goldson asked what went into winning the approval of the zoning changes of the Medfield State Hospital. Chair Teresa James responded that it was a close win and there was a lot of division in the town about this project. To achieve this win, there was a lot of time spent educating the public on affordable housing. Ms. Lemke added that there was a lot of public engagement on the MSH project, which made the public more supportive. Chair Teresa James added that they had a subcommittee dedicated to communicating with the public about the project which helped to increase public engagement.
- 7) “What are the greatest obstacles in addressing housing needs in your community?” Answers included the cost of property in Medfield, lack of buildable parcels, NIMBY when it comes to senior housing, construction costs, site selection, lack of consensus in the community, neighborhood resistance, lack of public information on affordable housing, political will, expectations of would-be owners, difficulty continuing the revenue stream for the AHT, and school sizes being too small to handle the new students that would come. Ms. Goldson asked the AHT members about Medfield’s public school capacity. Ms. Lemke said that she thinks that enrollment is actually lower these days. Another participant wrote in the poll that they believe an affordable housing bylaw would be helpful. Ms. Goldson asked if there were any town owned properties (other than Hinkley South) that could provide other opportunities for housing projects. Chairman James Brand responded that there are not many parcels of land available, and that many projects are initiated by the Development Committee. Mr. Sandomirsky said that many housing projects are initiated by private developers, and so they are typically large projects. He would like the AHT to initiate more small projects, rather than waiting for private developers to initiate. Chairman James Brand agreed with this.

- 8) “Who/what entities are working to address housing needs in your community and what are their current priorities and initiatives?” Responses included: the AHT coordination with private developers on small 40Bs and the Medfield Housing Authority on the land next to Tilden Village.

Ms. Goldson then opened up to questions from any meeting participants, including members of the public.

Mr. Sandomirsky requested that Ms. Goldson bring in ideas that are more outside of the box, perhaps that come from communities different from Medfield.

At 8:30 PM, Kevin Stoddard asked in the Q&A: “How many units over the 40 JM forecast as needed for the next census do you suggest? i.e. do we bake in some add'l units to get ahead of the 2030 census?” Ms. Goldson responded that typically, JM Goldson does not think that far ahead to 2030 in these plans, but she is open to thinking that far ahead. However, the immediate goal is to get Medfield past ten percent under the 2020 census.

At 8:31 PM, David Casey asked in the Q&A: “Hello, is there a goal for seniors to be able to stay in the town of Medfield after they retire?” At 8:44 PM, Ms. Raposa responded: “Thanks Dave, I’ll make sure Jenn gets your comment. Generally speaking, keeping seniors in Medfield is a goal.”

Adjournment

At approximately 8:35 PM, Mr. Meehan made a motion for the Planning Board to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Lemke. Roll Call Vote: Jim Brand = yes; Sarah Lemke = yes; Seth Meehan = yes; Teresa James = yes. The Vote: 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Lily Maranci, Administrative Assistant