

June 22, 2021

Senior Housing Alternatives Study Committee

Special Meeting Minutes

Meeting hosted via Zoom and conference room b – town hall.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 9:32 am by Chairperson Stave.

Roll Call: Alexa Gorlick, Sondra Astor Stave, Eric Trott, John Twerdy, Richard Brand, Valdis Vinkels, Christine Pattee

Adoption of Minutes: A motion was made by Pattee and seconded by Brand to adopt the minutes of June 8, 2021 as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Staff Reports:

Covered in report status.

News and updates:

Covered in report status.

Project Funding Sources:

No comment.

Community Survey Analysis:

No comment.

Status of Preparing Draft Report:

Christine reiterated the Committee's charge and felt that more emphasis should have been placed on graphics with the survey. She believes that the document has gotten far broader than was intended by the Town Council charge.

Valdis believes that we need to determine that there is a need for senior housing – he believes that it does exist. He stated what is important is how much can people afford and how much will the project cost, including the land. Zoning changes, cash considerations directed to a project by the Town, and bonding/borrowing could be considered. Sources of funding needs to be determined.

John stated that the cost of construction has increased dramatically which will affect the ability to facilitate a project. It may be prudent to wait until the costs decrease. Willington's project took three years to move forward, so this provides an indication of overall timing.

Page 2

SHASC Special Meeting Minutes

June 22, 2021

Dick mentioned an increase of 18% on construction costs is what appears to be the going rate. Funding sources, identifying available land, noting zoning modifications is necessary. The report needs to provide the details to those who are reading it.

Aline feels it doesn't seem prudent to expect that the project will occur very soon.

Christine feels a consultant will be helpful to assist in facilitating a project. She mentioned CT Housing Partners could be helpful to Coventry's efforts. State funding favors family housing as opposed to senior only. This is a problem in her opinion. Christine provided thoughts on the housing situation in Eastern Connecticut. She feels that facts don't matter with the report. Further, she states that 8-12 units of senior housing is not worth pursuing and that the focus should be in expanding the public sewer infrastructure. That is the only way that meaningful amounts of senior housing can be constructed in her opinion.

Sondra reviewed the Council charges in detail and the work that has been done to accomplish them, as well as the challenges that the Committee has faced during the pandemic.

Eric provided a review of how the document was prepared and the next steps that need to be taken to complete the document.

Sondra asked for hardcopies to be provided to the Committee. These will be printed and shared with the members.

John believes that 10 unit of senior housing would be a benefit to the community. Christine believes that the costs would be too high to accommodate this. Twenty four to forty units would be less expensive to facilitate.

Richard believes that the Committee should ask the WPCA for an opinion on what the amount of reserve capacity is for the public sewer system.

John made a motion, seconded by Aline to ask the WPCA to provide this opinion to the Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

The State will likely be requiring the Town to improve the public sewer system based upon its current status. No grant funding for upgrades are available at this time.

Next Steps:

Christine wants Rene Dobos from CT Housing Partners to be present at an upcoming meeting. The second meeting in July could be a target.

Page 3

SHASC Special Meeting Minutes

June 22, 2021

Next meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for July 13 at 9:30am.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric M. Trott

Director of Planning and Development