

**South Kingstown Affordable Housing Collaborative**  
**Thursday, May 27, 2010**

**Meeting Minutes**

The regular monthly meeting of the South Kingstown Affordable Housing Collaborative was held on Thursday, May 27, 2010 in the Council Chambers, South Kingstown Town Hall, 180 High Street, Wakefield, RI.

The roll call was as follows:

Marc Archambault	Present	Cheryl Hartnett	Present
John Taylor Ellis	Present	Geoffrey Marchant	Present
Jean Olivier Johnson	Absent	Paul Jordan	Present

Staff member Vincent Murray, Director of Planning and Ken Kenerson, Planning Board ex-officio member, were also present.

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chair Taylor Ellis.

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Archambault made a motion, Mr. Marchant seconded; motion carried: “To approve the minutes of the April 22, 2010 meeting.”

**VOTE:** Ellis – aye Archambault – aye Hartnett – aye Marchant – aye Jordan – aye

**3. Review of Draft Posting for Town Website, Public Education Regarding Affordable Housing Issues**

Mr. Murray led a discussion concerning using the Town website as a vehicle for informing and educating the public regarding affordable housing issues within the community. The updated community website provides a good vehicle in this regard. Specific content items that might be placed on the web include the following: Statistical information from the HousingWorksRI website could be used on our website, a calendar of events could be inserted and pictures could be placed on the section entitled “What is Affordable Housing?” The section might also include links for more information and groups working on these issues as well as frequently asked questions about affordable housing. It was noted that the information should be presented in a straightforward, non-technical fashion. Staff noted that, for example, the Town’s definition of affordable housing, taken from State law, is very technical and may confuse more than inform. He indicated that the website should define affordable housing but in a way that the average user would easily grasp. Mr. Jordan volunteered to put together a PowerPoint presentation for the latter. Ms. Hartnett will work with him on that since she has access to a complete Powerpoint presentation on affordable housing from her organization. Mr. Murray asked the members to email him any suggestions, links and/or pictures that could potentially be used on the TSK website.

#### **4. Discussion of Housing Issues for Comprehensive Community Plan Update**

Mr. Murray pointed out that the Housing Element is an important part of the 2010 Comprehensive Community Plan Update and that the State has required that the Affordable Housing Production Plan be incorporated into the Housing Element. One of the goals or policies of the element should be to provide education and leadership on affordable housing issues to the general public on such topics as partnerships, resources, comprehensive permits, inclusionary zoning, smart growth, workforce housing and cottage zoning. Discussion ensued relative to providing workforce housing as an economic development tool, the increasing popularity of cottage zoning and other pertinent issues. He mentioned that the Planning Board had recently held a joint work session with the Economic Development Committee at which they discussed the economic connections to affordable housing.

Mr. Ellis suggested that the AHC holds some joint meetings with the Economic Development Committee and the Planning Board to discuss the economic development aspects of workforce housing. Discussion ensued.

#### **5. Discussion of Status of House Bill # H7730 Concerning Funding for the Neighborhood Opportunities Program**

Mr. Murray stated that the pending bill would increase funding for the Neighborhood Opportunities Program (NOP) by \$10,000,000 in the 2010-2011 Fiscal Year. Mr. Ellis explained that this program is a family affordable housing initiative that helps to cover the gap in operating costs for maintaining facilities that offer affordable rents to qualified people. Mr. Murray volunteered to write a letter on behalf of the SK Affordable Housing Collaborative to our State Senator and/or Representatives asking for their support of this bill.

#### **6. Other Items of Concern and Interest**

The Town currently has 30% Open Space. Mr. Jordan stated that continuing dedicated bonding and constant acquisition of open space has had the effect of diminishing land resources available for housing, thus raising costs. Ms. Hartnett agreed noting that this policy focus may also raise the tax burden in the community. Mr. Jordan suggested that the Town develops an advertising plan to “sell” the affordable housing concept like it “sells” the open space concept. A discussion of open space and housing ensued including issues such as local usage of the Real Estate Transfer Tax.

Mr. Murray presented updates on the status of both the Brandywyne Comprehensive Permit project and the Whittier Estates major subdivision.

Mr. Archambault and Mr. Marchant will attend a meeting on June 7, 2010 regarding realtor and appraisers education grants offered by the Orton Foundation.

#### **7. Adjournment**

Mr. Archambault made a motion to adjourn, Mr. Marchant seconded; motion carried.

**VOTE:** Ellis – aye Archambault – aye Hartnett – aye Marchant – aye Jordan – aye

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.