

PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC MEETING

TOWN OF LITCHFIELD

Held on November 18, 2014

Minutes Approved 12/2/2014

The Litchfield Planning Board held a meeting in the Town Hall conference room 2 Liberty Way, Litchfield, NH 03052 on Tuesday, November 18, at 7:00 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Michael Caprioglio (Chair), Tom Young (Vice Chair), Russ Blanchette, Bob Curtis, Mike Croteau (7:04), Kevin Bourque, Jason Guerrette (7:19)

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Jen Czysz (NRPC Senior Planner), Joan McKibben (Administrative Assistant), Robert Tourigny (Executive Director) and Jennifer Vadney (Manager) NeighborWorks Southern New Hampshire

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Caprioglio called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Input:

No members of the public present.

1).Robert Tourigny, Executive Director of Neighborworks, Southern NH to discuss multi-family housing and redevelopment of existing homes to meet affordable housing needs.

Mr. Tourigny introduced Jennifer Vadney who is the Manager for Neighborworks, Southern NH. Mr. Tourigny stated that Neighborworks of NH is a private non-profit organization which has been in business since 1992 mostly in Manchester NH. In recent years it has branched out in the Southern region of NH. In addition to the development work that they do, they also do housing counseling, they provide free

housing counseling and education to folks both on the pre purchase side and for folks that are facing foreclosure. Mr. Tourigny stated that Neighborworks has been actively developing affordable housing since 1992, their early history was more in the area of acquiring vacant and abandoned buildings, rehabbing and fully developing them to bring them into permanent affordable housing. Mr. Tourigny stated that when he says affordable he means for households that earn less than 60% of the area median income and on the homeownership side, it is typically less than 100% of the area median income. They have developed 377 units of affordable rental housing throughout the region. Mr. Tourigny stated that they have done projects in Goffstown, Hooksett, Amherst and recently started one in Londonderry this summer. Mr. Tourigny stated that they work with the Town's Planning staff to see what the need is.

Joan asked who ends up owning the rental units and how are they kept affordable? Mr. Tourigny stated that each one of these properties is individually owned by a limited partnership and what they do as the developer is compete for financing through the State, they compete for what is known as tax credits, they sell those tax credits to get the initial capital. The way they can keep these projects affordable is through the majority of the funds that went to renovate and build that project came in form of equity, there is very little debt on the property so they are able to charge affordable rents. They use the tax credit program to build up a lot of equity up front.

Mr. Curtis stated that they have had a very difficult time getting the multi-family ordinance approved in Town, and was wondering if there was anything that can show the advantages of multi-family housing to a Town such as Litchfield to support their approach in presenting this. If there was a financial advantage to the Town, or some other advantages to the Town. Mr. Tourigny stated that the challenge they often had is the obstacle in the perception that people have of multi-family or affordable housing. The first thing is typically, its aesthetically acceptable in every community. It is about having a diverse housing spot and being able to have in your community a range of housing prices. If you can't afford to stay in a town, it is probably a good indication that there is a need for affordable rental housing or multi-family housing. One of the other barriers that a lot of communities have faced over the years, is a perception that if you build multi-family, you are going to inundate your school system with a lot of children, they have not found this to be true. Mr. Tourigny mentioned that the question about positive impact is that he thinks that by being able to offer a diverse array of housing for people in the community so that people can stay in the community.

Mr. Tourigny stated that it is about density which is determined by feasibility for a particular site. The burden is on the developer to prove the feasibility to the Town, which

is the critical piece.

Jen stated that one of the concerns for multi-family is what might we be in for if something were to be developed under the ordinance, so having an opportunity to see what it might look like and to see what it might take to see if its even feasible.

Mr. Guerrette asked if the housing they are creating is subsidized. Mr. Tourigny stated that there is no federal funding for the project. The Federal Government is foregoing, collecting taxes from taxpayers. The person paying the rent is paying a lesser amount, however we call it, it is community subsidized. Mr. Guerrette stated that his point is, the average income of those moving in would be lower than what our town is and believes that is the fear of the people.

Mr. Guerrette asked what the advantage is of having this type of housing in a Town where there is really no work, no transportation? Mr. Tourigny stated that the Town needs to figure out what the need is and go from there. Simple reality is that the Town may not have a need for this housing. Mr. Guerrette thinks that the people in Town may not want this type of growth which is why they vote no, which are the things that need to be talked about. Joan mentioned the State and having to have multi-family housing. Mr. Guerrette stated that he has a problem with the state thing because if the State really wanted that they would say you have no choice, but because they give the Town a Choice (I know what the Law says). Joan stated that you have to provide a place for it, you do not have to build it. The board discussed this further.

2). **The Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing to accept an application by Leonard and Jane Vigeant to consolidate two parcels and subdivide the resulting area into 10 lots (7 lots with land in Litchfield, the remaining land is in Hudson). Tax Map 1 Lots 1 and 2, 2 & 2A Charles Bancroft Highway.

The application was withdrawn for acceptance by the applicant.

****The above is deferred until December 16, 2014 at the applicants request.**

Approve Minutes of November 3, 2014

Motion: by Bob Curtis to approve the minutes of November 3, 2014 as amended

Second: by Tom Young

Vote Passes: 6-0-1

Any Other Items

Jen mentioned that she will not be here on December 2nd, but Jill will be there to fill in for her.

Motion: by Mr. Young to Adjourn

Second: by Mr. Bourque

Vote Passes: 7-0-0

The Next Planning Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 2, 2014 at 7:00 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15

Minutes taken by: Donna Baril