

Provincetown Community Housing Council

Veterans Memorial Community Center ↻ 2 Mayflower Street
December 9, 2013

The Community Housing Council hosted a day-long session of meetings with Facilitator John Ryan beginning at 8:00 am. CHC members, other town staff, and members of the public attended some or all of the day's sessions. No votes were taken.

Members Present: Ann Maguire, Kristin Hatch, and Susan Cook

Staff: Community Housing Specialist Michelle Jarusiewicz

Other attendees throughout the day: Tom Donegan, Khristine Hopkins, John Economos, Patrick Manning, Raphael Richter, Maggi Flanagan, Christine Austin, Sharon Lynn, Ted Malone, Nancy Jacobsen, Jennifer Cabral, Elaine Anderson, Tim Dixo, Cass Benson, Tony Brackett, Andrea Lavenets, Tiffany Crain, Rachel Butler, Catherine Russo, Rev. Kate Wilkinson

8:00 a.m. Coffee Hour

John Ryan had worked with Town Planner Gloria McPherson in Northampton on co-housing, an intentional community, no particular religious or political connection, "neighborhoods," ownership units as "condos," individual residents involved in the development, common areas, sometimes share some meals. Done 4; lived in one for 18 years. The congregate housing model didn't really take off, lost favor; none done lately. Efficiencies are better model; probably most affordable; 450 SF perfect size.

He sees continuing concentration of 1 person households and a decline in income.

Why summit now? 83 & 90 Shank Painter happened; ongoing need with over 300 on the waitlist. John Economos pointed out for a recent available unit; people on the waitlist have already left the area.

Ann Maguire indicated that Provincetown has done more than most town's on the Cape; Provincetown really cares.

Tom Donegan – many units have been converted to seasonal/weekly rentals.

Patrick Manning – properties owned by seniors are being sold or converted and not being held by families. Year-round units disappearing.

Kristin Hatch – condo conversion; people being pushed out fast

John Ryan – struck by fact that number of jobs in Provincetown about same as 7 years ago but number of Provincetown residents working in Town declined by 20%. Therefore about 400 people commuting to town that used to live here. Average wage in town is low; hospitality wage concentrated here but paying more here for the workers than elsewhere on Cape and in state.

Maggi Flanagan – year-round workers that work seasonally feel resentful that some employers provide housing for the seasonal workers

John Economos – unemployment in winter 30%+

Chris Austin – with economy issues, feel here immediately; need enough time to allow for unemployment; extended season helps

Kristin Hatch – unemployment office "no such thing as seasonal jobs." Need to look for work within 25 miles as the crows flies, which includes Plymouth!

John Ryan – the need for affordable housing has not changed; there is a need to reach the lower income population.

Patrick Manning – also a group of people that are just over income and not eligible; work 2 – 3 jobs, can't afford market rate units

John Economos agreed – need for those with income below 50% AMI and 80 – 100% AMI. He is an example – lost his rental, could not find a rental at all. On Martha's Vineyard develop mix

income projects with units from 30% AMI to 140% AMI. Province Landing has 5 units at 30% AMI [8 on MV].

Ann Maguire – economic development key issue; need to build up infrastructure for small businesses

Tom Donegan – chicken and egg issue; a tech company wanted to relocate here but couldn't because of housing, not in Eastham either; stayed in NY

Khristine Hopkins - people used to commute to Eastham; now to Harwich & Brewster.

John Economos – landlords know that the demand is there; rents are no cheaper up-Cape unless Yarmouth/Hyannis.

John Ryan – Provincetown has more multi-family; most towns have more single-family; seeing constrictions in available housing, economics are overwhelming; hard to argue with owner's choice.

Maggie Flanagan – used to be section 8 voucher was gold, now can't get 1 and still can't find a place; better to have project based subsidy

Ann Maguire - incentives for additional year-round housing – what will town do? Are existing incentives enough?

John Ryan – even if no taxes – not enough incentive; did the research, need about \$12,000 to make it work

Patrick Manning – employers work with housing

Kristin Hatch – employers buy houses for summer workers

John Ryan – providing year-round housing will help provide housing for workers

Kristin – seems like less winter/summer shuffle; issues include liability, need to get people out, easier to do weekly rentals

John Ryan – over 1000 empty units in winter; if could capture even small portion of that... a lot of effort needed to make it happen; different motivations for different types of use; not easy solutions. Provincetown is a unique community, not lot of parallels – Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Seen different levels of effort with different levels of success. Martha's Vineyard has been more successful by raising private money for mostly ownership units. Tapped into second home and business community with fairly charismatic people.

Need to have the community really invested. Not going to be solved by Board of Selectmen or Housing advocates; got to change how people think and behave.

Ann Maguire – takes very long time for developments, in meantime can add few units here and there.

John Ryan – perception that 83 & 90 Shank Painter solved the problem, need PR regarding the problem is not solved, need to make more units available . Incentives? Fast track process?

Certified tenant program? Private landlords afraid to get involved and get publicly whipped. Lot of substandard housing could also be issue for some landlords. Martha's Vineyard does great job of celebrating people who try to make it work.

Ann Maguire – some people in town constantly take whacks at affordable housing; on blogs; we should stand tall, have a good record

Khristine Hopkins – last Summit spoke about the common good. Stakeholders are everyone.

Ongoing campaign about common good, do right by everyone. How to retain young people? Need catalyst.

Kristin Hatch – “adopt a townie” program; make second-homeowners part of the solution instead of part of the problem

Chris Austin – Eastham has a non-residents event twice a year

John Ryan – don't generalize, if say there are 1500 second homeowners and 85% have no interest, still have 250 who are. Communication is key.

Chris Austin – don't assume people know. Often hear “I didn't know.” Education is key.

Ted Malone – “hot house” campaign, button campaign, “ask me about my housing.”

John Ryan – how convey a matrix of solutions to put all possibilities out there and let them evolve

Kristin Hatch – why Grace Gouveia and Community Center for sale to highest bidder?
Tom Donegan – idea 2 properties have historic limitations; buy VFW property, sewer, put part of money to that property
Ted Malone – if could access back of Motta field could increase options; 10 year projects, not quick. Worth pursuing if could add land.

Change language from “low income housing” to “community housing”

John Ryan – opportunity at Summit to focus on issues and solutions; what happens between now and then can be productive; organize time to create positive energy to move forward. Last time more attention at onset; people put the word out which led to great attendance. Need people to stand up and say “It’s me!” Need people to speak to how getting a unit changed their lives, how allowed them to stay in town. If they are worried about staying in town over the next few years, need to attend; just showing up makes a difference.

Communicate in advance, builds energy.

Sense want to serve all populations. Where are the critical issues? Use time and resources wisely. Sympathetic, but realize that there is not one solution that could work for everyone. Not saying “no” to anything, just prioritize.

Ted Malone – tax exemption, approved up to 80% AMI, administered at 60% AMI. Assessor concerned if expanded, impact on tax revenues -, how much willing? Where is weekly rental tax money going? Could some go to affordable housing? Rental certificates are key.

Summit Agenda to include some time for people to express their thoughts; updates; but most conversation will be about how to solve the problem. Look at types of housing – elderly, existing, rental, ... Opportunities? Feedback.

Ultimately Town Meeting will be involved. Get those people involved ahead of time to avoid misunderstandings.

Outreach for Housing Summit on January 20, 2014 – mail, phone calls, facebook...

In theory new units created on Shank Painter would have increased availability with the old units vacated. Reality maybe 7 or so because many had been couch surfing, living with parents, friends. Many people were rejected.

There has been a net loss of rentals since 2006. Since FY 2007, 375 condo conversions, most rentals.

11:30 am lunch break

1:00 pm

John Ryan presented summary of Updated Housing Needs Assessment. Provincetown is very desirable place to live. Since 2006 erosion of available housing. Provincetown has significant efforts. Let’s continue to do this – what can we do?

Since 2006, clear priority need year-round rentals; secondary need for ownership units, and third for senior housing. Key indicators: new rentals at 83 & 90 Shank Painter. During the same time, 375 condo conversions, substantial majority were rentals; more commuting to work while number of jobs remained about the same. Population is splitting – more at upper and lower ends. Hard to find year-round rental at any income level. Unemployment greater than 30% in winter. As a general rule, household should not spend more than 35% of income on housing costs. In 2000,

44% of renters paid more than 35%. Now, 59% pay more - significant indicators of stress. Wages are rising faster than at the state and county level, but can't keep pace with the rents.

There is a hole in the bucket, we have poured in new units at the top, but with condo conversions leaking rental units out, the need is the same as in 2006, with the highest need still 1 person households.

The number of families with children continues to decline; the number over 65 is steady.

Need to bring good ideas forward.

Vacant space.

Change tax exemption.

Net improvement each year.

Every strategy needs a champion.

Accessory units, change restriction to 10 years.

Short-term solutions means you are always working on additional solutions both short and long-term.

Housing abuses – where is time to address?

“Little fix” program being proposed under CPA.

Second-homeowners are not all the same, they want to be here, could engage them. It takes a long time.

Ted Malone – funds are scarcer than in 2006; programs cut significantly. Need to get in line.

Funds are shared across the state.

CPA split – change the CPA percentage back to as adopted with more money for housing.

There is no silver bullet.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm

Submitted by: Michelle Jarusiewicz, Community Housing Specialist