

Town of Candia

HOP Steering Committee

Thursday, October 3, 2024

Unapproved Minutes

Members Present: Tim D'Arcy, Carla Penfield, Anne Lacey, Judith Szot, Patti Davis, Sarah Sargent, Brian Sargent, Wendy Ducharme

Carla Penfield called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. She said the purpose of the meeting was to share any questions about the Housing Needs Assessment document and discuss next steps for the committee.

Patti Davis had a question about item 5 on page 12 in the document. She wanted clarification about whether building new housing was mandated at the levels presented in the document. Tim D'Arcy said that the state can't force Candia to build a certain amount of new housing, but this report provided our suggested number of new housing units. He cautioned that it is important to stay ahead of state recommendations to avoid potentially losing local control at some point down the road.

Committee members then discussed our "fair share" of workforce and affordable housing and the definition for each. Judith Szot pointed out the importance of zoning that reflects the will of town residents and the natural landscape. Sarah asked if there is a map that shows buildable areas. Tim said that such a map does not currently exist but that he would like to expend some of the HOP budget to develop one. The committee agreed that such a map would be a priority.

During the remainder of the meeting, the committee discussed the challenges of creating housing that is affordable with land and construction costs at their current levels. The committee's community engagement showed that residents prefer single family homes on three-acre lots. Numerous committee members pointed out that it is nearly impossible to create a single-family home that is considered affordable by a median income family, even on smaller lots in Candia. Brian Sargent highlighted the need to think outside the box and establish designated areas that are zoned specifically for different types of housing.

In response to a question from Carla, Tim discussed the Planning Board's recent approval for two Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) for Candia homeowners. One ADU can be detached and one attached, and the property owner must live on the property. He said that these units could be counted toward Candia's recommended "fair share" of affordable housing.

Carla invited the committee to meet to brainstorm ideas at meetings in the next few months, but members agreed that it would be more productive to wait until a map of buildable areas is created that considers access issues as well as water, ledge and other natural limitations. Wendy Ducharme and Sarah Sargent both mentioned the importance of having a builder speak to the group about challenges to creating more affordable homes once we have the map.

The committee will suspend meetings until the map of buildable areas is created.

Carla asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:20. Judith made a motion to adjourn and Patti seconded it.

*Minutes submitted by Wendy Ducharme*