



TOWN OF WATERTOWN HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

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Minutes of Watertown Housing Partnership Meeting February 18, 2020 6:00 PM, Town Administration Building

Members In Attendance

Fred Reynolds (Chair), Cliff Cook, David Leon, Helen Oliver, and Mike Lara, Watertown Housing Authority.

I. Review of Draft Minutes

Mr. Reynolds asked for discussion and review of the draft minutes of January 21st meeting, and suggested the addition of a comment from Ms. Oliver to change the Housing Production Plan name to The Watertown Housing Plan, and to also include a comment of Mr. Cook to add a section to the plan concerning the people in Watertown in need of affordable housing. Hearing no other amendments Mr. Reynolds asked for a vote to approve the draft minutes as amended, and all members voted to approve the minutes.

II. New Housing Production Plan

In light of recent developments in Watertown achieving DHCD Safe Harbor status based on land area occupied by affordable housing, the Watertown Housing Partnership decided at its January 21st meeting to reconsider the new housing plan goals focusing more on all local Watertown housing needs and not just affordable housing production. Ms. Oliver extracted the goals and strategies from the most recent plan and this document was distributed to members by Mr. Magoon for discussion at the February meeting. Mr. Cook agreed to modify the goals document during the meeting and then produce a revised draft for consideration at the upcoming March meeting. Proposed draft goals and accompanying strategies were each considered. Mr. Leon initiated a discussion of the needs of seniors to help them remain in their existing homes as well as the needs of individuals with various disabilities. Members agreed to consider encouraging accessible design on all new construction as well as considering partnering with other agencies to provide needed services to seniors and persons with disabilities. The need to establish a Watertown Affordable Housing Trust to make it easier to acquire redevelopment sites before they are bought by developers, and to avail Watertown of additional State and Federal services and funds. There was discussion of considering a local resident preference for affordable housing. Mr. Lara brought up the needs of very low-income residents and suggested a deeper affordability requirement for the Town's inclusionary zoning. Mr. Reynolds revisited several goals from older housing drafts and members agreed to include goals of maintaining existing affordable housing and to set an affordable housing goal of ten percent. Many wording changes were adopted. Mr. Cook will send a revised goals and strategy section to Mr. Magoon for distribution to members before the March Meeting. The discussion at the end of the meeting focused on the need to distribute the goals to various interested parties within the Town for further comment and suggestions.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.