

Nahant Housing Plan Production (HPP) Sub-committee

Thursday, May 4, 2023

via Zoom

Committee Members

- Mark Cullinan, Board of Selectmen
 - Patrick O'Reilly, Planning Board
 - Lynne Spencer, CPA Committee
 - Michael Rauworth, Zoning Board of Appeals
 - Michelle Capano, Resident Member, HPP Chair
 - James Walsh, Resident Member
 - David Wilson, Nahant Housing Authority (absent)
 - Patty Karas, School Committee
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Agenda

Meeting Agenda:

1. Call meeting to order
2. Approve meeting minutes
 - Meeting minutes 2023-03-02
 - Meeting minutes 2023-03-09
3. Recap the April 13th meeting
 - Review the revised MAPC schedule
 - Review committee goals
4. Continue discussion on affordable housing options
 - Review and discuss MAPC analysis
5. Propose HPP Information Table at Town Meeting – Sat May 20th
 - Discuss purpose – promote committee and upcoming community engagement on June 14th
 - Hours, support, materials
6. Discuss virtual HPP Open House – week of May 20th
7. Discuss Prepare for Community Engagement #2
8. Committee New Business
 - Next HPP Meeting May 11th, MAPC to attend to review site recommendations
9. Citizen's Forum
10. Adjournment

1. Call Meeting to Order

The Chair of the Housing Production Plan Sub-committee ("HPP") called the meeting to order at 6:36 PM. The

2. Approval of meeting minutes

The Chair moved for an approval of the meeting minutes from March 2, 2023, and March 9, 2023. These were not approved at the prior meeting as there needed to be a larger quorum of the committee to cover the attendance at those meetings. Mr. Cullinan moved on the Chair's motion, and Mr. Walsh seconded the motion. Mr. Rauworth provided feedback on a typo in the March 2, 2023, meeting minutes. The Chair screen-shared the meeting minutes to correct the typo.

Roll-call vote was taken:

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| Mr. Rauworth – Yes | Ms. Spencer - Yes |
| Mr. Walsh – Yes | Mr. O'Reilly – Yes |
| Mr. Cullinan - Yes | Ms. Capano - Yes |

3. Recap the April 13th meeting

The Chair moved to the next agenda item of the meeting. The Chair recalled the meeting materials that were sent to the committee in advance of the meeting. The Chair reviewed the proposed goals of the committee

Nahant Housing Plan Production (HPP) Sub-committee

Thursday, May 4, 2023

via Zoom

prepared by MAPC. Discussed was a change in one of the goals related to first time home ownership and the Chair shared that the Town may not be able to develop programming for first time home buyers but rather help identify resources or areas where residents can seek assistance in qualifications for first time home ownership. The Chair re-affirmed that at the next HPP Meeting on May 11, 2023, there will be discussions on modifying this goal.

The Chair also shared the revised MAPC timeline which was reviewed with the Town Administrator and addresses changes in the program to meet the scope and deliverables. Highlighting the work to-date, plans for the second community engagement and the proposed location analysis which will all be components to the housing production plan to be completed in August 2023. Following, the committee will move into the 3A MBTA Communities (3A) work with similar community engagement sessions so that the committee can present proposal or report to the Planning Board and Advisory & Finance Committee later 2023 so that these can be Article(s) for 2024 Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. O'Reilly mentioned that Nahant could meet its 3A requirements by revising some of the current existing Zoning Bylaws to confirm with the new requirements of 3A. The example mentioned was Bass Point Apartments where there is already more than 15 units per acre and so this approach would comply with the new requirements of 3A in terms of recognizing existing density which is included in the new statute.

Mr. Cullinan asked for additional clarification from Mr. O'Reilly. Mr. O'Reilly stated we are addressing zoning of the 3A and not necessarily creating new zoning. Having zoning that meets the threshold requirements which address the density. Mr. Rauworth stated there is nothing in 3A that mentions that new zoning must be implemented, or new development has to be created. Mr. O'Reilly also stated that the 3A would give property owners the ability to build by right so that it conforms with existing zoning regulations. Mr. O'Reilly mentioned there are inherent benefits of the 3A statute and promote increase density. However, where a community has the density, the opportunity is to update the Zoning Bylaws for conformity.

Ms. Capano asked certain scenarios for non-confirming lots vs. conforming lots and where multi-family would be permissible. Mr. O'Reilly did state that some of this is speculation until the new Zoning Bylaws are in place. He also added for areas of Bass Point and the business district, the 3A would allow for existing us but not by-right.

4. Continue discussion on affordable housing options

The committee moved to continue discussions on affordable housing options. The Chair shared the Jam board (greater/less impact, more/less feasibility analysis) that was used during the April 13, 2023, meeting with MAPC. The Chair stated what was discussed during this topic in the presence of the Town Administrator. This activity was meant to identify locations and all the sites mentioned are proposed.

The Chair shared with the committee the results from MAPC of constraints and opportunities analysis. Each of the maps were compiled from publicly sources of information such as wetlands, open space, etc. and the data provided illustrates characteristics of each map for instance public land could be developed or re-developed for residential use. The Chair shared the maps and the committee provided feedback or asked questions.

Mr. Walsh asked if a document like this felt it would be difficult and discuss fully. He asked if individual committee members could review and provide a written response. The Chair stated that this could be done by sending written feedback to the Chair which would be distributed to the members of the committee and discussed at the next meeting.

Ms. Spencer asked if there nothing is showing in Little Nahant but also understand the density issues of potentially excluding. Ms. Spencer asked if consideration has been given to acquiring property? Such has opportunity of the Nahant Pharmacy and if we can ensure Nahant wide. The Chair mentioned that acquiring

Nahant Housing Plan Production (HPP) Sub-committee

Thursday, May 4, 2023

via Zoom

property was also included and highlighted the Town of Swampscott and recent acquisitions to address their affordable housing needs. Mr. Rauworth was unclear of the 40B interested to take an entire interest and deed restrict and/or sell such as the Coast Guard Housing. But would be open to something such as taking an interest in a property for the purposes of 40B and should consider if there is mechanism that is less expensive.

Mr. O'Reilly asked how the Town could come up with a facility to take advantage of foreclosure or borrowing authority when certain real estate opportunities become available. The Chair mentioned that if the Town had a line of credit for this purpose that authorizes the Board of Selectmen to make these types of acquisitions that addresses affordable housing needs under certain requirements outside of Town Meeting.

Mr. Rauworth had two questions that Mr. Cullinan might be able to lend his experience. 1) establishing a revolving fund and 2) Town Meeting Article authorizing the Selectmen not to exceed a certain amount that satisfies 40B requirement. Mr. Cullinan stated that revolving fund (enterprise fund) require a re-occurring revenue source. Mr. Cullinan was unclear where the revenue would come from as we are limited by tax increases of 2.5%. Mr. Rauworth stated that if part of the revenue came from CPA (Community Preservation Act) this may solve part of the challenge. Mr. Cullinan asked Ms. Spencer to clarify the allocation percentages for housing, open space/recreation and historic preservation which is minimum of 10%; however, the balance of CPC funding available can available if one of these areas has a greater need. There is approximately \$60,000 in the community housing reserve. The State match is up to 100%.

Mr. O'Reilly found an interesting website called, 'housingtoolbox.org' which is grounded in Massachusetts statutes and provides information on how local municipalities can set up a housing trust fund to address funding for affordable housing projects. Ms. Spencer also mentioned that Beverly and Boxford have established housing trusts and residents could donate a portion of their residential home which may have tax benefit. Mr. Cullinan was in favor of the housing trust fund concept. Ms. Spencer also stated this essentially creates a municipal non-profit as well. Mr. Walsh asked if the properties would be owned by the Town or could also be sold with restrictions, and Ms. Capano confirmed that this use of the housing trust would cover both. Mr. Cullinan asked about the borrowing limits and would require a review of Bond Council and cannot borrow more than what you can pay back which is impacted by revenue.

Mr. Rauworth also mentioned another aspect in which the Town of Nahant can delay to avoid 40B vulnerabilities. In a program like the housing trust fund, if it can delay. Ms. Capano mentioned that the housing plan would help with that, and Mr. O'Reilly also stated that the time would need to show 1.5% progress toward meeting its affordable housing goals.

Mr. Rauworth asked about permissibility in flood zone and the committee discussed permissibility in wetlands where new housing has been built. Mr. O'Reilly stated that the Town would not get credit for 3A compliance as a result so properties in wetlands should be excluded from 3A.

Mr. Rauworth asked Mr. O'Reilly to explain how an overlay would work in the context of 3A. This is a modification to the underlying zoning bylaws. For example, a residential district of single-family homes could have its regulations updated with an 'overlay' allowing for a certain development type (e.g., multi-family homes) and gain additional rights or grant additional development rights which would otherwise be restricted.

The Chair asked the committee to review the Development Constraints & Opportunities document and send any and all feedback back by Tuesday, May 9, 2023, so that they may be included in the next discussion with MAPC.

Related to housing prompts from MAPC:

- CPC: Ms. Spencer has provided a response and update for CPC.
- Nahant Housing Authority: Ms. Capano has reached out to Ms. Wilson for a response.

Nahant Housing Plan Production (HPP) Sub-committee

Thursday, May 4, 2023

via Zoom

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- Council on Aging: Ms. Capano has reached out to Mary Miner, Executive Director, for an update.
 - Other Town Resources: Mr. Walsh asked if NPT (Nahant Preservation Trust) has any participation. Ms. Capano responded to the best of her knowledge she is not aware of, but the non-profit can have a role. If the organization wanted to support affordable housing in Nahant, they can make a proposal. Ms. Spencer agreed that the mission and purpose of the trust was not top of mind for the organization. Mr. Cullinan was not able to recall any housing related program that was implemented. Ms. Capano asked if there was any benefit to Town employees who move to Town and Mr. Cullinan confirmed there was none. Ms. Spencer mentioned this is where the housing trust could provide certain benefits or services. Ms. Spencer also mentioned trying to contact the Nahant Housing Authority director on possible activities. She also mentioned that CPC could fund vouchers to assist with affordable housing needs.
 - Gap in Housing in Nahant: The Chair shared the questions from MAPC and what is the focus and opportunities to overcome the housing needs in Nahant.

Mr. Cullinan recommended we consider the properties on Emerald Road and Spring Road and modernize those properties to increase housing. Mr. Walsh said that this would not advance the GLAM Analysis for 40B. Mr. Rauworth asked this open more to 40B objectives. Mr. Cullinan stressed that the needs are more than the achieving the 40B thresholds.

Mr. Rauworth asked to what extent does the Town have to favor or extend to Nahant Seniors or Nahant residents.

Mr. Walsh also stressed sources of funding from State or Federal agencies that support renewal energy.

Mr. O'Reilly mentioned that meeting 40B requirements first with GLAM and additional units and meet 3A compliance requirements. Other ideas discussed are 'nice to haves.'

Ms. Spencer asked if the idea is to prioritize, she suggested the Coast Guard Housing and the land in front of the Nahant Country Club.

Mr. Rauworth proposed a deed restricting the location through eminent domain thereby affording the opportunity to build new housing units.

Ms. Capano proposed increasing senior housing on Greystone Road / High Street which was priority feedback from the first community engagement and its property the Town already owns.

Mr. Cullinan proposed Goddard Drive and Greystone Road to meet the GLAM. If they are rental units, the entire area would count towards the GLAM. Other two areas are Country Club and St. Thomas Aquinas Church.

Mr. O'Reilly further supported Greystone Road and expanding the senior housing for the GLAM Analysis and covers 40B. However, Mr. O'Reilly did object to Thomas Aquinas Church unless they started discussions to discontinue. Mr. Cullinan stated that the property could be divided into where the rectory is and leave the church. Mr. O'Reilly would support an eminent domain of the Nahant Country Club and preserve the green place as well. Mr. Cullinan mentioned that the Nahant Land Company does receive tax credits for maintaining the land as open space. Mr. Cullinan recommended further discussions with the Nahant Land Company.

5. Propose HPP Information Table at Town Meeting – Sat May 20th

The Chair moved to the next topic. There will be an information table from 12:00 PM – 1:15 PM to be available to answer questions and promote the committee.

6. Discuss virtual HPP Open House – week of May 20th

The Chair highlighted the idea of holding a virtual open house over Zoom where residents can attend to ask questions of the committee and MAPC and provide feedback. Present proposed sites for consideration and

Nahant Housing Plan Production (HPP) Sub-committee

Thursday, May 4, 2023

via Zoom

pivot to an in-person community engagement. MAPC is developing the approach for this activity. Proposed week of May 22nd for the virtual open house before Town Meeting.

7. Discuss Prepare for Community Engagement #2

The Chair moved to the next topic. The proposed date is June 14th. Highlighted that the same format as the first community engagement would be used. Open for discussion with MAPC will me format.

8. Committee New Business

No new business was discussed before the committee.

9. Next HPP Meeting May 11th, MAPC to attend to review site recommendations

Confirmed the next meeting of the Committee for May 11, 2023.

10. Citizen's Forum

No citizen questions.

11. Adjournment

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. So moved by Mr. Walsh and seconded by Mr. O'Reilly.

Roll-call vote was taken:

Mr. Rauworth – Yes

Mr. O'Reilly – Yes

Mr. Walsh – Yes

Ms. Karras - Yes

Mr. Cullinan - Yes

Ms. Capano - Yes

The meeting ended at 8:17 PM.

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Respectfully submitted as approved at the August 10, 2023, Housing Production Plan Advisory Sub-committee Meeting.

By: Michelle Capano, Chair