

Farnham Working Group

FINAL
3/18/21

Minute taker: Amy Douglas

Attendees: Chair Linda Larrabee, Katie Raycroft-Meyer (Addison Regional Planning), Molly Francis (Shoreham Selectboard), Linda Oaks, Julia Mench, Alex Tretiak, Barbara Wilson, Amy Douglas

Meeting opened at 7:05 p.m.

1. **Minutes of the January 21st** meeting were approved following amendment to include incorporation of Barbara Wilson's action item, a Housing Perspective for Shoreham. The Perspective is a summary of results of a survey done in Shoreham last summer by George Gross and Barbara Wilson for the school and demographics provided by Katie from Regional Planning which Barbara compiled. (That document was provided to Task Force members in February)

2. A quorum of those attending the **February 26th meeting** approved those minutes as submitted.

3. **Preliminary Concept of Housing Plan for the Farnham Property.** Katie presented her overall conceptual drawing for housing on the Farnham property developed as a result of Task Force meetings. The goal of the conceptual drawing is to present the Town of Shoreham with a plan to promote discussion by townspeople as to desired use of the property. Components of the drawing include:

- a. Commercial/public space on Main Street;
- b. Affordable/subsidized multifamily housing;
- c. Cluster housing of smaller single family homes, also known as work force housing; and
- d. The possibility of somewhat larger private homes on northern portions of the property, where lots could be sold at market prices for traditional development.

4. **Next Steps Discussion**

- a. Talk with Vermont Housing Authority about funding. Shoreham has water and sewer, 3 phase power is nearby and there is potential for gravel for needed roads, all of which should increase the likelihood of funding for subsidized housing.
- b. Zoning issues including the possibility of a Village Center Designation from the state. A Neighborhood Development Designation could ease possible Act 250 requirements.
- c. Focus on taking the conceptual drawing to the Townspeople.
- d. On May 6 the Task Force will meet with Fred Kinney of Addison Economic Development Corporation regarding tax incentive financing etc.
- e. Katie will speak with Elise Shanbacker of Addison County Community Trust to get information about numbers of units of housing that non-profit projects can get funded by Evernorth (a non-profit housing funding organization) so that the Working Group concept would fit funding requirements.
- f. Roads. The issue of ownership and funding for roads into the project needs to be thought about. Parking for public access to public areas is another issue.
- g. Work of the earlier Farnham Task Force and the goals of the Town Plan need to be part of planning and proposals and part of presentations to the Town. This Working Group's concept should flow from the Town Plan and the earlier Farnham Task Forces.
- h. Barb Wilson noted that the Main Street frontage could be an attractive parking/garden area.
- i. Julia Mench asked if multi family units are usually rentals and Katie said they usually are.
- j. Julia Mench and Katie discussed a community center which could be more than another meeting space. Bristol for instance has a commercial kitchen that is used by small businesses and pop-up events occur at the site.
- k. Julia Mench suggested that the Working Group needs to prepare for presentations to the Town by anticipating questions that may arise and having answers ready. Some of the issues might be: tax effect on town; why not sell the property outright and be done with it. The Working Group should have as full a list of issues and answers as possible.
- l. Barb Wilson noted that the town does not have affordable housing for young families and efforts to keep the school in town would be helped by locating such housing on the Farmham property.

- m. Barbara Wilson noted that the village needs walkable places.
- n. Katie noted that a Trail Grant application last year showed the need for walkable access Route 74 to 22a. Sidewalks are needed for a Village Center Designation.
- o. Julia Mench noted that there are no state designations regarding wildlife interests on the Farnham Property.
- p. Linda Larrabee noted that the project as drawn is in keeping with the village appearance.
- q. Julia Mench brought up the issues of possible concerns regarding rental units versus existing single family homes. Renter/owner information needs to be part of the presentation to the town.
- r. Linda Oaks – The Town Plan encourages development within the village area so that ag lands are not developed.
- s. Katie – Aging in place options for people in Shoreham is another goal for this project.
- t. Katie – A Vision Statement should include how many units and what kind. A market study should be done to find what people can afford. Julia Mench will research Vision Plans for the next meeting.
- u. Barb Wilson noted the percent paid for housing in Shoreham is high so facts re that should go in presentation to town. Modular homes can be energy efficient and affordable.
- v. Molly Francis will be attending the Working Group meetings as the Selectboard expects the Group will be asking the Town for feedback this year.

4. **Quarry.** Molly reported that a study commissioned by the Selectboard of a portion of the Farnham property determined that there is sufficient viable stone/gravel on the site for the Town to consider quarrying it for use on Town roads.

5. **The next Working Group meeting** will be April 15th. Fred Kenny of Addison County Economic Development Corporation will speak to the Group on May 6th.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.