

Town of West Tisbury
Community Preservation Committee (CPC)
Meeting Minutes – December 9, 2020, 5:30 pm
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

The meeting was called to order by Beatrice Phear, for Cheryl Lowe, at 5:34 pm.

Roll Call Present: Bea Phear, John Rau, John Brannen, Nancy Dole, Lesley Eaton, Ted Jochsberger, Doug Ruskin

Others: Heidi Dietterich, Administrative Assistant, Dawn McKenna, David Vigneault, Derrill Bazy, Kate DeVane, Karen Tewhey, Philippe Jordi, Kevin McGrath

Beatrice Phear opened the Public Hearing at 5:34 pm.

Dukes County Regional Housing Authority - \$60,000 - David Vigneault

David Vigneault reported that this year's application was the same amount of funding as last year.. West Tisbury also has the same number of households as last year. He noted that the Town is underutilized because West Tisbury does not have enough landlords. This past year, one landlord left with one tenant, and one new landlord came in with a larger home that has already been rented. The ongoing support of the CPC has been particularly useful this year with Covid-19 affecting resident's ability to afford rent. The DCRHA has been in existence longer than any other housing authority in the State. David added that a discussion was held at the Affordable Housing Committee that involved possibly reviewing situations such as a West Tisbury family finding their own rental (not necessarily in West Tisbury) that meets the DCRHA guidelines, and being able to use the West Tisbury DCRHA appropriation for the new location. He noted that this was an idea being discussed, it was a result of the pandemic, and that the DCRHA is trying to do what it can for Island residents in need of housing.

The Committee discussed this idea and agreed if it was approved and recommended by the Affordable Housing Committee, this should be included in the CPA warrant article wording.

Harbor Homes of Martha's Vineyard - \$75,150 – Karen Tewhey

Karen Tewhey thanked the West Tisbury CPC for supporting this program for the past two years. Currently, the house located in Tisbury (owned outright by Harbor Homes), is fully occupied. This year's request is for a women's home. The women's home would be for women 18+ in age, with no substance abuse issues. These are the same guidelines for the men's home in Tisbury. The occupants in the men's home tend to be referred from the youth collaborative. Fifty percent are 18-26 year olds who are trying to work, but their income has plummeted. The remaining 50% are over 26 years old and have health issues or have been injured on the job. The requirements are their income must be below 30% AMI. These homes are not supervised. There is a case worker who meets with the tenants once a week, primarily for management support, not psychological. The caseworker helps with life skills with practical ideas suggested for re-engaging with the community. This will be the same for both the men and women's homes. The sponsor/co-applicant is Island Housing Trust, who will hold an affordability housing restriction in perpetuity on the properties. Bea Phear asked if a property had been identified. Tewhey responded that there is an attractive option in Edgartown, but they are still looking. John Rau asked if all towns on the Island had been asked for funding. Tewhey said yes. She had used the 50/50 formula to determine the amounts to request from each community. Doug Ruskin asked if Edgartown

had approved the request. Tewhey said they had not, with no reason given. Tewhey continued that Harbor Homes of MV was now serving as an umbrella organization for the homeless on the Island with five active programs. John Rau asked how many homeless were on the Island, Tewhey said about 100. She said she gets one to two referrals a week. Those with substance abuse issues, or mental health issues she can't help effectively. Some are in the hotels, some are couch surfing, or sleeping in cars, garages, etc. Lesley Eaton asked if the program was only for single women or families. Tewhey said that was an issue, the home would be for single women. She had indicated families were being placed in hotels and couples were going to the shelter currently.

Island Autism Center & Neighborhood - \$215,000 – Kate DeVane

Kate DeVane presented this project. The Island Autism Group (IAG) is a 501(c)3, this project will create recreation, job training, and a microfarm on 7.5 acres. Currently, there is nothing available for autistic individuals over the age of 22 on the Island. Island Housing Trust is working with IAG on the housing portion of this project. The group is having good fund raising success and is also receiving support from the Island and the State from different grant sources. John Rau asked if any town had turned down their request. Edgartown had turned them down, Tisbury had given 50% of their request and Chilmark had given 30% of their request. Rau asked why IAG was asking for so much from the Town of West Tisbury, did West Tisbury have that many citizens on the Autism spectrum? DeVane indicated this was more a hometown community project with more community access by the citizens of West Tisbury anticipated. Nancy Dole asked if this was a West Tisbury project or an Island project? Why not split the amount being requested throughout all the towns on the Island? DeVane responded that West Tisbury citizens were geographically closer to the project and would more likely use the trails and the farm stand. John Brannen asked about the affordable housing, why was it more money for West Tisbury? Rau indicated that actually the Town would be paying more having this land taken off the tax rolls, and having more fire, police and ambulance needs for this project. Maybe the project should ask for less due to these incurred costs? Philippe Jordi responded that typically, a host town is asked for more money. The reason is that the host town will have the housing units included on the State's affordable housing inventory.. West Tisbury is trying to get to approximately 100 units on the State's inventory. Ted Jochsberger asked if West Tisbury citizens would have preference for these units. DeVane explained that she and David Vigneault were developing a lottery system for residents. Vigneault explained that local residents having local preference is a beginning assumption for the project. Bea Phear asked about additional fund raising contributing to the \$3M for this project. DeVane said they would be at \$1M next week and will need \$2M after that. Philippe Jordi indicated there were \$1.2M in pledges for this project through the IHT. Bea Phear indicated that the CPC gives to housing, not programs. She would like to see a housing/pro forma with rental information for the project. DeVane said that programming is integral to the project numbers. Philippe Jordi said that the project includes Open Space, which is an eligible use of CPA funds. Bea Phear asked if the IAG would be coming back next year to ask for further funding. Doug Ruskin indicated that this year's application is primarily land acquisition and predevelopment housing costs. DeVane said there were no construction costs now, just predevelopment, and that the IAG would be coming back to the CPC in the future. Nancy Dole asked Philippe Jordi how many units were on West Tisbury's Housing Production Plan currently? He responded it looked like 11 units. Dole asked why 100 units were needed? Jordi said it was based on a percentage of year round residents. John Brannen asked about the ownership structure, was it similar to Harbor Homes? Jordi said no. IHT had no interest, no ground lease on the project. The IAG had purchased the 7.5 acres. IHT was working contractually with the group, on planning, design and permitting. A permanent affordable housing restriction would be required and put into place if the appropriation is approved. This could be included in any warrant article wording. Kate DeVane said the project was trying to achieve 'self-directed' care, which serves Martha's Vineyard residents.

Bea Phear thanked the presenters for their time and information, and also for the work they were doing. On a motion made by John Rau, seconded by Ted Jochsberger, the Committee unanimously voted to close the public hearing at 6:21 pm.

Old Business:

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the November 18, 2020 meeting. Beatrice Phear asked if the Committee had any changes or corrections to the minutes. On a motion made by John Brannen, seconded by Ted Jochsberger, the Committee approved the minutes unanimously.

The Committee discussed the CPC in Edgartown and voiced their concern over the lack of participation in Island wide projects, lack of communication with other CPC's, lack of support for important Island wide projects, and also past attempts (failed) at outreach to involve Edgartown in Island CPA projects.

With no further business, on a motion made by Ted Jochsberger, seconded by John Rau, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Dietterich
Administrative Assistant