

TOWN OF CUMBERLAND HOUSING TASK FORCE MINUTES
October 25, 2022

Call To Order: Chair Broder opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Roll Call: Present: James Broder – Chair, Lu Gallaudet – Vice Chair, Brian Cashin, Rick Doane, Betsey Harding, Mark Lapping, Katie Magoun, Eben Sweetser, Gail Witherill, Justin Wood, Town Councilors Bob Vail & Mark Segrist and Admin. Asst. Christina Silberman. **Absent:** Town Planner Carla Nixon

Approval of Minutes: The revised minutes of the September 27, 2022, Housing Task Force meeting and the prepared minutes of the October 11, 2022, Housing Task Force meeting were accepted.

Chair Comments: Chair Broder noted that tomorrow night is the workshop with the Town Attorney, Town Council, Planning Board and Housing Task Force for review of LD2003. Chair Broder read Town Councilor Allison Foster's email regarding the procedures for the workshop.

The Housing Task Force reviewed the Town Attorney's workshop presentation slides provided by the Town Manager and prepared questions.

Councilor Segrist reported that he recently started on the Legislative Policy Committee with Maine Municipal Association that has seventy members with two representatives from each State Senate District. The Committee met earlier in the month and LD2003 and LD 290, a tax forgiveness program for people 65 and over, were a couple of the topics reviewed. Some members of the Committee felt these need to be repealed and others felt changes are needed. Councilor Segrist said if he learns more, he will share the info with the Housing Task Force.

Mr. Cashin asked if density vs. fire suppression and water access has been considered. Councilor Segrist said this was not discussed. Councilor Vail said that statistically new homes don't burn, the building code is so much greater and burnable materials don't exist as they do in a 100 year old house. Mr. Cashin said new homes are larger with an open design that do not provide for fire separation.

Mr. Sweetser asked if they should think about how the existing growth areas match with this new rulemaking. Chair Broder said the growth areas are intended to be the areas where the Town would encourage development and where infrastructure should go. The current growth area map was reviewed.

Chair Broder referred to two outlines submitted by the Zoning and Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee and the Tiny Homes and Co-Housing Subcommittee and said both had a lot of reaction to the Cumberland Housing Authority.

Chair Broder said the Housing Task Force will submit their report to the Town Council in mid-December and will then go on with their lives and the Council will go on to other issues. Chair Broder said he suspects that absent some significant changes in the structure of town government, the issue of affordable housing will never come back up to the top unless the Town takes advantage of the existence of the Cumberland Housing Authority. The Housing Authority has the potential to become a place where the issue of affordable housing is dealt with on a regular basis.

Chair Broder said that the Housing Task Force can play strong role in redefining what the Cumberland Housing Authority is. Housing authorities have a lot of powers under State Statute and the Cumberland Housing Authority uses about 2% of these. The Cumberland Housing Authority Articles of Incorporation are needed to review for recommendations for changes.

The following recommendations from the Zoning and Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee were discussed.

1. Reorganize the Cumberland Housing Authority to be a robust entity (with a mission statement) that initiates, partners with, and stewards new projects to increase Cumberland's stock of affordable housing. Council should decide if a staff person is

needed. There was consensus of the Task Force for this recommendation. Chair Broder noted that a staff person would be needed.

2. Cumberland Meadows should shift to low and moderate income housing only. This shift should be realized through attrition. Because of the proximity to schools these units should be available to all ages. There was consensus from members of the Task Force for these units to have a low to moderate income cap and a general consensus for changes to allow the units to be available to all ages. Councilor Vail said he would want to see the addition of senior housing units to replace any units that are no longer designated for seniors.

3. Planning Board should review all zones and overlays and consider merging RR1 and RR2 to one 2 acre RR zone. The RR1 Zone currently requires a minimum of 4 acres per lot and the RR2 requires minimum a 2 acres per lot. Changing the RR1 Zone to a 2 acre minimum lot size will allow for more housing. A suggestion was made for the RR1 zone to allow for 2 acre lots only for affordable homes. A previous community survey showed that the majority of residents wished to keep the 4 acre minimum zone.

The Housing Task Force discussed how many affordable units the Town wants to incentivize. A reasonable number is needed to keep pace with surrounding Towns. There was a suggestion for 72 units but this number needs to be confirmed.

Chair Broder referred to the specific projects the group has discussed for three parts of Town and said that if the Town creates an entity to plan for and coordinate with the Town Council, non-profits and other organizations then the Housing Task Force will have done a good job of protecting the future of affordable housing.

Administrative Matters: Chair Broder will not be available to attend the meeting scheduled for Nov. 8th and this is Election Day. The Housing Task Force suggested meeting on Wednesdays, Nov. 16th and Nov. 30th instead of Tuesdays, Nov. 8th and Nov. 22nd. Ms. Silberman will confirm the availability of meeting space for the new meeting dates.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.