

Sherman Housing Commission

Jan. 20, 2014

Minutes

Present: Steve Roffwarg, chair; Jeanette Perlman, Michelle Hansen, Charlie Reppenhagen. Lynne Gomez, clerk.

Minutes of the December meeting were approved as read.

Steve outlined status of the lease resolution. Clay suggested a meeting between Steve, Dave Berto, Town Lawyer and himself to get the lease language resolved. Steve distributed the current lease with Dave Berto's comments to the commissioners. Steve gave 10 good dates, none of which worked for the Town Lawyer. Dave Berto can do it any Friday.

Details of the lease language were reviewed. Discussion followed on obstacles that have been inserted by the town attorney, many of which were not instructions of the Housing Commission and inhibit the possibility of funding.

Jeanette Perlman said the Housing Commission needs to write a letter to the editor of the Citizen News that details the truth. The longer we drag this out, the less possible that we will get the money, she said.

Jeanette and several other members said they were ready to resign. They have done everything that has been asked. Steve agreed, if the lease cannot be worded, continuing to meet is a waste of time.

A suggestions as also made to write a letter to Governor Malloy and the Departments of Housing to specifically state what is going on in Sherman. The next Board of Selectmen meeting is Thursday. Steve will make plans to meet with Clay and the attorney on Jan. 31. My obligation is to see that the lease protects the current and long-term interests of the town, Attorney Seinkowitz has stated.

If a private developer creates senior housing, it will have nothing to do with Seinkowitz and nothing to do with "protecting the town," Jeanette noted. They will do what they want. Jeanette added that there is no reason why this project should take more than 2 years, but the problem is that Sherman has missed "every single deadline" that would put Sherman in the running for the money.

Discussion followed on state politics and the governorship. Would a Republican make funding available for senior housing?

Discussion followed on elements of the lease. Discussion followed on the loss of seniors in the town with no affordable senior housing. Steve is pushing for a face to face to iron out the details of the lease, get approval from BOS and take it to the voters.

Discussion followed on Planning and Zoning's interest to oversee the zoning and not let a private developer do it. Jeanette cautioned that a private developer will not do 12 to 18 units, but more likely 60 plus. And the only thing the town can say is how many stories high.

Charlie Reppenhagen said he doesn't think enough people in Sherman know what would happen if a private developer came in and that a private developer won't care.

Discussion followed.

The question was raised: Is the BOS obstructing a vote of the people on this topic? Discussion followed. Steve noted that the next meeting will be the last and best chance to move forward.

Charlie talked about a town where the housing is working. He worked on a project in Newtown with a lawyer on the Housing Board. The management program worked fine, he said. Discussion followed on the Sherman Library's building committee.

Steve noted, in conclusion, that if the Selectmen really wanted this, it would have happened a long time ago. We need to take it to a vote, he added. Discussion followed on a statute disallowing the use of town money to advocate for affordable senior housing, so noted and brought forth by the town attorney.

Motion to adjourn: 6:30 pm

Next meeting: Feb. 17, 2014 at 5:30 pm at the Senior Center

Submitted,
Lynne Gomez