

## **Lyme Affordable Housing Commission Meeting February 2, 2023**

The Commission meeting was held in person at the Lyme Town Hall. Attending: Allyson Cotton, Carleen Gerber, Carol House, David Lahm, Jim Miller, Phyllis Ross, and Tina West.

Visitors: Andrew Gibson, Kristina White

Carol House called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

The Commission welcomed two visitors. Andrew Gibson is a potential new member to the Commission. Kristina White attended to share her take-aways from the Summit on Housing and Conservation. We began by having everyone introduce themselves.

### **Minutes**

The minutes from the November 3, 2022, meeting were accepted as posted. There were no meetings in December or January.

### **Old Business**

Carol reported that the P&Z appointed three of its members to coordinate the Plan of Conservation and Development: Carol House, Mary Stone, and Fritz Gahagan. This group has not yet met, but Carol said that the process will begin by soliciting ideas, concerns and information from different stakeholder groups within the Town.

### **New Business**

#### **Summit on Housing and Conservation.**

This event was sponsored by the Connecticut Land Conservation Council, the Land Trust Alliance, and the Trust for Public Land., and held on February 1 in Hartford. The purpose of Summit was to bring together planning for conservation land and affordable housing.

*While land conservation and affordable housing are often pitted against one another as an “either/or” proposition, the reality is that Connecticut communities need both. CLCC invites you to a full-day exploration of how housing and conservation groups can work together to achieve greater good. With our program partners, we will showcase successful examples of collaboration, and how such efforts can lead to healthier, more equitable housing, to more land conservation in our communities, and to increased funding for joint projects.*

Six people from Lyme attended, two from the Lyme Land Trust (Kristina White and Lynn Richmond) and four from this Commission (Carol House, Carleen Gerber, Phyllis Ross, and Allyson Cotton). The attendees thought the Summit was very informative, offering information and networking. Below are feedback comments from attendees and a list of action steps as follow-up.

- Land is the common denominator
- Towns may have been unintentionally signaling that conservation is the only good use of land. Here in Lyme we want to support 3 major uses of our land: homes (including affordable ones), conservation, and small farms. We need to design programs that benefit all three
- Energy efficiency should be front and center in these programs
- Think holistically

- Outcomes we seek -- conserving more land, building/maintaining affordable housing that is climate resilient, keeping our agricultural heritage, and deepening community engagement
- Have curiosity beyond existing solutions
- We should talk directly to individuals who need more affordable housing in Lyme or other knowledgeable stakeholders, including, town nurse, senior center, social services director, school system, etc.
- Learn more from groups working toward similar goals, such as the SE CT Community Land Trust and Hudson Valley Affordable Housing & Conservation Strategy
- This movement is statewide.
- More jobs are becoming available with places like Electric Boat
- Look at Stonington and what actions they are taking to preserve NOAHS
- In affordable housing we want quality, efficiency, and beauty – as well as affordability
- Need to look at a mix of different types of housing
- Learn more about grants and sources of funding
- Look at the Warren Group for more information
- For education, we need to create a specific example of how affordable housing be accomplished

Steps to Take:

- Review the Community Investment Act – Carol -- report at next meeting
- Review website for Hudson Valley Group – Allyson – report at next meeting
- Connect with other groups – SE CT Community Land Trust, Salem Land Trust, Litchfield County Center for Housing Opportunity, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Community Foundation for Eastern CT, others? – Carol, Carleen, Phyllis, Allyson – set up communication.
- Investigate Stonington initiatives for supporting NOAHs and potential for funding and legal issues – Tina and Jim – report at next meeting
- Talk with Lyme Land Trust about the Summit and potential for collaboration – Kristina
- Contact the CBIA for information and how they might assist - Andrew

The meeting was adjourned 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol House