VILLAGE OF SISTER BAY HOUSING COMMITTEE (VIRTUAL)
MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2024
(APPROVED)

1. Call Meeting to Order & Roll Call
Chair Patrice Champeau called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

Present: Chair and Trustee Patrice Champeau, Lori Allen, Lauren Aurelius, Marissa Downs, Gustavo Gallardo, Kay Smith
Absent: Razvan Ciobanu
Staff: Administrator Julie Schmelzer
Others: Louise Howson

2. Approval of Agenda
Motion by Allen, second by Smith, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approve Minutes
Motion by Smith, second by Aurelius, to approve the minutes from the October 22, 2024, meeting as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Comments, Correspondence and Concerns from the Public
Schmelzer explained correspondence was received from Lousie Howson and it had been sent to members as part of the meeting packet. There were no comments, and no other members of the public spoke.

5. Discussion/Action Items

a. Geneva Ridge; Sturgeon Bay Affordable Housing Project

Paul Shefchik, the developer and builder of the project, participated by phone to explain how he became involved in the project, the city's role and his role, the model the city used, details about the development agreement, and information about the homes and home sales.

Summary points included the homes are all three-bedroom homes with attached garages on traditional lots. Homes are 1000-1300 sq. ft. and sell for $270-305,000. The city wanted a workforce development project, and after several other projects that resulted in higher priced homes, they entered into the agreement with Portside Builders, Paul's company. The city worked with them to try and make the project as affordable as possible, such as by reducing the lot size to fit the home design. The program requires the building costs, and program costs, to be evaluated every year to ensure homes remain affordable. Their lots and infrastructure cost about $38,000 per lot, and the city determined the payback period to be six years.

The homes must be sold to someone who works in the county, and if they sell the home within those first six years, someone else who works in the county needs to buy the house to complete the 'term', or there has to be a payback. If held by a worker employed in the county, after six years, if the home sells, they don't have to pay back the infrastructure costs. If the home is sold after six years, the homeowner can also sell the home to anyone. If sold before the six years, the homeowner can only sell it at a rate approved by the city, which is the consumer price index. In all sales however, there is the deed restriction the home can never be a short-term rental, into perpetuity.

Shefchik said there were ways they could have made the project more affordable, namely by the city being the developer to avoid developer fees and by not using realtors, which of course charge a real estate fee. All buyers are approved by the city; the city is the one actually accepting the offer. He said selling the lot, and having the homeowner work directly with the builder, would have saved money – the real estate fee would have been based on the price of the lot, not the home.

Aurelius inquired if they had long term relationships with subcontractors and would there be challenges getting contractors to Northern Door. Shefchik said the company has long standing relationships with the contractors, and they don't charge more just because of where they are working, and many of them want to do these types of projects to help address the housing issue.

Smith asked if they worked with lenders on reduced rates and affordable mortgages. He said yes they do, they use Nicolet and Bank of Luxemburg. Smith said we have others that want to work with us too, such as Bank First.

Downs said the homes were about $1000/sq. ft. for a three-bedroom home with a two-stall attached garage, noting the costs real estate fees, developer mark-ups, and builders risk insurance add to a project. Schmelzer commented many of our homebuyer needs are for one- and two-bedroom homes, and some may not be able to afford an attached garage and may need just a carport, or no garage, all of which will help keep costs down. It was noted some people will need three bedrooms, especially as more families come to Sister Bay. Members discussed having basic home designs that buyers can revise based on their affordability. If people can afford amenities, like a fireplace, or marble countertops, those are all items they should work on directly with the builder and be costs above and beyond the price point we promote.

Champeau disagreed with the city's homes not being kept in the workforce market after six years and said she would hope Sister Bay would not follow that aspect of the model. Shefchik did clarify though, the city decided that after six years, when they no longer were reliant on the city for the home to be affordable, the owner should be allowed to sell to whoever they wanted.

Downs said the property was in a TIF, which must have helped a little too. She asked about what happens to the working family that has an emergency and has to relocate or sell? Shefchik said the city did consider that possibility, and that's why they have options for resale built into the program. Shefchik explained he knows the development side, but we might want to speak with the Community Development Director from the city about the details of the program itself.

Aurelius asked about the appraised values and Shefchik said the homes have been appraising at the sale price or higher.

Other comments and questions included, if the village sold the land directly, could staff handle the sales? Schmelzer indicated she believed they could, primarily because the brunt of the work falls on the village attorney. Oversight on the home sales was brought up, and it was noted the homes should not be able to be resold as a second home, and that should be a deed restriction – the home must be used as the primary residence. Gallardo asked if we needed to speak with an attorney noting the concern about not allowing people to build equity in the home. Schmelzer responded attorneys have looked at these models, and the reality is, it's a condition – if you want the home, at a low price, you have to understand your resale will be very restricted.

The committee decided to get more information about the administrative side of the city's program. Champeau urged the members to keep thinking about resale restrictions.

6. Discussion Regarding Matters to be Placed on a Future Agenda, Referred to a Committee, Official or Employee

Schmelzer is to try to arrange for Marty Olejniczak from the city of Sturgeon Bay to join the call; Schmelzer asked the committee finalize their discussions on incentives for multi-family developers; members agreed they should see if Stantec can be present; and provided she has had time to meet with Shefchik about home plans and costs, Schmelzer may have that information as well.

7. Set Meeting Schedule & Topic(s); Speaker Invite List.

(Discussed in part under item 6.) It was the consensus that the committee should meet again soon to keep the discussions moving along. The meeting date and time was set for December 3, 2024, at 11:00 a.m.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Smith, second by Allen, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Julie Schmelzer, Acting Recording Secretary