

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Housing Diversity Study Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2023

Present: Kevin Justh (KJ), Timothy Thompson (TT), Stephanie Anderson (SA), Curtis Kelly (CK), Victoria Volent (VV), Katie Reeves (KR), Amit Oza (AO)

Absent: None

Committee Support Staff: Kristina Musante (KM) and Josh Biehler (JB) of K&J Strategic Solutions consulting firm

Public Guests: Cindy Krum, Ardath Dixon, Drew Johnson

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting began at 6:30 pm.

2. Attendance

All committee members were in attendance.

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

4. Cindy Crum, Executive Director, to give “Explanation of the Cape Elizabeth Land Trust”

Cindy began by thanking the committee and committee staff for their invitation. She introduced the Stewardship Manager, Ardath Dixon, who was also accompanying her to add additional information and be a point of contact for future discussions. Cindy noted at the beginning that these meetings should be recorded, especially this one, but she was grateful to have this opportunity. Cindy began giving over the basics, mentioning that everything, including their mission, vision, and strategic plan, is on their website and recommended the committee review it. The Land Trust’s mission is to educate and conserve ecological habitats, farms, and recreational land. They are a nonprofit land trust with a board and other legal requirements that ensure its mission is fulfilled.

The Land Trust has two main legal restrictions on properties - (1) conservation easements (for example) Cross Farms and the Methodist Church; and (2) owning the land for a fee but having legal protections, which doesn’t allow for any building structures. They also manage and own many ecosystem trials for the health and wellness of the community and are part of the climate change effort of (the 30x30 initiative). She noted that although they can’t partner with the committee if there is a conservational piece to an affordable housing project, they may be able to partner, but the town does most of that type of work. The committee members discussed that there is confusion among the community on whether the Land Trust can sell or donate land to the City for affordable housing. Cindy noted that the Land Trust cannot do this and offered to send

the committee maps showing their properties. There was discussion about land near the dump because the Town didn't want to fully commit to the recreational area there, but there is a 30-year to go on that property. Cindy mentioned that the Town has always liked having its conservation land. The discussion continued that Cape Elizabeth Land Trust is a conservation land trust, and maybe Cape Elizabeth needs a developmental land trust to support housing efforts.

5. Approval of Minutes from December Meeting (Monday, December 5, 2022) & Workshop Minutes (Tuesday, November 29, 2022)

a) Victoria Volent motioned to approve the minutes for December 5, 2022. Katie Reeves seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous for approval.

b) Victoria Volent motioned to approve the minutes for November 29, 2022. Amit Oza seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous for approval.

6. Reports and Correspondence

The committee began with a discussion on hybrid/remote meetings. The committee is discouraged by the fact that there is no video for these important conversations. After speaking with the Town, the committee staff mentioned that the Town plans to invest in the Owl software and hardware and that all meetings moving forward must be in person. The committee felt upset because they had worked hard only to discuss issues or comments if they were in the official committee meeting setting. The committee discussed the Owl device, as the committee already used it once. The discussion led to if the committee is inviting subject matter experts (SME), then we need to have Zoom meetings because not all SMEs will be able to travel for these meetings, and we urgently need to meet with them.

Curt Kelly made a motion declaring an emergency motion due to travel and time constraints to have the next meeting Jan 23, 2023 and February 3, 2023, be fully remote. Stephanie Anderson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. If, after speaking with the Town, they are not allowed to meet fully virtually, the decision was to postpone the meetings.

a) Tom Egan Email about Pending Zoning Ordinance amendments driven by LD 2003

The committee discussed appreciation for emails and ideas but noted that they should also be sent to the Town Council, where they could be taken up. Committee members wanted to note that Tom Egan has been a full-time resident for years but most recently became a seasonal resident.

b) Maureen O'Meara Memorandum on the Comprehensive Plan Implementation Recommendations #30, #82

The committee felt this was great information but didn't need to dive into this. It should be included, though, in discussion with the Town Manager [Matt Sturgis](#). At the meeting with the

Town Manager, the committee would like to know if the current number of vacant nonconforming lots is accurate.

c) December 2022 Report for Town Council

This was for the committee to review to see if they had any changes before submitting to the Town Council. The committee staff mentioned that they must report to Town Council quarterly on what the committee has been working on. The committee requested minor edits of the language, the same as the edits for the Community Forum Reports. The committee members would like to change some of the wording, most to soften some of the language and use the word “some” or “a few” or “a” instead of community members. They would also like to see the number of community members that attended at the top of the report.

7. List Items on the Agenda

a) Review of Evaluations from the December 5th Forum

Information provided in the Evaluation was discussed briefly.

b) Approval of the Community Forum Report from November 7, 2022

The committee reviewed the changes but again mentioned that no vote was needed as this was for informational purposes. The committee would like to see the number of community members at the top of the report. There was a discussion among committee members on the number of housing goals and where the number of 450 affordable homes came from. It was noted this was from page 68 of the Housing Diversity Study. There was no vote on this approval, as it is being used for informational purposes for the committee to review.

c) Discussion of housing goals for the committee

The committee discussed making goals closer to the end of their charge. The housing goals will become more clear after speaking with SMEs, the public forums, evaluations, etc.

d) Discussion on collecting community responses – more in-depth review of the matrix presented at the December meeting

The committee discussed the matrix provided. The blue box in the middle needs to be removed. The committee discussed how to utilize this tool best. This matrix will be helpful when talking with the SMEs. There was a discussion that if committee members knew some of the information, they could fill it out using a google excel spreadsheet that could be shared with the community at the following meetings. The matrix will be filled out more in-depth between meetings and brought for the public to see updates, especially after speaking with SMEs.

e) Committee staff presentation on Lumio survey tool for collecting data from the community

The committee staff presented on the Loomio software. The staff mentioned the cost would be somewhere in the range of \$10-149, but that after speaking with the Town Manager, there was a discount, so it would be more likely around the \$49/month range. This tool was used for the Comprehensive Plan. The staff mentioned that a good way to use this was to create discussion

threads to help inform them of what the public was thinking. It would be extremely helpful for people who can't attend these meetings. The one note is that people do need to be computer literate to participate. There was a discussion about how the community signed on to this, which the staff couldn't answer, or how many people could be invited. The committee would like to discuss this in more detail at the next meeting.

8. Next Meeting /Event

- a) HDSC Workshop: January 23, 2023, at 6:30 pm virtually (if not rescheduled)
- b) HDSC Committee Meeting: February 3, 2023, at 6:30 pm virtually (if not rescheduled)
- c) HDSC Committee Meeting: March 6, 2023, at 6:30 pm at the Town Council Chambers

The items to be added to the next agenda include a discussion of an RFP for a survey consultant. A follow-up discussion and implementation of Loomio. The committee staff will also be sending out invites to SMEs for the next meetings.

9. Public Comment

Public comment from Drew Johnson wanted to make a note that although he has written about affordable housing, he was not there writing for the newspaper but was there as a concerned citizen. Jeff also noted that the high school has several ovals that he doesn't know if they get used to. The committee may want to meet with John Springer about using the high school library space if Town Chambers isn't available, and they want the meeting recorded. Jeff also mentioned an article in the Atlantic magazine in Jan/Feb about homelessness and the coastal cities. The market does not attack demand the same way regulatory issues in coastal areas. Also, the New York Times put out a video (youtube - liberal hypocrisy), and it should pop up but is worth a view.

Public comment from Jenny Smith wanted to ensure that if we do a survey, renters know and are encouraged to answer the survey and be included in these meetings.

10. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by chairmen and vice chairmen at 8:30 pm