



**DENNIS AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST**  
**June 26, 2023 MEETING MINUTES**

Town of Dennis Public Meeting Notice

This is to formally advise that, as required by Mass. G. L. Chapter 30A §§18-25, and pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, An Act Relative to Extending Certain Covid-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, signed into law on June 16, 2021, this meeting of the Dennis Affordable Housing Trust (DAHT) on Monday, June 26, 2023, at 4:00pm.

Trust members present: Robert Samoluk (RS), Co-Chair; Kayla Hilts (KH), Co-Chair; Josh Mason (JM), Vice Chair; David Winther (DW), Treasurer; PJ Rainwater (PJR); Kate Byron (KB); Noreen Brown (NB).

Town Staff present online: Maggie Spade-Aguilar (MSA), Housing Coordinator.

Others present online: Carlyn Carey, Board of Select.

**AGENDA**

1. Discussion with New Town Planner Paul Foley – Welcome & Introductions

Paul Foley spoke of housing as a major issue, in that there is a lot of housing but not a lot of affordable units and that the Town is seeking ways to find more inventory; spoke of his background at Martha's Vineyard Commission for 15 years followed by a position at Fairhaven; said the Town of Dennis is currently looking at a number of projects, referenced Fairhaven and other Town residences that are being bought up to provide short-term rentals and which then drive up the home prices in the local market; emphasized a need to be environmentally conscious; cited the sandpit as a parcel not being utilized at present.

RS asked per 40R, which Mr. Foley said differed from 40B in that 40B is usually just residential whereas 40R is an overlay that can be mixed-use with ground-floor commercial and is approved as such a Town Meeting. RS mentioned past issues with 40B scenarios where the public opinion came down to move the project to a location away from whoever might be offering an opinion on the matter. Mr. Foley said he respected the prospect of multi-use at Wixon School and would like to see the Town work with a Transfer of Development option.

DW referenced an incentive from the prior DAHT meeting that a multi-Board committee be set up to address property project proposals and their facets. Mr. Foley said his past experience is working with Planning not Zoning Boards but that a working group across entities will be helpful and will plan to speak with Select Member, Ms. Carey, this week to get started. RS stressed the need to get something done and avoid continuous delays.

2. Public Comment

Sue Gierej of South Dennis spoke, asked of developer's incentives toward 55 and over housing. Mr. Foley responded in expressing that it is more a Town's inclination than derived from State programs, with an understanding that 55+ will be less likely to add to vehicle traffic.

3. Housing Coordinator Update - Status One-Stop Application - Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI) list – Updates - Municipal Engagement Initiative (MEI) – Next Steps - Upcoming

events: meetings, educational webinars.

MSA tabled discussion of the Housing Coordinator Update to the next meeting.

4. Status Updates – Submission of Wixon School RFEI, Letter to Select Board regarding Special Housing Committee, Proposed Dennis Courtyard (744 Main St and 18 Hope Lane), Website

MSA said a Select Board designate has not been selected as far as she is aware; has submitted the Wixon application by hand on the due date and that the Board went into Executive Session at the prior meeting to consider proposals. DW said it would be helpful for the SB to get back to the DAHT with receipt of proposal, questions, and direction. Ms. Carey said she will be the SB liaison going forward and that a number of submissions were reviewed per the Wixon School during Executive Session; said she will confirm that the DAHT submission has been received formally and will work toward publicizing some kind of timeline for public notification. Ms. Carey requested a copy of the DAHT letter sent to the SB, which DW said was sent to Town Manager in that regard just a couple of days following the May DAHT meeting.

KH said the website is in the works and expected to be ready for Town-wide switch-over sometime in September/October.

RS spoke about fielding a lot of resistance to the proposed site Dennis Courtyard, a 40B complex on 6A at Hope Lane being 55 and older as younger workers' affordable housing needs are also a pressing concern. KH asked if the short-term rental issue was addressed at the complex to which RS said it was, briefly. JM said debate on the proposed complex is an opportunity for the DAHT to spearhead a community alliance on affordable housing needs.

5. Discussion of DAHT role in Dennis major housing initiatives (VIC Hall, Bob Crowell Rd., Multi-housing Overlay District, Wixon School Redevelopment.

Per RS, covered in the discussion with Mr. Foley earlier in the meeting. JM referenced a previous statement from the Town Manager wherein she said she would be happy to meet with the DAHT. DW said he has a copy of the RFP and will circulate it with the Trust.

6. Proposed formation of working group to review non-development housing initiatives (Examples: AFHMP support, rental assistance, ownership support).

RS asked if there might be short-term solutions to current problems, such as offering financial assistance to home buyers who will then make their home deed restricted. MEI (Municipal Engagement Initiative) was brought up, which MSA said is an org that can help bridge entities to form an encompassing committee and, RS suggested, is more oriented toward community-outreach. RS said he would like to return to the group with a set of initiatives to help people get into an affordable home or to keep the home they are in.

MSA referenced a letter from a developer which RS expressed is in line with the established process to get on the SHI list via Ready Renter program designation, including State protocols, a lottery and other items. MSA said the final step to get on the SHI list is a costly measure that includes required advertisement and a \$5,000 fee each time a unit turns over; asked if the Trust would like to entertain having a revolving fund of \$10,000, for example, that can be

reserved for the entity to run the Ready Renter program when funds are not available to facilitate the service. RS to meet with MSA to get the notes collected on the Ready Renter or Housing Authority programs issue. MSA said Mary Wagan's presence may be helpful as well.

## 7. Minutes Approval

RS made a couple of changes to the May 22, 2023, DAHT meeting minutes: Under 2. Housing Coordinator Update, delete Forward Phase II Update and create a headline for Projects Underway; delete RS and NB from approval of April 24, 2023, meeting minutes.

## 8. Additional Items not anticipated by the Chair

DW reported that Nancy Friend at Dennis Housing Authority does not have any updates and the management agreement is status quo; payment made for gas and insurance and other things, DAHT losing money. PJR said she would like to see the signed document.

**Agenda Item: To share information on all documents including current rents and financial impacts with the DAHT.**

JM asked if the gentleman who was offering to donate a parcel of land had been followed up on, to which MSA said she has reached out a couple of times and has not heard back. Kelly Race, too, to follow up. MSA referenced Dan Proto being given the go-ahead to update and improve the current meeting room parameters here at Nickerson Hall, which requires a switch-out to new equipment which JM suggested could be done within a day's time.

PJR spoke of her position as liaison to the Substance Abuse Advisory Council for the past six years and requested that someone else might assume this position; said she would still continue to attend meetings as a non-voting member.

**Agenda Item: Substance Abuse Advisory Council liaison.**

**Agenda Item: Second Quarter Financial Statement.**

Summer Meeting: Monday, July 24, 2023.

## 9. Adjourn

**KH made a motion to adjourn the DAHT meeting at 5:54pm. PJR seconded the motion and it passed, 7-0-0: PJR, KB, DW, NB, JM, KH, RS.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Jody O'Neil