

1 **Approved XXXX , 2024**
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5 **THE SOUTHBOROUGH HOUSING OPPORTUNITY PARTNERSHIP COMMITTEE**
6 **(SHOPC)**
7 **MEETING MINUTES**
8 **Thursday, September 5th @ 7:00 PM**
9 **VIRTUAL MEETING/REMOTE PARTICIPATION**

10 Members present: Jesse Stein, Al Hamilton, Paul Desmond and Douglas Manz
11

12 **CALL TO ORDER:**

13 The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
14

15 **Consent Agenda:**

16 **Administrative Approval of Meeting Minutes**

- 17 • Doug calls the meeting to order.
18 • Doug thanks Paul for preparing the June 6th meeting minutes and notes three sets of
19 minutes to be approved.
20 • Roll call for June 6, 2024, minutes: All in favor, Paul, Jesse, Al, and Doug
21 • Roll call for July 11, 2024, minutes: All in favor, with a correction noted by Paul (Vice Chair
22 instead of Chair). All in favor – Paul, Jesse, Al and Doug
23 • Roll call for July 23, 2024, minutes: All in favor – Paul, Jesse, Al and Doug
24

25 **Discussion on MBTA Communities Act**

- 26 • Jesse provides an update on the MBTA Communities Act, mentioning public hearings and
27 a special town meeting on September 30.
28 • The Planning Board is working on zoning changes to include higher density multi-family
29 housing on 10 acres within a half-mile radius.
30 • Concerns from impacted residents and efforts to find a compromise between state law
31 and resident interests.
32 • Affordable housing component with 10% of units deed-restricted.
33

34 **Questions on Specific Parcels**

- 35 • Doug inquires about the background of specific parcels, including the Fitzgerald site,
36 general store, and McCarthy's pool site.
37 • Jesse explains the mapping sessions and resident consensus in determining eligible
38 parcels.
39 • Discussion on the challenges of meeting the bylaw and the importance of resident input.
40 • Doug and Jesse discuss the difficulty of pleasing everyone and the need for a compromise.
41

42 **Support for Planning Board's MBTA Communities Act Plan**

- 43 • Al moves to support the Planning Board's plan for the MBTA Communities Act. Paul
44 seconds the motion. Roll call: All in favor, Paul, Jesse, Al and Doug.
45

47 • Doug and Jesse discuss the importance of compliance and the potential risks of non-
48 compliance.
49 • Jesse emphasizes the need for more housing, especially affordable units.
50

51 **Future Approach to Chapter 61A Parcels**

52 • Doug introduces the discussion on Chapter 61A parcels and potential future approaches.
53 • Jesse highlights the high cost of acquiring developable land and the limited funds
54 available.
55 • Paul suggests exploring community land trusts and donations from well-off residents.
56 • Jesse mentions partnering with the Southborough Open Land Foundation and the Open
57 Space Preservation Commission.
58

59 **Challenges and Potential Solutions for Chapter 61A Parcels**

60 • Doug and Jesse discuss the need for a map of all 61A parcels in Southborough.
61 • Jesse mentions the Atwood property as a potential site, despite lead contamination
62 issues.
63 • Doug supports the idea of townhomes and lower-density affordable housing.
64 • Doug discusses the benefits of a 70% preference for town residents and employees in
65 affordable housing projects.
66

67 **Discussion on Reducing Zoning Barriers to Affordable Housing**

68 • Doug brings up the cap on senior housing and ADUs in the Zoning Bylaw.
69 • Jesse advocates for removing the need for ADUs to go through a special permit process.
70 • Discussion on the potential impact of recent changes in ADU laws.
71 • Jesse mentions confusion with other boards regarding the recognition of ADUs as multi-
72 family units.
73 • Jesse clarifies that the property in question is a single-family residence with an accessory
74 unit, not a two-family home.
75 • Doug raises the issue of the cap on senior housing, questioning why it exists and
76 suggesting it could be increased.
77 • Jesse explains that the cap is part of a special permit for major residential development,
78 offering incentives for increased density.
79 • Doug and Jesse discuss the potential for removing or increasing the cap on senior housing
80 at a future town meeting.
81 • Doug inquires about the status of the state's housing bond bill and its impact on ADUs,
82 with Jesse noting some movement in the downtown district.
83 • Doug mentions the passage of the housing bond bill on July 31, allowing for increased
84 allowance of ADUs.
85 • Jesse notes that the implementation of these changes is still uncertain and will require
86 integration into town planning.
87 • Doug and Jesse discuss the cap on ADUs and the need for further exploration of increasing
88 housing stock.
89 • Jesse suggests inviting Karina to a future meeting to provide more detailed information
90 on zoning changes related to senior housing and ADUs.
91 • Doug agrees and emphasizes the importance of addressing both senior housing caps and
92 ADU implementation in future discussions.

93

94 **Affordable Housing Trust Fund and SHAP Consolidation**

95 • Doug provides an update on the working group discussing the potential consolidation of
96 the Affordable Housing Trust Fund with SHAP.

97 • The group includes Andrew Dennington, Lisa Braccio, Paul, and Doug, aiming to merge
98 the two boards to streamline affordable housing efforts.

99 • Jesse highlights the complexity of the draft legislation and the need to finalize it before
100 the town meeting.

101 • Doug supports the merger, noting the current advisory role of SHAP and the need for a
102 more nimble board to handle affordable housing transactions.

103 • Jesse suggests reconsidering the makeup of the new board, recommending three at-large
104 members and one from the Planning Board for expertise in zoning.

105 • Jesse and Al discuss the need for a planning board member on the new board to ensure
106 proper zoning knowledge.

107 • Jesse, Paul and Al discuss the feasibility of a member from the planning department

108 • Doug emphasizes the importance of having a staff person assigned to the new board to
109 handle meeting logistics and support.

110 • Al and Doug discuss the potential use of AI assistants like Otter.ai for transcribing
111 meetings, with Al offering to explore this option further.

112 • Al makes a motion to recommend to Town Meeting support the merger of AHTF and
113 SHOPC. Seconded by Paul. In Favor: Al, Paul, Doug – Abstain: Jesse

114 • Jesse abstained given concerns over the make-up of the new AFHTF not having a Planning
115 Board member but is in favor of the merging of SHOPC and AFHTF.

116

117 **Potential Use of Affordable Housing Trust Funds for Rental Payments**

118 • Al introduces the idea of using the Affordable Housing Trust Fund to buy down affordable
119 rental payments on Chapter 40B projects.

120 • The committee discussed the potential benefits and challenges of this approach, including
121 the developer's incentive and the non-trivial sum of money involved.

122 • Doug suggests considering increasing the number of affordable units instead of reducing
123 rents, with both options being explored further.

124 • The board agrees to discuss the potential use of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for
125 down payment assistance on affordable housing units, with Al planning to reach out to
126 Mass Housing for examples and precedents.

127

128 **Affordable Housing Policy Discussion**

129 • The Committee discusses the necessity for the property to be permanently needed as
130 affordable and mentions that the owner of an affordable unit can still accumulate wealth
131 through modest gains.

132 • Further discussion on that the value creation is capped at 80% to ensure affordability and
133 that down payment assistance can be recaptured upon sale, although this varies by
134 community.

135 • The conversation highlights that the goal is to reduce barriers, not to provide a windfall,
136 and that the process varies by community, with Habitat for Humanity as an example.

137 • Discussion emphasizes the importance of quality shelter and community for raising
138 families, noting that this is valuable even if it doesn't result in significant profit upon sale.

139 • The group agrees on the importance of removing barriers and discusses the potential
140 creation of a new affordable housing trust fund by the Select Board.

141
142 **Scheduling Future Meetings**

143 • Doug suggests scheduling another meeting, considering the upcoming town meeting
144 might change the schedule, and proposes October as a tentative time.
145 • The group discusses potential dates for the next meeting, with 17th of October being
146 selected as a tentative date.
147 • Jesse mentions the need to coordinate with the town planner and suggests an 8:30 AM
148 start.

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150 **NEXT MEETING:**

151 The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 17th at 8:30 AM.

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154 **ADJOURN: MOTION** by Mr. Hamilton to adjourn. **Seconded by** Mr. Desmond **ROLL CALL:**
155 **Hamilton – Yes, Stein-Yes, Desmond-Yes, Manz-Yes. VOTE to Approve: Yes-4, No-0.**

156
157 Respectfully Submitted,

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159 Douglas J. Manz
160 SHOPC Chair