

Planning Commission

November 3, 2022

Unapproved

Board members present: Dennis Casey, Dan Nugent, David Schmidt, Jeff Keeney, Brad Boss, Lexy Thompson

Unable to attend: Denny Barnard

Others present: Rebecca Elder, Richard Faesy, Jeff Dunham, Elise Shanbacker, Peter Schneider, Chris Oullette, Pete Antos-Ketcham

The meeting was called to order by Chair Dennis Casey at 6:35 p.m. in person and on Zoom.

No changes to the agenda.

Energy Efficient Homes for Mobile Home Parks

Elise Shanbacker, Executive Director of Addison County Community Trust, and Peter Schneider, VEIC Energy Consultant, joined the discussion to talk about options for energy efficient homes that are alternatives to traditional mobile homes.

Elise summarized the work ACCT has been doing in Starksboro, including engineering feasibility on Brookside MHP. There is not enough capacity for a community system so they are looking to some best fix scenarios and some smaller systems for up to 10 homes each. They are looking to acquire land nearby to support this work. It is easier to tie into a collective system.

Lazy Brook and Hillside MHPs face different challenges. The most recent capacity grant awards have not yet been announced so ACCT is waiting to see what work can be funded. There are longer term sustainability challenges with a major water issue last year at Hillside. Jeff asked whether the water is metered at each home. No, the water is metered at the pump house for the park.

Peter Schneider then described some energy efficient homes he helped coordinate that were installed in the Bristol MHP in collaboration with the John Graham group and with funding through VHCB (VT Housing and Conservation Board). They put in 3 modular homes for families facing homelessness. He estimates that about 50% of the mobile homes in Vermont need replacement (roughly 8000 homes). Years ago after the destruction of Hurricane Irene, there were several hundred ZEMs (Zero Energy Modularity) installed throughout the State. There was a USDA Rural Development program supporting these efforts.

There is a lot of money for weatherization projects through groups like CVOEO, however it is expensive work. A recent older home weatherization project was nearly \$20K.

There are some challenges to installing these homes in existing parks. Newer homes are heavier than the older models. Existing slabs cannot support the weight and are often damaged or uneven. As of 2009, new installation standards were created requiring a frost protective slab. Those cost roughly \$15-20K. Removal of old slabs is \$5K. There have been a variety of programs that have tried to fund this work. Community block grants are designed to support updating of infrastructure, new slabs, new connections, etc.

Peter has been working with a manufacturer in upstate NY that is constructing about 5 homes per day. They are at the 100-120K price level. Plant is west of Utica. There are initiatives at VEIC to support factory designed homes from a nonprofit manufacturing in Eugene, Oregon.

ACCT has been discussing some spec homes with Fecteau Homes. There are some vacant lots in LB and Hillside parks. Site prep would be needed and funds to help in purchasing the homes to spec.

ACCT is looking to do a community block grant with the Town. (CDBG program)

\$500K earmarked for Brookside

12/6 there is a community development conference about infrastructure and improvements where more information will be available. Elise is a panelist.

PC members asked about how long the funding opportunities will last. VHCB will be getting more funds this year, with a larger amount coming from the PTTs.

New advanced manufactured homes are costing \$200-300 per SF. These prices are out of the range for many living in the MHPs.

Discussion included whether solar options are possible. A flat roof is better for solar. Homes would need to be reoriented for best solar gain.

Both the PC members and ACCT are willing to continue exploring options though the fiscal implications of these homes make them unlikely as replacements for most MH renters/owners.

[Bylaws Discussion](#)

The discussion about bylaws continued. The group reviewed the ongoing list of areas for revision. The group will return to the noise regulation section next time.

[Planning Commission Roundtable](#)

Reminder of the MAUSD merger vote on Nov. 8

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Elder