

**Housing Committee  
Town of Pelham  
Meeting Minutes for June 1, 2021**

Meeting conducted remotely via Zoom

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee Members in Attendance:**

Tilman Lukas, Ruth Elcan, Gail Kenny, Barbara Cooper

**Guests in Attendance:** Nancy Weeber (NW), Tracy Osbahr (CO)

**Meeting called to order at:** 4:35 p.m. by Tilman

**Minutes Approved:**

None

**Votes Taken:**

**Additions to the Agenda**

Further review of land inventory

**Committee Discussion Topics:**

Barbara Cooper introduced Council on Aging members. Objective is to see how the HC can work with the COA to further help Pelham seniors with housing-related needs.

Tracy reviewed survey that the COA had sent out to town residents. Has the HC looked into Senior Circuit Breaker program by the state (DOR). If own or rent in Mass., are over 65, within income limits, can apply for tax rebate. Barbara wondered how this is different from the town program. Town assessors stated that few residents use ~~the town reduction~~ Pelham's tax abatement program because they don't want to disclose their income. Tracy suggested getting in touch with assessor or tax collector to see how this works. Barbara will get in touch with June Massee (town collector) to ask about accessing the program and get info for the fall Slate. Barbara Googled state program and it is for reduction in income tax (Schedule CB). Might HC include something in the Pelham Slate?

BC: Federal funds that are part of Covid relief are available for rental and mortgage assistance. Wayfinders in Springfield, is the primary conduit.

TL: Will look into who to contact at Wayfinders.

TC: Survey reflected that most residents have Internet access (approx. 96%). However, Nancy stated that only 18% of seniors responded. Many seniors are not comfortable with using the Internet.

BC: Hard to determine what kind of programs since most people don't respond to surveys and reluctant to talk about- what their needs might be. Should we prepare a survey that is handed out at the fall town meeting asking people about their housing needs?

TL: PVPC administers regional rehab programs funded by DHCD. In the past these programs included septic repairs, insulation, windows, etc. These are very competitive programs and a town would need to demonstrate need.

Should inform residents about MassSave and other programs that help reduce housing-related costs.

Amherst Neighbors works with Pelham COA. Need to check with them.

NW: will send Tilman the link to Amherst Neighbors. Need to let people know that town committees are working together to try to provide services.

GK: PVRTA will provide services to residents for a fee. Can the fee be waived for seniors? Also, will ABA have a PVRTA stop?

TL: Described town efforts being made to construct a sidewalk on the south side of Amherst Rd. from to the Amherst town line and to the Community Building. Hopefully there will be a PVRTA stop at ABA and the library.

NW: Pelham has a small population and a large area. Pelham is one of the only towns that does not have a senior center. This makes communication very difficult with seniors.

TO: COA will start to provide services at the Community Hall across the street from the library. Problem is that there is very limited parking and crossing Amherst Rd. is hazardous. COA is looking at hiring a outreach person who could help residents connect with various resources.

TL: Will contact Rick A. to see if there is a way to develop more parking along N. Valley Rd.

GK: Adjacent property might have some space for parking.

JL: Will look into who now owns the property where the music studio was.

#### Future Meetings:

Can we continue to hold Zoom meetings? Members prefer Zoom meetings for the immediate future. Tilman will check into this.

#### Amethyst Brook Apartments:

TL: ZBA is finalizing their hearings. Two meetings left. Process has been very cooperative. Optimistic that the ZBA will issue a permit that the developer can accept.

#### Habitat for Humanity

Houses are under construction. Will there be two driveways? Will the houses be on slab?

JL: Concerned that radon be addressed. Many houses in town have radon problems. Will the houses have a radon barrier?

**Meeting adjourned:** motion to adjourn 5:57 p.m. by Gail, seconded Ruth. Unanimous.  
~~p.m.~~

**Next meeting: July 6, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
Tilman Lukas

**References:**

ABA: Amethyst Brook Apartments (20-22 Amherst Road)  
ANR: Approval not Required  
CC: Conservation Commission  
CDBG: (Community Development Block Grant)  
CPA: Community Preservation Act  
CPC: Community Preservation Committee  
DHCD: MA Dept. of Housing and Community Development  
HC: Housing Committee  
HD: Highway Department  
H4H: Habitat for Humanity  
HCDI: Home City Development Inc .  
MHC: Massachusetts Historical Commission  
PVPC: Pioneer Valley Planning Commission  
PB: Planning Board  
VCDC: Valley Community Development Corporation  
ZB: Zoning Board  
COA (Council on Aging)