

Tinmouth Planning Commission
April 21, 2022
Regular Meeting ~ Minutes

Members present in-person: Michael Fallar, Judy Gilmore, Andy Gilmore, and Larry Carabeau
Members present via Zoom: Vito Macaluso, Bob Lloyd, Pat Psholka, and Kim Harbaugh
Others present: in-person Gail Fallar, Secretary

Michael called the meeting to order at 7:08

Members reviewed the agenda, added announcement under other.

Minutes of 3/17/22 were approved as written, Pat moved to approve, Larry 2nded, all voted in favor.

Members discussed Affordable Housing. Members were provided copies of Tinmouth Zoning Regulations regarding Accessible Housing/Uses prior to the meeting and copies of the Town Plan's section on Affordable Housing at the meeting. Bob read from page 33 of the Town Plan which explained that Tinmouth being so rural, is not very suitable for affordable housing. *"Tinmouth is not a very suitable place, from a countywide perspective, to build affordable single-family housing – if indeed it can be built anywhere in the county without substantial subsidies. The town offers few jobs or services. So life in Tinmouth is life with the automobile. Most families, even of modest means, find it essential to own and operate two cars, despite the high cost of gasoline. Heating oil is rising in cost after a period of very low prices. Thus the cost of living in an "affordable" house in Tinmouth is not insubstantial, and notably more than living nearer the county's towns and urban areas."*

He commented that it had been tried through NeighborWorks and that the project was not able to attract more than one owner. He noted that he used to assist Habitat for Humanity when he was in Massachusetts – they select a potential owner who then makes a commitment and helps with the construction/renovation. There was much more of a population there and support from churches etc. back then. He noted there is a HH organization in Rutland, wondered if that might work for Tinmouth. Michael suggested speaking with the Smiths to see how they felt about being part of the October Hill Project – there are a number of strings attached to subsidized affordable housing.

Several members questioned what the need for it was in Tinmouth and the county, suggesting that there needed to be jobs available in order to attract more workers who then might need housing. Members also discussed the definition of affordable housing – typically 35% of gross income should be what is spent on housing. How to determine what to do differently than what was done in past attempts? The high cost of construction, some estimates are over \$400 per square foot – a number of folks attempting to build are delaying due to the increase in the cost (was \$200 per square foot). Some members inquired if we want to become a Wallingford or Rutland? The Town Plan was written with keeping Tinmouth rural in mind. What are other towns doing for AH – need to check with RRPC. As this was Rainbow's concern and she was unable to attend, Andy moved and Larry 2nded to table until the next meeting to allow her input.

Bob reminded everyone that the PC can only create opportunities, they can't make it happen. Current zoning regulations already allows for this if someone wants to make it happen.

No updates on proposed subdivisions – still waiting for surveyors to complete work.

Next meeting will be May 19th.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM. Respectfully submitted,

Gail Fallar, Secretary