

Town of Peacham  
Selectboard Minutes of Informational Hearing on the Proposed Application for a  
Planning Grant to the Vermont Community Development Program  
October 26, 2010  
Town Hall Gym

The informational hearing was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Selectboard members present: Tim McKay, Andy Cochran

Clerk to the Board: Bruce Lafferty

Others: Barry Lawson, members of the public. The sign-in sheet will be attached to this document.

1. The Selectboard stated that a proposal is being considered to submit an application for a Planning Grant to the Vermont Community Development Program. Peacham Community Housing (PCH) is initiating the proposal and is seeking support from the selectboard, which is required as part of the application. Barry Lawson is the principle writer of the grant application and was asked to explain it. Lawson reviewed the elements of the proposal including:
  - a. the fate of the Science Building, which has been closed in response to major problems within the building;
  - b. updating market study of housing needs;
  - c. work with Habitat for Humanity;
  - d. preparation of viable options for affordable housing and market-based housing for seniors;
  - e. public outreach
2. The background of the senior housing situation was explained by Lawson. PCH has been a minor partner in the existing housing project for 15 years, during which time Housing Vermont has been the major partner in charge of financing and management of the housing. Housing Vermont has informed PCH of their imminent withdrawal from the project in Peacham. PCH is planning for the future of the housing.
3. There was discussion regarding the elements of the plan. The complexity of the existing senior housing agreements was pointed out, particularly the maintenance of the septic system serving the senior housing and private residences, which involves a 4-party agreement (does not include the Town). Considerable concern was expressed over the uncertainty of this septic agreement.
4. Concern was expressed that legal problems regarding the septic system for the senior housing be resolved before applying for planning money.
5. Concern was expressed over potential liability of the Town if the Town submits the grant.
6. Concern was expressed over PCH's capacity to take over the existing housing without a strong partner. Housing Vermont is withdrawing as the

- major partner in the Peacham senior housing, and is currently making a major investment in energy efficiency upgrades to Kinerson Hall before turning the building over to PCH.
7. It was pointed out that the Town must meet certain certifications in the grant application and that some of those certifications might be problematic.
  8. Other concerns were expressed regarding possible strings attached to this funding.
  9. No one spoke in favor of submitting the grant application at this time.

The Selectboard concluded the meeting by thanking those who attended for their constructive and helpful comments.

Cochran moved to adjourn. McKay seconded. Unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

Timothy McKay  
Selectboard Chair