

**A regular meeting of the Leelanau County Housing Action Committee (HAC) was held on Monday, April 11, 2022 at the Leelanau County Government Center.**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Chair Lois Bahle.

**ROLL CALL**

Members Present: L. Bahle, R. Foster, C. Wood, S. Oriel, P. Hallstedt, T. Lentych, T. Wessell,

Members Absent  
(Prior notice): F. Clements, J. O’Neill

Members Absent: C. Noonan, M. Lautner

Staff Present: T. Galla

Public Present: W. Irvin, Y. Brown

Welcome new members Claire Wood and Phil Hallstedt

**CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA**

**The agenda was accepted as presented.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Yarrow Brown spoke on a meeting this morning of Housing Solutions Network, which was under Networks Northwest. Housing North has expanded it to the ten counties and they tried to figure out their goal. It is a Housing Innovation Council and they focus on tools and innovation around housing. This is a way for them to get feedback and vet some ideas. They did a survey and asked what people wanted to hear about. Some of the topics were to discuss housing opportunity mapping and Accessory Dwelling Unit’s (ADU). Mapping would be for housing that is ready or in the process of being developed and could include information on zoning. The idea is to update story maps with current projects and share that with other communities to develop similar mapping in other communities. The Housing Solutions Network meets on the second Monday of each month at 10 am. The second part of today’s discussion was accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

**STAFF COMMENTS**

Galla stated she did a presentation on Saturday to Leelanau Indivisible on housing. Overall, the session went well and there was a good-sized audience with varied backgrounds. Wessell said the meeting was taped and that should be shared with everyone to watch.

**CONSIDERATION OF FEBRUARY 14, 2022 MINUTES**

***Minutes were accepted by consensus, as presented.***

**OLD BUSINESS**

Update: Housing North – Housing Ready position

Brown said they are making progress and will be in front of county commissioners to make a formal request for \$20,000.00 a year for 3 years, to support the position. They have presented it to at least five units of government and will try to get on all agendas for those they have not met with yet. Leelanau Christian Neighbors did agree to support the position with \$10,000.00 a year for three years. They have a request to Rotary Charity for \$30,000.00 for the first year and also put in a request to Grand Traverse Regional Community Foundation. No unit of government has passed a resolution yet but they do have some soft

pledges of \$5,000.00 and have heard from others that they will participate. If HAC members wanted to reach out to anyone in the townships, please do so. They are waiting to hear back from a few townships and villages. Brown invited members to attend a local meeting in their community for the presentation. Brown has draft contracts available for all units of government who have indicated support.

Hallstedt asked once there is this position, will it be available to all townships? Brown said it will be a county-wide position. Hallstedt asked about the cost and Brown replied they are asking for \$5,000.00 a year from each unit of government and \$20,000.000 a year from the county. Hallstedt asked how the work would be prioritized. If they contribute more, could they get more time of the person's expertise? Brown said they are going for \$100,000.00 each year with about 50% from philanthropy and 50% from communities. Hallstedt said he would love to go with Brown to the local government for the participation request.

Bahle asked how the Charlevoix County program works and Brown said there are more villages than townships in Charlevoix participating. There is one township and two villages that have contributed in Emmet County and the county is doing in kind donations. There are different models in each community for how this works.

Wessell said that the Township Foundation has made a \$10,000.00 a year commitment for three years. Just last week he heard that maybe if they get more services for Leelanau Township they would come up with more money. How can they make sure everyone benefits from this service? If it is focused only in Leelanau Township, he believes they would find the money.

Hallstedt said multiple counties might have the same issue. If you link funding to amount of contribution, that is a fair way. Wessell said on the other side of that is all of us benefit from projects no matter where they are in the county. Lentych felt that whatever Leelanau County does is probably going to be by itself. He wouldn't expect guidance or a model from others for Leelanau County, or for Leelanau to follow others. Oriel mentioned that getting philanthropic money helps out by not having the individual governments cover all of the balance.

## **DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM**

### **1. HAC Future Framework Discussion**

Galla mentioned this has been on the agenda a few times and it was mentioned that Brown could talk about this and give an update.

Brown thought this related back to the Housing Ready position and some of the goals. Oriel sensed that it was Clements who wanted to make sure things were aligned and current. Lentych believed Clements was talking about the position and it would influence their framework. They can't do it if they don't know if there is a position. Assume their framework will have some components handled by the person.

Brown said hopefully by the June meeting they would know if they can get this position so they could advertise this summer or fall. Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU's) may not have been on your goals but she thought that has risen to the top since it's a hot topic everywhere. Hallstedt asked what is the future framework? Lentych said it relates to their goal documents. If there is staff, they can accelerate it. Right now, they are trying to do it by a committee basis and they set their goals accordingly.

Hallstedt asked if this person would be an implementer, or strategy. Brown said they have a job description. They will be part of both by coordinating, facilitating, and collaborating. There is a lot of skills that go into it. Mostly they have to collaborate and be able to communicate and work along multiple levels of government. Having a housing background will be a plus, and having their own

housing – if they have to get housing here, that might be a problem. Hallstedt said it is time to get the position funded and get them here but how long will it take? Brown said it would be a couple months to put out the request and then about two-six months to get them oriented. Hallstedt asked why not work on framework with guidance from their other people right now. Couldn't they move forward with their planning? Brown said she hoped to get started in the beginning of summer.

Oriel said based on this discussion, maybe something members can do right now is to look at our existing framework and current description and make sure they don't disconnect between those two. Lentych said one of the reasons they wanted to go down this path with a position is they cannot get items done on their framework. At some point, they needed to flush that out.

Hallstedt asked if they could move ahead with Oriel's recommendation. Brown said this group began before the position so they could still have their own goals to help guide this position. Foster said it would be helpful to see the position descriptions in Charlevoix and Emmet. Bahle said she would like to look at them again with the most recent descriptions and one page paper on the housing program.

## 2. ADU discussion and upcoming webinar

Oriel wondered how many of the townships and villages permit ADUs. Brown said she could share a spreadsheet that they have started. Galla stated they found that a lot of ADUs are found in residential districts. If you are in any other district, you can have a single-family home but you can't have an ADU. The idea is to map out where the homes are, eliminate those that are not homestead and see how many would consider doing ADU. Galla has found many webinars on ADUs to be very informative. Galla said there are many homes in the county with two families living in them. Hallstedt said they have to realize these ADUs are probably already occurring with good intentions to help others.

Discussed ensued on regulatory issues.

Bahle said the Village of Suttons Bay allows ADUs but they are restricted to owner occupied. Currently there are two residents in the village that have another property that they rent on a twelve-month basis. They want to put an ADU in conjunction with the rental and also keep that as a long-term rental instead of a short-term rental, but the ordinance doesn't allow that, so there is a tweak in the language that is needed.

## 3. Funding for Housing – ARPA funds Special Board Meeting April 19

Bahle anticipates there is more funding coming in May but didn't know when or how much. Galla said there is a Special Board Meeting on April 19 if anyone wanted to join. There are still a couple presentations to be reviewed: Habitat for Humanity, Housing North and Leelanau Christian Neighbors have all asked for funds. Homestretch did receive a commitment of \$125,000.00 for the rental units on Marek Rd. They are still short from their goal.

Wessell was not optimistic that anyone is going to be satisfied when they are done as to how the ARPA funds get spent. The Board of Commissioners has heard a lot and learned a lot from all those doing the requests and doing the presentations. They still don't have all the money for broadband and towers. Even if they can't do it this round, they know they have more funds coming. They have learned a lot about housing, ALICE, and health

department needs. Even if they can't do anything this round for more housing, the presentation is going to be very important.

Bahle said if they look at how many people have been touched by housing it would probably be as big as the effect of broadband.

#### 4. Status of Projects – Habitat for Humanity, Homestretch

Irvin commented on two shovel ready projects. The Maple City Crossings is in partnership with Leelanau County Land Bank Authority (LCLBA) and they are building three duplexes, and the zoning allows single family homes or duplexes. This will service families under 80% Area Media Income (AMI) and they have selected families for four houses. Status as of this morning was that EGLE is reviewing their sewer permit (Part 41). It is the only thing they are waiting on besides funding. They have the ability to wait until July to start but they are trying to expedite it. Another project is Bugai Rd/M-72 in partnership with New Waves Church of Christ. They are building fourteen homes; six houses are single family homes and eight rental units. It is a beautiful transitional process. If renters eventually go to home ownership, we will serve them in another part of the community. The two projects combined total about a \$3 million investment. They have currently raised \$1 million of it and it will take them probably three years to do both. Having funding is what holds them up and they have families on a waitlist.

Wessell asked if there were two buyers for each duplex and if this was an association. Irvin replied yes, it is already established and ready to go. Wessell asked if it allowed for owner rental units? For example, they have property in Northport village and would love duplexes. They don't have many people that can buy without a higher income. They would like a duplex with owner on one end and rental on the other. Irvin said it was an innovative thought. Any way they can serve the community, that's a great option. They have to be sustainable to continue their work.

Hallstedt said they talk a lot about money but these are driven by volunteer hours. This is a great opportunity by showing leadership to pull together volunteers and challenge people to come together. These barns around here were not built by one person or contractor, it was community built.

Irvin said they would expedite the process but still have to fundraise. They have budgeted an additional \$50,000.00 per house this year. Irvin talked about additional housing projects in the region that Habitat for Humanity is working on, and home repairs. They are desperately trying to fill that gap. Bahle asked if they work with utilities to get any funds? Consumers offers such a program. Irvin gets emails and calls all day long every day from people asking for help. It hurts, but it motivates them. They just hired four people to help them with all of this work.

Hallstedt said the campaign for Give Back to Leelanau is that so many people take away from resources in a good way. The Pure Michigan program has also been fantastic. He asked how they can help get this word out that this is an opportunity to give back to Leelanau.

Wessell asked how much the duplexes would go for in Maple City? Irvin replied that on average, their homeowners pay \$165,000.00. 30% of the income goes toward housing. The appraised value for Maple City Crossings is \$286,000.00 per unit which could go up after they build it. They secure their equity in that home so if it is sold, it comes back to Habitat. Irvin needs enough to cover rising costs for supplies, 30%-50% of rise in material costs, plus volunteer support.

Bahle said the Marek Rd project from Homestretch has \$122,000.00 left as the gap. Hallstedt said they are less than .7% from getting the rest of the money needed to get this thing over the line and get it going. Wessell

said they desperately need rental apartments for people who can't afford home prices. Lentych spoke on the funding and didn't understand why they can't get government to help.

Galla mentioned Homestretch ad in the paper. The drawings look nice and there are ways to get the word out for funding: Leelanau Ticker, Enterprise, etc. Wood said she could speak to Emily at Leelanau Ticker and see if she could write about this issue. Galla noted the Inn in Glen Haven said there is a non-profit putting \$2 million into the Inn. Under the comments in the article, it was noted there is \$2 million for an Inn but we can't get \$2 million for housing. Wood said there are a lot of people following this so another article might be good.

Lentych said if you can't build what your drawing shows and it has to cut down, that looks bad, that's why it is important to close the gap at the need and not try to cheapen it up and cut corners.

Hallstedt said they might need more government intervention but also more free market opportunities and that goes to regulations that prevent us from getting housing that is affordable.

Wessell said part of government intervention is looking at zoning and permitting, and things they are talking about with ADUs. Oriel said it's what Irvin and others are experiencing with EGLE, it's those kinds of delays that shows advocacy at state level is so important. Oriel said their time is money and those things really make a difference. We may get ignored versus a project down in Grand Rapids. Galla mentioned the Zoning Reform group through Michigan Association of Planning and how can we expedite that. The REACH project in Northport took 18 months to get a part 41 approved for 4 units. Maybe they need more staff or if they don't have the review done in a certain number of days, it is automatically approved. Irvin mentioned the numerous reviews and the additional cost for them on their project.

Hallstedt mentioned trying to get more funds and get this first rental project done. We need to help Homestretch get this done. Wood said if they don't have donors identified they should release it publicly to request funds.

Bahle said maybe the commissioners need to be challenged. Maybe a contribution from the county is to waive some fees. Wessell didn't think the fees were a major problem. Bahle felt they were a challenge.

Other:

Hallstedt said workforce housing is critical, seasonal workforce housing is in a crisis. There were eight job postings at Northport Public Grill and they don't know how they are going to fill those. For our orchard, we usually hire three interns and find housing. They have found five candidates, but they don't have housing and enough jobs to keep them working on his orchard. They are going to hire all five and have partnered with a couple other places to create a pool and have housing. Maybe something they can scale to help others. Wessell thinks Emily from Leelanau Ticker should report on that, too. What makes this different is you have a pool of workers and they can work for different employers.

**COMMUNICATION ITEMS-** None.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS-** None.

**STAFF COMMENTS-** None.

**MEMBER/CHAIR COMMENTS-** None.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 4:13 pm.