

**SALEM COUNCIL ON AGING
Minutes of Regular Meeting**

Date and Time: June 19, 2019 at 5:14 P.M.

Meeting Location: Board Room, 401 Bridge Street

Members Present: Lynda Coffill (LC, Chairperson), John Russell (JR), Julie Carver (JC), Elaine Heredeen (EH), Abigail Butt (AB) (via telephone), Alice Williams (AW), George Barbuzzi (GB)

Also Present: Teresa Arnold, (TA, Director of the COA)

Absent: Donna Clifford (DC)

Clerk: Kathleen Fitzgerald

Meeting Called to Order

LC calls the meeting to order at 5:14 P.M.

Motion made by JR to approve the May Minutes, seconded by EH and passes unanimously.

Old Business:

Senior Housing – LC received an email from the Mayor yesterday regarding new ordinance (copy attached).

AB asked if this will pass. JR stated that it was what they talked about when they met at the housing meetings and didn't think it would pass. AB stated that it has lost its heart and that Salem is already pretty congested and stated she was for more housing.

GB asked is if this was to build or existing housing and LC stated it is for building. JR advised that it used to be existing dwelling and in the past it had to be a family member or caretaker. AB stated then there will be no such thing as an R-1 neighborhood. LC advised that you could already do it R-2 and R-3. JR asked if R-2 can you add R-3. AB advised there was a square footage component. JR advised that the ordinance as it is states 800 square feet. AB stated that 800 feet is comfortable without being excessive and that our goal is to support seniors in Salem and make it affordable. LC said she was absolutely right and that this is more to address the housing crisis.

AB stated that if there was a clause about special zoning, an appeal will be granted provided it meets the criteria for seniors and disabled adults. AW stated that it also says it must have two on-site parking spaces. JC stated that would eliminate a lot of units. LC

stated that in Witchcraft Heights they are taking one car garages and the cellar behind and making them into apartments.

JR stated that the ordinance allows for that now and advised that there have only been six applications for permits. LC stated that there were concerns about the impact in R-1 neighborhoods for caregivers, etc.

JR asked if this was something we would be supporting or not supporting and advised that he may be for this, but that it doesn't seem to be for seniors and there is no cap for money you can charge. AB suggested that we should say that we talked about it as a Board, and don't see how this enhances senior housing. It doesn't say anything about making sure all of the units are accessible. This just creates housing. JR stated that this opens up parking issues and advised that the reason people aren't supporting new building is because of parking issues.

AB stated that it seems the focus is on bringing in new young adults. LC said there are moves around the transportation issues regarding shuttles, etc. but that this opens up more gentrification which is going on. AB also stated that we should talk about zoning which we have for a reason because there are benefits.

LC stated the two issues will be zoning and parking. JR stated that he did not think there was enough effort put into letting people know about the ordinance. He stated it is under-utilized and under advertised and further stated that he thought a lot more applications would be received if people were aware of it.

AB stated that housing should be doing outreach about this and that information should have gone out with tax bills. She stated that on average people need to hear about services or programs 7x before it sinks in.

LC stated that she had serious concerns that the present ordinance was not being enforced or advertised and impact on R-1's. AB stated this was especially true in terms of short-term rentals and that there needs to be restrictions that are not there.

LC advised that when the letter gets written she would make sure that is emphasized. AB suggested asking why we are starting a new ordinance when no one knows about the old ordinance.

EH makes a motion to write the letter, seconded by JR and passes unanimously.

JR said that at the last meeting we talked about the difference between affordable housing and subsidized housing and that seniors needed senior subsidized housing. He further stated that people will not balk as much if we were talking about senior affordable housing. He said we are not interested in affordable but looking for subsidized.

AB advised that there are all different funding sources and that the State bases it on area median income, not on senior area income.

LC said we talked about places where more senior housing could be built and stated that we still need to advocate for this. She further stated that community partnership funds could be used, and AB advised that the Community Preservation Act was a total legal use of funding. LC advised that the Salem Housing Authority could administer that, and JR advised that they would.

JR asked if anyone knew that Section 8 has a certain amount of money to pay for an apartment and a lot of landlords use that for Section 8, but may be charging too much. GB said he thought you had to accept the amount and JR questioned why we couldn't change that, so if someone wanted to pay the extra money, they could. AB advised that what is considered affordable to pay for housing is 40% of your income so they are not allowing them to pay over the 30%. The whole point is to make it legitimate. JR said he thought it could be addressed and would probably make a few more apartments available to people.

LC stated that we really needed to push for funds from the CPA and advised that City Councilors want to use all CPA fund to do things around the City that need to be done and stated that she thought we should go after it next year. She stated that the Board should focus on two things:

- Going after CPA und
- Turning up the heat on subsidized housing

LC reiterated that over the summer AB would look at the affordable rate; i.e. 10-12% and AB advised she would prepare a study after the baby was born.

New Business:

Salem.com – TA asked how it is working for everyone and LC asked if we could have someone come in in September and work on everyone's phones.

Additional Board Member – EH advised that Councilman Domingo Dominguez would like to be on the Board. AB advised that we have to see if there is a conflict of interest and advised calling the State House and having a conversation and they will give a ruling. She advised that they could have an auxiliary member where they attended meetings but did not vote.

Friends Update: JR advised that the pasta dinner will be this coming Friday night and there will be a lot of raffle and auction items. The Moose Club pays for everything and the DJ donates his time. There is no cost at all for the Friends and whatever money made goes entirely to the Friends. He advised that they reached out to elected officials and will let them know that they can make donations out of campaign funds, not their own personal funds. He advised that the next planned event will be a Comedy Night on October 18th at the CLC.

Director's Report:

North Shore Physicians Group – Last week, only a handful of people attended so Patricia Zaido will ask the physicians to try and promote the lecture series.

North Shore Community Health Network Grant – Met with Maggie Brennan and talked about how to shape clinician hours starting in September. We will get \$10,000.00 each year.

Mass Commission for the Blind – Hoping to start a support group for visually impaired.

Mass Job Fair – Hosted today at the COA.

Memory Café – Will be held on the first Monday of the month at 11:00 A.M. A few have been cancelled. We had some challenges getting the participants from East Point Adult Day Health here but working well now.

R U OK – The wellness program is ready to launch. Working with the health subcommittee and police department to make this happen.

Nutrition Program/Congregate Meals – 82 individuals served 727 meals in May. Farmers' Market coupons will be distributed on July 17th.

Transportation – 1,777 rides in May.

Social Services – 80 Greater Boston Food Bank participants served in June with zero complaints about food quality. Joe Ericksberg will be doing “mentoring” with Sharon and Lynne for a few weeks and when done, he will be SHINE certified and able to take appointments. Most common issues last month were inquiries regarding housing, Mass Health/Commonwealth Health and health insurance.

Next Board Meeting: September 11, 2019. (a week early to accommodate Mayor Driscoll's schedule as she is on the agenda)

A motion to adjourn is made by JR, seconded by EH, and passes unanimously. The meeting adjourns at 5:45 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk