

*North Sea Citizens Advisory Committee  
Town of Southampton  
164 Fish Cove Road & 18 Pine Tree Rd  
Southampton, New York 11968  
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*Lucille Dunne  
John Watson  
Co-Chairs*

*Secretary  
Barbara Fair*

*Members  
Joan Barra\*\*  
Mary Beatty  
Joan Brennan\*\*  
John Clark  
Daniel Gebbia  
Stephanie McNamara  
Frank Palmer  
Ann Reisman  
Arlene Schroeder  
Mary E. Topping*

*\*denotes Seasonal Member  
\*\*denotes ex-officio  
member*

## **MINUTES**

**March 12, 2012**

The meeting opened at 8:06 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The minutes of the February 13th meeting were approved. Moved by Frank Palmer, seconded by John Watson.

### **Guests**

Town Council Member Bridget Fleming, Town of Southampton Housing Authority (TSHA) Executive Director Richard Blowes, TSHA Assistant Executive Director Ann Gajowski, TSHA Board President Bonnie Cannon, and area residents Foster Maer, Robert Smith, John Barona, Ray Clair, Art Donovan, and Myron Holtz.

### **Special Presentation – Town of Southampton Housing Authority**

Mr. Blowes introduced himself and Ann Gajowski, mentioning that in their first presentation to the NS CAC last year he said they would return to apprise the CAC of any further developments. He explained that he and Ms. Gajowski serve at the pleasure of the five members of the TSHA Board, which are, in turn, appointed by the Southampton Town Board. Mr. Blowes indicated that their presentation would cover the mission of the TSHA, what has been accomplished so far, the intended beneficiaries of the TSHA' affordable housing initiatives, and two proposals being considered for the North Sea area.

The TSHA's mission statement is: "In keeping with the rural character of the hamlets and villages of the Town of Southampton, the mission of the TSHA is to develop affordable mixed-income housing opportunities." Thus far, the TSHA has purchased and operates a pre-existing property with 37 senior/disabled apartments that receive federal rent subsidies, and renovated a dilapidated single-family home in the Flanders/Riverside area, for which they provided before-and-after photos. The TSHA also owns nine sites – 2 in East Quogue and 7 in Flanders – which they plan to develop with the Long Island Housing Partnership as energy-efficient single family homes that may be owned or rented.

Addressing a key question, Ms. Gajowski queried the attendees, "What do you think the Median Income is for the Town of Southampton?" The answer, \$107,500 for a household of four, surprised many. This means that rental subsidies can be available for families of four earning up to \$53,750. "There aren't a lot of rentals out there that are within HUD guidelines and meet the Quality Standards", Ms. Gajowski said.

Based on the TSHA's experience, there is a big need for good quality rental housing. A map was provided showing areas where inexpensive rentals were located and where there were few affordable rentals. Another goal of the HCV program is to avoid concentrating families earning below the median income, or excluding them from high income areas.

Mr. Blowes emphasized important changes the TSHA has made to the HCV preferences. There are now preferences for persons who live or work in the Town or volunteer for the Fire Department or Ambulance Service. Also the waiting list is "open", meaning that someone who applies today and meets the preferences could jump to the top of the list. Significantly, he mentioned that if you exclude members of the police force, 50% of the employees who work for the Town are below 50% of the Median Income and could qualify for HCV rental subsidies. Ms. Cannon stated that "Our only concern is to take care of the people who live here."

Addressing a question about property maintenance and potential for deteriorating conditions, Mr. Blowes said that if anyone calls the TSHA with a complaint, they look into it immediately. The TSHA is committed to proper maintenance and can move much more quickly than the Town in getting evictions. Tenants who violate lease requirements, such as by overcrowding, can not only be evicted but banned from any future HCV rent subsidies, nation-wide. It is a powerful incentive to comply.

The TSHA is looking at two proposals in the North Sea area: Cedar Lane/Balcomie Woods and Sandy Hollow. Access to Cedar Lane/Balcomie Woods would be through an existing right-of-way from Balcomie Lane. As-of-right development allows seven homes with one-bedroom accessory apartments on approximately half-acre lots. The buildable portion of the site is 6 acres. An option would be four manor houses with a total of fourteen apartments. In either case, the 3 acre portion of the site that is part of the White Cedar Swamp and was purchased with CPF money would be preserved. The Sandy Hollow proposals would create sixteen rental units in four town-home type buildings with a sewage treatment system. The TSHA would like to add one more unit for an on-site part-time superintendent. The TSHA was looking into developing this site in partnership with United Way and the original developer.

Asked to define "affordable" homeownership, Mr. Blowes said it was the same for the TSHA as for the private sector: the cost of the home should be roughly three times annual household income. So for families at 80% of median income, the homes would be affordable at \$258,000. (For single family homes with one bedroom accessory apartments, the rental income would become part of the calculation.) Homeowners would decide who they choose to rent accessory apartments to, but must charge rents at or below HUD's guidelines for affordability.

Regarding the Cedar Lane/Balcomie Woods site, Lucy Dunne, co-chair of the NS CAC, pointed out "You have the property but you don't have the funding. Sell the six acres to the CPF and develop another site." Mr. Blowes replied that he had put out feelers on the possibility of selling the site to the CPF but hadn't gotten a response.

Ms. Dunne further observed that the workforce housing was best created near public transportation and stores, that the entry to the Balcomie site was past million-dollar homes, and the reason no one from there was in attendance was that many were seasonal residents. Continuing, she said she didn't want to see a "pocket" of workforce housing, as The Courtyards, also providing 14 units of affordable housing, was just across the street on Majors Path. Also there is a large amount of small multiunit houses along North Sea Road.

In response to another question about the sketch plan for the Cedar Lane/Balcomie site, Mr. Blowes explained that the green band around the perimeter of the lots was a 50 foot buffer zone of native plant materials.

Another question concerned the Town's purchase of five rental houses on Magee Street that were demolished but no new housing was created. Mr. Blowes responded that there were problems with boundaries that weren't properly defined, and the Town and Mr. Press were working on clearing up the problem.

Mr. Blowes concluded the presentation by stating he would proceed to explore the concept of selling the Cedar Lane/Balcomie Woods site to the CPF; that of the two preliminary designs presented the TSHA was leaning toward homeownership – for which the TSHA would need infrastructure money from Suffolk County and grants from NYS; and that he would like to see the TSHA meet with the CAC chairs each month to hear and address any problems.

After the TSHA officials left, there was some further discussion. Among the points: the residents of Balcomie Woods would not be notified about the project because their homes are not "contiguous" to the site and at this point they have no clue about the traffic changes; it should be the responsibility of whoever is building this to contact (Balcomie Woods) residents; the sewage load for the proposed development should be calculated; although both Cedar Lane and Balcomie Woods are currently cul-de-sacs, the commenter added he was not against this type of housing..

On other topics, it was mentioned that there is a lot of dense housing along North Sea Road and the ZBA just approved doubling the size of one group of small houses; and, "as much as we can get people to communicate, we should."

### **Other Town Committee Reports**

**Solid Waste.** The committee plans to have a column in the *Southampton Press* once a month.

**Sustainable Growth** – The Town Board voted not to hold a hearing on the proposed plastic bag ban. The Town approach is now to form a Task Force to promote reduction and recycling of single use plastic bags through education. It was noted by a visitor that Channel 18 had a good piece on plastic bags.

**Unimproved Roads Committee** – The committee has requested a date to make a presentation to the Town Board.

**Disabilities** – No report

**CAC Chairs Committee** – The Committee discussed PDD community benefit survey. The chair of the Tuckahoe CAC felt the public should not be polled on the subject.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Moved by Dan Gebbia, seconded by Barbara Fair

**Present:** Lucille Dunne, Barbara Fair, Dan Gebbia, Stephanie McNamara, Frank Palmer, Ann Reisman, Mary Topping, John Watson,

**Excused:** Mary Beatty, John Clark, Arlene Schroeder