

Meeting of MDI Tomorrow Housing Group  
Minutes from January 30, 2003 meeting

Note Next Meetings February 10 and 25 8-9:30 am, Terry Kelly's office at MDI Housing Authority, 80 Mt. Desert Street, Bar Harbor

Attending: Janet Hamel, Bobbi Williams, Hook Wheeler, Stan MacDonald, Terry Kelly, Keating Pepper, Kathy Suminsby, Sam Coplon, Ron Beard

Check in comments-

Kathy and others had viewed Livable Landscapes on Maine Public Television and she made a copy. Stan reported that Mount Desert Community Trust continues to explore a community housing project in the vicinity of Babson Creek, Somesville. Sam and Keating are working with another Mt Desert property owner to explore community housing in a portion of a larger subdivision project. Janet suggested that we consider inviting planners, developers and community leaders of other "gateway" communities to present how they have worked on the issue of community housing. Hook wondered about members of the Housing Group traveling to visit successful community housing projects elsewhere in New England and about offering local architects and developers to present their "best ideas and designs" for community housing to a local housing gathering. Bobbi reported that her work with the town of Mount Desert Ordinance Review Committee and Planning Board may lead to a special town meeting, following regular town meeting, to take up ordinance changes that would make community housing more easily achieved. Sam reported that Ann Kreig, Town Planner from Bar Harbor, would try to attend the next meeting of the group on February 10.

In discussion, the group added to the list of projects brainstormed at the last meeting:

Look elsewhere at some effectively working community housing projects, determine the zoning requirements of such projects and compare with what current MDI town zoning allows.

Look at both rewards and incentives for private sector development of community housing as well as the requirement that developers commit a certain percentage of their projects to community housing, or that developers/owners who build houses over a certain number of square feet contribute to a community housing fund.

Explore enabling legislation needed to use a local real estate transfer tax for an island-regional community housing fund, administered by Mount Desert Community Trust or the MDI Housing Authorities.

Begin public education about the community housing issue, how it is tied to economic prosperity, healthy schools (vibrant, year-round communities) and how MDI communities (public and private sector) can work together on this issue.

Generate stronger connections to the capacity of College of the Atlantic to assist with data gathering, mapping, and community design that sustains both environment and people

Continue to highlight the issue in order to encourage:

- More private sector thinking and action on the issue

- More support for public-private collaboration on specific community housing projects such as those by Mount Desert Community Trust and MDI Housing Authorities (such as West Eden Meadows)

- More revision and updating of town comprehensive plans and land use ordinances to make possible more community housing and reduce development costs