

Coolidge School Working Group
Meeting Minutes
4 pm Wed., Nov. 14,, 2018
Finance Meeting Room, Town Hall, Maynard, MA

Committee Members Present:

Linde Ghere

Aaron Miklosko

Donna Dodson

Vicki Brown Stevens

Sarah Donnelly

Also Present:

Ellen Duggan

John Massaro

Carolyn Read, Exec. Director N. Central Mass. Habitat for Humanity

1. Minutes – The minutes of the Nov. 7, 2018, meeting were approved. Vicki said she would forward our approved minutes to the town clerk.

2. Updates

- **Maynard Housing Production Plan** – Donna posted a link to the town report in an email this past week. She noted that it underscores the town's need for senior housing.
- **RFPs** – Ellen and Linde composed a draft overview of what components might be in our RFP. Linde said we would be more likely to succeed in getting Town Meeting approval for a plan once we have a plan from a developer so everyone could know exactly what would happen to the Coolidge. Therefore, we think it best we circulate a well-constructed RFP that would attract a variety of uses while protecting what is most important about the school and its grounds. Once we have an acceptable proposal we could take it to the Selectmen and publicize it through another forum at the library, for example, all before Town Meeting in May. If our first RFP fails to attract a suitable use, we can put out a second, modified version.

Some RFP components:

- Public access to Coolidge grounds
- ANR
- Preserve sledding hill, and extension of hill could be possible.
- Consider asking bidders to maintain grounds, playground
- Compatibility with neighborhood
- Green building – solar
- Preservation restrictions
- Express level of town willingness for permitting certain proposals

Linde said our RFP should be concise and not too restrictive. We can always reject what is not compatible. We need to do this soon.

3. Habitat for Humanity of North Central Massachusetts – Carolyn Read, the executive director of the local Habitat for Humanity, told us that developing the Coolidge into condominium units might be a feasible project for them. Habitat offers one to three-bedroom homes. They generally are 1,000 sq. ft. for 1-bedroom; 1,100 sq. ft. for 2-bedroom; and 1,200 sq. ft. for 3-bedroom units. Units usually cost around \$150,000 which families or individuals pay for with a 0% mortgage. She said Habitat must raise half the price of the construction before they can begin. Those funds come from donations and can come from the town, such as Community Preservation Funds. Habitat's offices in Massachusetts have plenty of experience building condominium projects although not in the local district. She said they have looked at the Coolidge before and some on her local board worried about the slate roof. Asbestos could also be in heating pipes and lead could be present, too.

Although affordable housing can be contentious in some towns, Carolyn said Habitat's projects are generally widely accepted because local communities are right away involved in the process of carefully choosing and vetting families as well as volunteering in the construction. Maynard has never been the site of a Habitat construction project, although Habitat has sponsored home repair work here.

Carolyn's talk left us enthusiastic and hopeful.

4. Adjournment – The meeting ended at about 5:30. Our next meeting is at 4 p.m., Dec. 5.