

MINUTES
BARONS SOUTH COMMITTEE
APRIL 8, 2011
Minutes revised on 4/27/11

The meeting of the Barons South Committee was called to order at approximately 9:40 AM by Marty Hauhuth- Co- Chair

In Attendance:

Steve Daniels – Co-Chair
Marty Hauhuth-Co-Chair
Barbara Butler
Jo Fuchs-Luscombe
Rev. Ed Horne
Sharon Rosen
Yvonne Senturia
John Thompson
Paul Van Orden
Gail Kelly, Assistant Town Attorney

Absent:

Ken Bernard

Also Present:

Ed Hyde – Wilton Commons, Wilton, CT
George Ciaccio – Wilton Commons, Wilton, CT

Mr. Ed Hyde and Mr. George Ciaccio were involved in the Wilton Commons Project, an affordable senior housing project located in Wilton, Connecticut. According to Mr. Hyde, the project is near the point of beginning construction.

Messrs. Hyde and Ciaccio spoke about the Wilton Commons project in great detail. The following is an outline of what was discussed regarding the Wilton Commons project:

1. An independent committee was formed as distinct from a town committee. The independent committee incorporated but maintains a close relationship with the Town of Wilton. They established a public/private partnership and ultimately a landlord-tenant relationship. The corporation will lease 4.5 acres of property owned by the town.
2. Developers: Mutual Housing of Southwest Connecticut located in Stamford is the developer. New Samaritan, the developers of the Saugatuck in Westport

and Ogden House in Wilton were considered. They suggested we reach out to Leslie Higgins Bittle who started New Samaritan for information. Barbara Butler has the contact information.

3. Start up expenses: They filed for non-profit status and received start up funds from United Way and various religious institutions in Wilton. The committee visited every church and synagogue to get support from the community.
4. Town Taxes: Housing non-profits are not free from paying town taxes. According to Mr. Ciaccio there is a Connecticut tax regulation regarding town taxes and non-profits. They expect to pay property taxes and that is one reason why the project is being built in two phases. Phase one consists of 51 units costing the corporation 61,000 in town taxes. The second phase will consist of 23 units. After the second phase is completed the developer will owe upward of \$90,000 per year in town taxes.
5. Who finds the funding for development? The developer knows the funding sources best and they are responsible for getting the funding. The application process is very long and complicated.
6. Limitation of units to town residents? While you cannot restrict units to only town residents many of those who apply and live in these units will be town residents. We can give preferences to town residents but it is one of a number of preferences considered. Apply to HUD for certain number of preferences. Must provide data to HUD for them to approve your preferences. A similar project built in Fairfield, CT was initially 75% Fairfield residents. There are 51 units to be built first and there is over 125 on the waitlist. A very high percentage of those on the wait list are from Wilton and another percentage are parents of Wilton residents. All the units are affordable. There is an income requirement of no more than \$60,000 and must be 62 years of age or older. No asset limitations but assets are presumed to create a certain amount of income that is included in the \$60,000 yearly income limit.
7. Congregate housing: Wilton Commons will be congregate housing, providing one meal per day and housekeeping. The committee has to prove to the Town of Wilton that there was a need for this type of housing. Based on the 2000 census, there were 130 families living below the poverty level in Wilton (Wilton total population is 14,000).
8. Financing: Discussion of tax credits, loans and grants. These details the developers put together. For tax credits must create LLC to get the investments in exchange for the tax credits.
9. Zoning Process: Their committee needed to make a minor change to the zoning regulations. Wilton had zoning in place for congregate housing but not at the location they wanted to use.

10. RFP: The independent committee didn't need an RFP. They had an informal list of what they wanted from a developer. The developer had to write an RFP for the construction companies to come in a bid for the project. They expect the developer, Mutual Housing, to also be the operator of the facility.

Messrs. Hyde and Ciaccio were thanked by the committee. Questions from the audience were encouraged.

Yvonne began discussing the current literature regarding senior housing and on-site wellness services. In addition, we discussed the small house model and briefly the CT pilot program for small house nursing homes. Please see attached P. A. no. 08-91. We are not sure if this act is still in effect. The proposed budget may actually be doing away with this small house pilot project. As a group we decided that this discussion needed to be tabled for another meeting devoted to this discussion.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 11 AM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Sharon H. Rosen