



**MINUTES
TOWN OF NAGS HEAD
MULTI-FAMILY WORKING GROUP
MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2024
(Meeting #1)**

(Approved April 15, 2024)

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10 am; Town Manager Garman provided background information and initial thoughts.

B. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Members Present:

Comr. Kevin Brinkley and Comr. Megan Lambert

Planning Board members Meade Gwinn and Molly Harrison

TW's Bait & Tackle business owner Chris Greening

Outer Banks Association of Realtors Government Affairs representative Donna Creef

Outer Banks Homebuilders Association representative Duke Geraghty

Members Absent:

Old Nags Head Place resident Basil Belsches

Staff Present:

Town Manager Andy Garman

Planning Director Kelly Wyatt

Town Clerk Carolyn F Morris

A handout was distributed to attendees entitled *Table 7-1: Requirements for Multi-Family Dwellings* which is attached to and made a part of these minutes.

C. BACKGROUND/REVIEW OF WORKING GROUP CHARGE

Town Manager Garman summarized his *Background* slide as follows:

- In late 2022 the Town adopted a moratorium and subsequently eliminated multi family; multi family was no longer allowed in the new C-2 District.

- Board of Commissioners and Planning Board members held a joint workshop to discuss the possibility of providing multi-family options. It was Board consensus to consider multi family. A Draft ordinance was prepared by the Planning Board and presented to the Board of Commissioners.

- The Board of Commissioners wanted further review of the Draft ordinance followed by a recommendation from the Working Group to return by June 2024.

Town Manager Garman summarized the Town zoning map and districts. He also reviewed the Working Group charge, approved by the Board of Commissioners as follows:

- To consider the draft multi-family ordinance written by the Planning Board.
- To preserve the intent of the ordinance, to protect the character of Nags Head, and to provide new alternatives for workforce/long-term housing without increasing the stock of short-term rentals.
- To evaluate conditions/standards which would render such projects unfeasible due to financing, construction, configuration, or management.
- To suggest additional measures that would achieve the aforementioned goals.

D. REVIEW OF DRAFT ORDINANCE AND PLANNING BOARD'S MAJOR CONSIDERATIONS

Planning Director Kelly Wyatt reviewed the draft Planning Board ordinance; two categories were created – Small and Large multi-family categories.

Mr. Greening questioned the 800 square foot minimum structure; he feels that a smaller unit size that employees could live in, by themselves, would be preferable to a larger unit shared with others. Ms. Wyatt stated that while 800' has been the minimum, this can be reviewed.

Mr. Geraghty felt this seemed small for a unit for the return of only six units; Ms. Creef said that an opportunity to keep a lot size of 15,000 square foot for all as a minimum would be beneficial and provide some consistency. Ms. Creef also noted that due to the changes to GS 160D, once you hit five bedrooms, commercial standards apply.

Mr. Greening questioned what is affordable housing and what is the exact purpose of the Working Group; Manager Garman said that the focus was on work-force housing and long-term rentals. The main reason for the Working Group is to review in detail the proposed Planning Board multi-family ordinance. Comr. Brinkley pointed out that while we can't solve the problem, we can do something about it.

Mr. Greening felt that if business owners can work together on a development they can somewhat govern who rents them out since the ordinance focuses on work force housing for local businesses. He pointed out that the Planning Board review indicated eight vacant lots in Town that could be used for housing and many more that could be redeveloped to be work force housing.

Ms. Wyatt summarized the Draft Planning Board Ordinance re: deed restrictions and architectural design. From the Board/Planning Board Joint Workshop, it was consensus that townhouse style development was preferred:

- Townhouses generally have fewer shared walls and offer more privacy than apartments, more home-like environment.
- Townhouse developments can offer more diverse architectural designs, maintaining the character of the surrounding areas.
- Townhouse development is generally not as dense as apartment style development.
- Townhouse development fosters a sense of community, residents have their own entrances, outdoor spaces, etc.

The Ordinance precludes apartment style development for Large Multi-Family. Apartments would be allowed in the Small Multi-Family category as both a principal and accessory use.

There was discussion of businesses having their commercial business downstairs with upstairs residential units – This is usually found in much older buildings. Manager Garman said that mixed use standards can be further examined.

E. DISCUSSION

Ms. Creef said that if a project meets all lot coverages, setbacks, etc. then the Town should be able to approve it – a smaller project such as one structure on one piece of property for four units. But when you open up the requirement for a Special Use Permit, then it is more cumbersome and difficult to go through the scrutiny of adjacent lots, etc. She said that what the Town is trying to do is admirable but it needs to be simplified/tightened – for the smaller units – to make it easier to go through the Town review and approval process.

Comr. Brinkley agreed stating that the Special Use Permit process could be removed for the smaller projects. This is for a residential use in a commercial district and applicants shouldn't have to go through the Planning Board and the Board of Commissioners review processes if all of the required boxes are checked. He expressed his concern about the Town's character and that Nags Head not turn into other areas with more congestion/density.

Comr. Brinkley questioned if there are contractors/developers that could come in and talk to the working group; Manager Garman said he would put together a presentation at the next meeting that would include a review of costs.

F. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for **Monday, April 15, 2024 at 10 am** in the same location – the Town Hall Conference Room. Draft minutes from today's meeting and an agenda will be forwarded to members.

In response to Comr. Lambert, Manager Garman is to look into bringing someone from the building development community to speak at the next working group meeting.

G. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.