

**TOWN OF GUILFORD**  
**Public Hearing - VCDP Implementation Grant Application**  
**Monday, February 14, 2011, 6:00 PM**  
**Guilford Town Office**

**PRESENT:** John Amidon, Becky Anderson, Katie Buckley (Town Administrator), Richard Clark (Selectboard Chair), Conley Crowder, Chris Garofolo (Brattleboro Reformer), Fred Humphrey, Penny Marine (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Herb Meyer, Frank Rafferty (Lister), Troy Revis, Jr. (Selectboard), Anne Rider (Selectboard), Cindy Shippee, Isaac Wagner (WHT), Cathi Wilken

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Selectboard Chair, Richard (Dick) Clark. He stated the following:

The Town of Guilford is considering making application to the State of Vermont for a VCDP Implementation Grant under the Vermont Community Development Program. This purpose of this public hearing is to obtain the views of citizens on community development, to furnish information concerning the amount of funds available and the range of community development activities that may be undertaken under this program, the impact to any historic and archaeological resources that may be affected by the proposed project, and to give affected citizens the opportunity to examine the proposed statement of projected use of these funds. The proposal is to apply for up to \$650,000.00 in VCDP Funds which will be used to accomplish the following activities:

**New construction of seventeen (17) apartments in two (2) buildings at 71 and 91 Guilford Center Road, across from the Guilford Volunteer Fire Department's station.**

Katie Buckley explained that the Town of Guilford Selectboard agreed to act as the municipal sponsor for the Windham Housing Trust's (WHT) application for this VCDP Implementation Grant application during their regularly scheduled meeting on January 10, 2011. It is a requirement in the application process that the Board hold a public hearing for the purposes stated above. Katie introduced Isaac Wagner, Project Coordinator, WHT, to those in attendance and informed them that Isaac was available to answer any questions they may have about the proposed housing project.

Isaac informed the group that the amount of the application will be for \$625,000.00 not \$650,000.00 as stated in the notice. Anne Rider asked Isaac to provide a brief overview of the project. He explained that the WHT has been working with the Friends of Algiers Village, Inc. (FOAVI) for a number of years on their master plan for the re-development of the Algiers Triangle. It started in 2004 with the rehabilitation of the historic Tontine building (which converted a dilapidated structure into 7 units of affordable housing and was completed in 2008). Isaac furnished drawings of the proposed housing project and provided specific details about the architectural designs and site layout.

Frank Rafferty (Lister) announced that he would like to make a statement, with "no animosity," which he requested to be included in the record. He stated that he opposed this development and he opposed the Town spending taxpayers' money to assist in the granting and billing of the project. He expounded

on his objection by saying that the larger building which is proposed is too large in scale for that area; he would like to see something much smaller in that location - perhaps one (1) or two (2) other smaller buildings in addition to the smaller of the two proposed structures. He feels that it will change the nature of the entire Village having a housing project of this size in it. He expressed that they (projects) "generally after a few years get looking very run down" . He believes that the amount of the vehicle traffic of residents will overload the intersection (US Rt. 5 and Guilford Center Road). Frank stated that he **would** be comfortable with the project if it were scaled down and if it were designated for senior housing; his understanding is that the project will be "low income or subsidized housing." He went on to explain that he hoped the residents of Guilford are aware that this (project) is going to raise taxes considerably due to the number of children which will live in the new housing units. He explained that there is a "special State Statute" which defines how these buildings are appraised; they are not appraised at market value but rather on an income approach based on the subsidized rent. Frank's rough estimate of what the proposed project will pay in property taxes is between \$4,000-\$6,000; one (1) child living in it will cost the Town about \$14,000. He speculated on the potential of eight (8)-ten (10) children living in the units and the resulting education costs with this.

Isaac stated that he would try to answer as many as Frank's questions as he could. He wanted to be sure that nothing was misrepresented. Isaac asked Frank if he wanted his questions/statements addressed or if he wanted them just stated for the record as concerns. Frank did not respond to Isaac's question but instead asked Isaac about what would happen with the end of Grist Mill Road, which will cease to be a public right-of-way if the project takes place. Anne Rider explained that the Town has already discussed this idea and included the perspective of Dan Zumbroski, Guilford's Highway Foreman/Commissioner – he is in favor of discontinuing this section of roadway as it is treacherous vehicle traffic travelling on it and for the Highway Department to maintain it in the winter. Frank asked if property owners on Grist Mill Road had been spoken with about this. Dick Clark replied that they had not since the Town has not started the formal discontinuance process yet. Troy Revis, Jr. pointed out to Frank this part of the road will not have an impact on the residents in question.

Anne Rider expressed that Frank's concerns about the potential increase to the Town's education costs have been shared with her by some other residents, as well as the overall scale of the larger structure. Isaac confirmed Frank's point that the property will be taxed based on the subsidized income from the property. He went on to address the number of potential school age children which would dwell in the units. Based on comparisons to similar stock, the WHT estimates no more than five (5) school age children will live there. Isaac spoke further about the dimensional scale of the project; 24 units were originally contemplated but it was reduced in number to 17 units. There was a general discussion about how things will actually look once built versus how they appear in the drawings.

Frank stated that he was not convinced. He said, "I realize that I don't have a say in this other than just to express my position." Anne Rider suggested that Isaac address the process by which people **do** have a say in this. Isaac mentioned that through the Act 250 process there will be another opportunity for interested parties to state their positions. There was a general discussion about the increased level of activity in the Village of Algiers.

Fred Humphrey (FOAVI, Board Member) addressed the group and Frank Rafferty. He expressed that he thinks it's just fine for the opportunity to have school age children living in the project. He praised the WHT for what they have done with the Tontine building and sees this project as a nice continuation of their great work; FOAVI is 1,000% in support of this. He spoke to the traffic issue saying that it will be

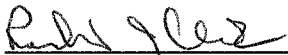
increased not just from this development but rather from overall increased traffic of people coming from all sections of Guilford.

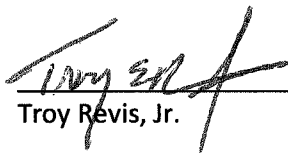
Isaac pointed out that they (WHT) are hoping to get senior citizens in these buildings; he does not want this project to be characterized as serving only young families. He is hoping that WHT's thoughtful development of this project will yield a broad mix of residents.

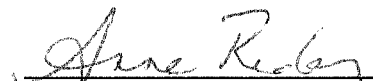
Dick Clark asked if there were any more questions. Fred Humphrey asked if there would be any units offered at market value. Isaac responded that almost all would be affordable housing for those at 60% of area median income or below – there would be a few units that will be offered at 80% of area median income but none at market value.

Dick thanked the group for their attendance. He recognized both Frank Rafferty's and Fred Humphrey's positions on the project.

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 PM.

  
Richard Clark

  
Troy Revis, Jr.

  
Anne Rider