

Dryden Affordable and Workforce Housing Committee
***DRAFT* Minutes for Feb. 7, 2024 Meeting Via Zoom**



*Making Dryden hospitable & affordable
for working families*

Attendance: Martha Robertson; Ray Burger; Craig Anderson; Dillon Shults, and Chuck Geisler; Christina Dravis, Mike Murphy and Miles McCarty could not attend.

Note: *next meeting is on March 6, (2 pm) or possibly sooner.*

Agenda:

1. January minutes approval
2. February guest: Holly Hutchison, Sustainable Finger Lakes MH heat pump project
3. Continuing conversation on funds, Chuck's one-pager to CCE, and TC Recovery funding

Jan. minutes approved.

1. Holly Hutchinson, Sustainable Finger Lakes (SFLX)
 - Background in organizing and program management, most recently directed a 6-year, federally- funded project for apprenticeships in Rochester area.
 - Now: Coordinator FLCF + Coordinator MH Pilot Project

SFLX has 3 affordable housing programs: funds to LMI families for home energy upgrades

- FLCF: since 2010, \$ from community, covers entire Finger Lakes Region (90)
- CEEP: launched 2023, \$ from NYSERDA in city and town of Ithaca (goal 100 renters)
- MH **Pilot** Project: launched 2023, \$ from TCRF, covers To. Co. (goal 50 MH owners)

Pilot details-

- Award from Tompkins County Community Recovery Fund: \$532,000
- Funds heat pumps installation + electrical upgrades (up to \$5500 for heat pump, \$2000 for electric). Ave. award/MH~\$8,000.
- Designed to be stacked with other incentives (NYSERDA Empower +, NYSEG, OTDA, NPA Zone, FLCF)
- Home is required to meet NYSERDA envelope standards (ACH and R values); NYSERDA Empower+ funds used for this.

- Eligibility: LMI (300% Fed poverty rate), live in Tompkins, own home (primary residence)

Current Stats that describe Pilot Progress (Holly does this ½ time)

- People who contacted her: 62
- People whom she reached for intro phone call: 54
- People whose homes she visited: 33
- Home where work was completed upgrades: 12 (2 in Dryden+who got insulation only)
- Number of homes in progress: Possibly 10.
- OOP costs range from \$0-\$10,000 (for extra work requested by homeowner) Average OOP is 9%

Marketing/Outreach has taken many forms, which she's happy to share.

Contractor Partners: MH Project: Halco, Simply Home Performance, Zero Draft, NP Partner and in Dryden add CAPCO and Cozy Basements; if insulation is needed, EMPOWER+ money is used first. Mobile home belly work only; up to \$8000 available for insulation. If contractor says mobile home isn't sound enough for upgrade, then fall back to replacement.

Lesson Learned:

- Primarily related to ASHP installs in MH's (amps, ducted vs. mini split, natural gas, etc..)
- Issues with weatherization:
 - workforce capacity can be scarce (to complete work in 18 mo.)
 - Some electrical services needed to be upgraded (of concern to MHP owners)
 - spray foam chemical odor persists during day of application
- Much value from weatherization during power outages, even if doesn't lead to ASHP.
- Marketing essential. Initial out-reach to establish relations with county and town clerks, as well as Jay Franklin. Sent blurbs to towns to publicize and had article in *Tompkins Weekly*, and on the list serves. Used door hangers. Tompkins County Health sent notices to park owners who put it out to MH residents. Also used Aging Services Network, food pantries, CCE, etc.

Q&A:

****How complex is administration of multiple funding sources? Answer:** not hard. Contractors do the work to manage & receive reimbursement.

****Intake/recruitment? See her stats.** She reaches out with phone calls to establish eligibility. Follows up with home visit, and then survey of home issues, involving owners. Then gives MH owner a list of certified contractors and owner chooses. Owner calls contractor and home energy audit follows, sometimes with discouraging delays by contractor. Contractor develops work plan intended to show \$ benefits. If family agrees, contractor applies to SFLX. Gay

Nicholson and Holly develop spreadsheet to evaluate proposals; if approved, contractor begins work, and payment is made upon completion.

** What happens if she doesn't complete all 50 homes? May ask for no cost extension. Devoting nearly full-time now in order to complete the project by December.

**Are seniors a good target? Yes, because they have more time to devote to the whole process.

**Follow-up: Holly hasn't had time to follow up with all of the homes she initially visited; focuses on those who signed up for contractors. About to do another push and to ask participating families how the program is working for them.

** Problems? Utility bills might be higher in the short run going from natural gas to electric. Conversion from propane or oil means a savings, so a better "sell."

2. Chuck's One-Pager to CCE

[Chuck's zoom not working so he can't elaborate or handle questions.] Dillon covers, saying the one-pager is a good compilation. Weatherization a good way to use/spread any funds we raise. Karim Beers is likely to commit \$50,000 to our MH weatherization from his Clean Energy Hub Funds. EMPOWER+ (NYSERDA funds) gives up to \$10,000 per LMI household. How much of this is available from NYS (not sure)? Who would do the actual work? How do we find MH applicants? Need a trained energy navigator to do the work (or INHS)?

Dillon conferred with Delia Yarrow at INHS (Director of Lending) who believes more federal money is coming, though it may have new strings attached. Potentially INHS could be involved. Note that INHS is currently contracted with Dryden to do \$500,000 worth of home rehab (CDBG grant) on 13 to 15 homes over the next two years. The administrative cost will be \$65,000. Thoma is doing a \$500,000 CDBG contract with the village of Dryden (??).

Were are we to go forward with mobile home weatherization, how could we be more effective? Going door-to-door and seeking help from successful MH owners to talk to their neighbors. Jay Franklin has a comprehensive list of mobile home owners.

County funding? What would this be used for? Individual MH owners have to apply for EMPOWER \$. Town can't apply on their behalf and distribute the money. [Note: Hailley Deliesle reported after today's meeting that the Community Recovery Fund was a one-time effort using ARP funding the to County. So Eliot Benman must have been referring to other county funds.]

Add-On Matters

Jason's email about ADU funding. Problems with NOFA (not clear and additional two weeks is an adequate to gather data on viable candidates). Grants are not big enough to build new units.

Funds could work to upgrade noncompliant units but who wants to admit that they are noncompliant? Ray thinks the town may apply anyway just to get in the queue and learn the ropes for the next round in 2025.

Pro-Housing Community status. Mike Murphy notified us that the village was awarded this – – a nice honor indeed. It may turn out that Governor Hochul will require all communities seeking New York State funding to have this status. Leverage for action (wouldn't apply to federal funds).

Tim Cutty at Park Grove. Martha is talking with him on Friday about land in the village. They broke ground on 1061 Dryden Rd. project. Ray is pleased with this working relationship.

Gay Nicholson (SFLX): Martha will reach out to her to explore the possibility of Gay joining us in a later Housing Committee meeting and further informing us about the mobile home work Holly is leading. We need more answers to questions that have come up.

Minutes transcribed by Chuck from Martha's note. Corrections & edits welcome.