

**Quality of Life Committee, Town of New Lebanon**  
**April 28, 2023**

**Present:** Bob Gilson, Tistrya Houghtling, Danielle Kuffel, Sharon Powers. Guest: Al Bellenchia

Tistrya Houghtling called the meeting to order at 9:35 am.

**Housing:** Al Bellenchia. Executive Director of Columbia County Habitat for Humanity came to speak with the Quality of Life Committee about a prospective project to produce affordable housing in New Lebanon. To date Columbia County's Habitat for Humanity program has built 25 houses. Before the pandemic they had begun to focus on multi-family housing. Recently, in collaboration with an architect, Habitat has come up with a new design concept to create 3 bedroom, 2 bath, low maintenance, environmentally friendly, all electric homes that can be produced for under \$240,00. The plan would be to find a piece of property within walking distance of downtown that would allow for multiple homes to be built on half acre lots. Given New Lebanon's zoning, a variance would have to be applied for. Tistrya Houghtling said that she had sent Mr. Bellenchia a list of several undeveloped parcels in the downtown area that Habitat could research to check to see if the parcels might be for sale.

Prospective buyers would need to have at least 30% of their income available to cover the costs of housing and maintenance. The development would be structured in such a way that purchasers would be able to accumulate equity, however, when the houses are sold, they would have to be sold as low cost housing. The houses would also have to be owner occupied. The houses would be sold to people currently on the Habitat for Humanity housing list. New Lebanon residents can apply to be on the list, but qualified applications would be reviewed in the order they were received.

Al Bellenchia said that in order to move forward he would need a letter of intent from the New Lebanon Town Board. Tistrya in turn, made the motion as follows: "I make a motion that the Quality of Life Committee make a recommendation to the Town Board at their May 15 meeting to adopt a declaration of intent in the Town working together with Columbia County Habitat for Humanity on the proposed housing development." Sharon Powers seconded the motion. It carried 4 – 0.

Supervisor Houghtling made a motion to adopt the March 31 minutes as typed. Danielle Kuffel seconded. The motion carried 4 -0.

Supervisor Houghtling said that she had sent out a statement of a conceptual framework for the Quality of Life Committee, and that she had received several edits. She asked that a motion be made to ask the town board to adopt the framework as amended. Sharon Powers made a motion as follows: "I make a motion that we adopt the Conceptual Framework as amended by a blue and a red line as amended for the Quality of Life Committee; and ask that the Town Board adopt that and incorporate it into what the Quality of Life Committee is all about." The motion was carried 4 – 0.

The next Quality of Life meeting, scheduled for May 26 at 9:30 am, will be held in person.

Tistrya moved to adjourn the meeting. Sharon Powers seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully submitted: Bob Gilson