

Committee to Assess and Recommend Strategies for Housing Creation Within the Town

Selectmen's Conference Room 2nd Floor Town Hall Building
367 Main Street Hyannis, MA 02601

Rick Presbrey: Chair
Councilor Paula Schnepf
Councilor Betty Ludtke
Councilor Charles Bloom
Councilor John Crow
Councilor Gordon Starr
Maryann Barboza
Hilda Haye
Laura Shufelt

October 28, 2024
3:00pm

MEETING MINUTES

Chair of Committee opened the meeting of the Committee to Assess and Recommend Strategies for Housing Creation Within the Town and made the following announcement:

This meeting is being recorded and will be rebroadcast on the Town of Barnstable's Government Access Channel. In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 20, the Administrator must inquire whether anyone else is recording this meeting and, if so, please make their presence known. This meeting will be replayed via Xfinity Channel 8 or high-definition Channel 1072. It may also be accessed via the Government Access Channel live video on demand archives on the Town of Barnstable's website: <https://streaming85.townofbarnstable.us/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=1>

The administrator to the Town Council took Roll call, all members present in the Selectmen's Conference Room except for Councilor Mendes; Councilor Bloom. Councilor Starr attending via zoom link. Also in Attendance James Kupfer, Director, Planning and Development.

PURPOSE: Recommend strategies for the creation of housing to serve year-round residents and seasonal workers. The committee shall review the Cape Cod Commission's Regional Housing Strategy, <https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/regional-housing-strategy> and the proposed Massachusetts State Housing Bond Bill <https://www.mass.gov/lists/housing-bond-bill> and the Town's Housing Production Plan, <https://www.townofbarnstable.us/Departments/planninganddevelopment/Projects/Housing-Production-Plan-Update.asp> with a goal of recommending 2-4 strategies for the Town to adopt, along with recommendations for implementation and resources needed.

Chair of Committee opened public comment and wanted to leave public comment open for the duration of the meeting.

Chair of Committee stated our goal is to come up with three or four ideas that can be done to solve the Town's housing problem, so if we go through the 30 or so possibilities and come up with three attainable ideas that could work, that would be the way he would like to see the committee go.

Chair of Committee welcomed public comment:

Paul Phalan: He volunteers for an organization called Clean Barnstable, and he was assigned to Lincoln Road, and as he was walking, he noticed that there are a lot of vacant buildings and homes along that road. There is a vacant property next to him that the gentleman pays his taxes and mows the lawn but he hasn't lived there in years and can't understand why. I know we can't force a homeowner to rehab or lease or rent them, but there are communities that tax vacant properties, or we should try and come up

with tools for homeowners to be able to use the home for a rental if they are not using it. He also had a question about the Marstons Mills property and why it has taken 10 years to even discuss the housing issues. He would like to see Senior Housing there. The residents need to be heard first, its not ok to do all the building in Hyannis, we need housing there. The other issue is the Airport, there is a ton of land where the Airport is. It's a waste of land in his mind. It is not a money maker its loses money. We could quadruple the housing there in that land.

Chair of the Committee said that there have been several meetings regarding the Marstons Mills property, so the public has been well informed, and he has attended them as well, and he mentioned it is a mixed bag of what residents want to see there. A lot object to the type of housing there, but if it is done well and correct then resident will be happy, but if its not done correctly then that is when you have pushback from the public. It is a very serious issue here and across the country, and not everyone understands that.

Maryann Barboza said she likes the idea of moving the Airport, and maybe a committee needs to be set up to discuss that. This town has a lot of committees that meet and do nothing when it comes to low income and minorities or the poor in their neighborhoods. People in the town always say we are going to help these people or the other people, but never do. There are laws put in place to help neighbors if your neighbor is unruly, but it doesn't mean that everyone is like that.

Christopher Gregory- Centerville

Dear Committee Members,

I am hoping to attend the meeting today to provide comment. Below is an article I wish to share and address to you. I have also generated an audio summary to give you the high level overview.

I look forward to talking with you,

*Chris Gregory
Centerville*

<https://www.socialhousingcenter.org/blog/in-montgomery-county-maryland-they-are-building-a-network-of-social-housing-and-it-cost-the-county-virtually-nothing-here-is-how-they-do-it>



[Montgomery County, Maryland is Building a Network of Social Housing at Virtually Zero Cost- Here is How They Do It. — The Center for Social Housing and Public Investment](https://www.socialhousingcenter.org/blog/in-montgomery-county-maryland-they-are-building-a-network-of-social-housing-and-it-cost-the-county-virtually-nothing-here-is-how-they-do-it)

The incredible efficiency of Social Housing
www.socialhousingcenter.org

<https://notebooklm.google.com/notebook/9b32f270-818d-4aab-995d-81d9fcb15c87/audio>

This article stems from a conversation with Councilor Bloom. Councilor Bloom mentioned to Mr. Gregory that the buildings being built need to be 4 stories for the builder to make any money, Mr. Gregory wanted to clarify that the developer needs to show the lender it is a profit margin, but the developer is not getting that profit. He and his wife sold a home here in 2022, and they both thought

long and hard about not selling and renting it for a year-round rental, the risk of owning 1 property and renting it out was too great of a risk to take for my wife and I. If you get a renter in there and all of a sudden they can't pay the rent, or they get sick and are out of work, my wife and I are now on the hook to pay both mortgages, or try and get them out to get a new renter in there, but if they are sick or somehow disabled, you can't get them out, so it was too much of a risk.

Chair of Committee thanked Mr. Gregory for coming in and expressing his thoughts, and mentioned that Committee member Laura Shufelt had read the information he had sent in its entirety and wanted her to comment.

Committee member Laura Shufelt stated that in the recently passed Affordable Homes Act there is a pilot program for social housing promoted mostly by a couple of Representatives in the Cambridge area so it has the potential for funding, but it is still only a pilot program, but is looking forward to the results, and pending those results the State may make some changes to the waivers or laws that would allow it to happen. In the pilot program there is a third middle income and a third lower income and a third market, some of the funding would come from the State and have to be financed or partially financed spread out over time with very low interest, so we are a wait and see in Massachusetts. There needs to be a dedicated payment source in Massachusetts in order for this to work here because of the private public relationship Massachusetts has, and also there needs to be someone that can do the 1/3 to 1/3 to 1/3 income ratios.

Chair of committee thanked everyone for public comment.

Committee member Maryann Barboza had a proposal to present to the committee for consideration at the next meeting. She spent the past weekend talking to people, both homeless and those housed. The Armory across the street is vacant, the town owns it, to fix it up for the homeless in our town, there needs to be structure, and its for people who are from the Cape originally, that now are homeless or that have been displaced out of their home. This needs to be looked at as a potential sight for this to happen. There can be a whole program designed to help people get back on their feet. People are dying in the streets, and that building is vacant, just need basic showers and a nurse to administer meds if needed.

Chair of Committee asked Maryann to put together a comprehensive plan on her idea and present it to the Committee when its ready.

Councilor Crow would like to see more regulations on the Air BNB in our area, and take the profit away from the investors, and make those homes year-round rentals. The Town needs to regulate these. There are a lot of cities doing this, and it is something we need to look at.

Councilor Schnepf would like to volunteer on the task of the Town to look at a transfer tax on real estate to generate income for housing and would like Councilor Starr to join her in that effort, and would come back to the Committee with a proposal.

Committee member Laura Shufelt would like to propose looking at Town only and town assets for affordable housing options. Committee member Hilda Haye offered to help Ms. Shufelt on that suggestion.

Committee Chair would like to suggest the town look at affordability, currently the town does not look at that or enforce it in anyway or monitors what once was affordable. The town does not monitor this as to whether they are sales or rentals. And losing those affordable units is crucial right now, and we do not know how many we have already lost, so the town needs a full time housing staff person to monitor our housing stock, and to make sure that our developers are adhering to the agreement they entered into when they first built.

Councilor Crow would like to look at the inclusionary ordinance needs to be reviewed and possible increasing that.

Committee member Laura Shufelt also would like to look ordinance and possible changing it to a zoning ordinance right now its a general ordinance. Barnstable does not have it as a zoning ordinance, them it is enforceable by our zoning enforcement officer.

Councilor Schnepf would like to have some flexibility in our zoning amendments.

Chair of Committee asked for a motion to accept the meeting minutes of October 28, 2024, Maryann Barboza made the motion, this was seconded by Councilor Bloom, all members voted in favor of accepting the meeting minutes as written.

A motion was made by Councilor Paula Schnepf, this was seconded by Councilor Crow, all members voted in favor of adjournment at 5:13pm

ADJOURNMENT 5:13pm