

NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION  
AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE

Monday, February 21, 6:00- 7:00 PM Eastern Time

No Physical Meeting Location. Attending by Zoom access: Jeff Lubell, Kathleen Shepherd, Paul Manganiello, Jeff Goodrich, Brian Loeb, Gordon Greenfield

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81242668798>

Meeting ID: 812 4266 8798

877 853 5257 US Toll-free

Topic: Affordable Housing Subcommittee

1. Approve agenda. Motion to approve made by Shepherd, seconded by Manganiello. There was no discussion. Approved 5-0.
2. Comments from the public. None
3. Approve minutes of 1-10-22. Motion to approve by Manganiello, seconded by Greenfield. Approved: 5, rejected: 0, abstained: 1.
4. **Next steps on properties identified through this subcommittee's review of publicly owned land.**

The subcommittee's proposal on assessing Fire District land for possible affordable housing sites has been submitted to the Planning Commission which passed it on to the Selectboard with a request for a discussion with the Selectboard, to be followed by a meeting between the Selectboard and the Fire District. A member of the PC submitted questions that Lubell will include in the packet for our next meeting. One of the questions focused on the location of the proposed housing sites relative to the village center and public transportation.

One subcommittee member suggested we take a regional view and compare the relatively short commute from sites on Beaver Meadow road to job centers in Hanover and Lebanon to the travel needed to access those job centers from more distant towns in the Upper Valley. It was also pointed out that it is very difficult for people with lower incomes to access housing in Norwich and it is important to address this issue.

There has been no action on the potential site near the transfer station. Lubell will reach out to the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board to discuss the site.

## 5. ADUs, tiny homes, and other affordable housing topics

The subcommittee discussed a range of topics related to affordable housing, including:

- **ADUs and tiny homes:** While they are different, they both offer smaller, more affordable homes. Should we have an open forum to get public interest and gather people's ideas?
- **Community Land Trusts:** the oldest land trust is Champlain Housing Trust (1975). Does the Upper Valley Land Trust plan for housing in the future? The community land trust concept generally involves a 99 year lease of the land by a trust or municipality to preserve long-term affordability. Governance is usually by a board comprised of representatives from three groups (the residents, the nonprofit board, and the government)
- **Norwich wastewater:** Lack of wastewater capacity is one of the biggest obstacles to a number of affordable housing options, including accessory dwelling units. A study is planned by the Planning Commission to assess the town's wastewater needs and options.

## 6. Information sessions on affordable housing

Members of the subcommittee discussed the possibility of holding informational sessions on various affordable housing topics. There was generally a favorable view of this idea. They could be offered on Zoom, with recordings provided. The topic will be put on the agenda for the next meeting with a goal of agreeing on a plan then.

The group brainstormed ideas for sessions, including:

- introduce the Norwich affordable housing strategy, with the goal of informing about all we do, not just one project.
  - describe our work to locate housing sites on publicly owned land and our broader objectives.
  - explain the idea of "missing middle" housing, and put it on our website. (possible speaker: Daniel Parolek.)
  - invite Jill Davies to discuss Woodstock community trust model.
  - get Vital Communities help.
  - Invite speakers: from Twin Pines, Hanover Conservancy, Star Lake, Norwich subsidized Senior Housing.
  - What can we learn from Habitat?
7. **Preserving long-term affordability.** Loeb mentioned that in some cases external funders will require long-term affordability, so the requirements do

not always need to be imposed by the town. We could provide an educational memo to town on how long-term affordability is preserved.

8. Other business: Ralph Hybels has resigned from committee.
9. Comments from the Public. None.
10. Manganiello made a motion to end the meeting at 7:00, which was supported unanimously.

APPROVED 3-21-21