

**NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION
AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE**

AGENDA

Monday, December 20, 2021 START TIME 6pm

Physical Meeting Location: Multipurpose Room Tracy Hall. Instructions for access to Tracy Hall are at the link below:

<http://norwich.vt.us/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/ToN-Face-Covering-Rule-2021-Dec-10.pdf>

http://norwich.vt.us/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/COVID_Conting.-Plan-No12.-2021-1124.pdf

Topic: Affordable Housing Subcommittee

Time: November 15, 2021 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81242668798>

Meeting ID: 812 4266 8798

877 853 5257 US Toll-free

1. Approve Agenda
2. Comments from the Public
3. Approve Minutes – 10-18-21
4. Update on memo to planning commission re publicly owned land
5. Preserving long-term affordability
6. Zoning revisions to promote affordability
7. Other business
8. Comments from the Public

Enclosures:

1. 10-18-21 AH Draft Minutes
2. Next Steps: Investigation of Fire District Land for Affordable Homes Document

Town of Norwich
Affordable Housing Sub-committee
DRAFT
Minutes
October 18, 2021

Location: Tracy Hall multi purpose room and virtual meeting via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81242668798>
Meeting ID: 812 4266 8798

Members Present: Jeff Lubell (Chair), Brian Loeb, Kathleen Shepherd, Paul Manganiello, Gordon Greenfield
Public Present: none
Staff: Rod Francis

Meeting called to Order: 6:04pm.

- 1) **Approve Agenda:** Manganiello moved and Loeb seconded a motion to approve the agenda. Motion carried 5 - 0. For: Lubell, Loeb, Manganiello, Shepherd, Greenfield.
- 2) **Comments from the Public:** none.
- 3) **Meeting Minutes of September 20, 2021:** Manganiello moved and Shepherd seconded a motion to approve the minutes. Motion carried 5 - 0. For: Lubell, Loeb, Manganiello, Shepherd, Greenfield.

4) **Update on memo to planning commission re publicly owned land**
 Lubell reported back to the subcommittee on the discussion from the last planning commission (PC) meeting. The commission would like the AHSC to return to the PC with a recommendation on Beaver Meadow RD parcels owned by the Norwich Fire District (NFD), including an estimate for further work assessing development feasibility. The DPW parcel was also discussed, in the PC meeting Francis undertook to make further inquiries with regard to possible funding sources of landfill delineation, and any subsequent changes in liability to the town in light of any new information concerning the extent of the landfill and continuing uses of the land.

The meeting discussed in more detail the features of the existing DPW parcel. The group determined that to look for more information on the prior use of the site.

The group resolved that Francis would pursue information concerning the delineation and potential characterization of the landfill site (including potential remediation) and that Lubell and Goodrich would develop a cost estimate and scope statement for assessing suitable housing sites on Beaver Meadow RD lands owned by the NFD.

5) **Preserving long-term affordability**
 The meeting agreed with Chair Lubell that this item should be held over until Goodrich could join the discussion, given his interest in the topic.

6) **Zoning revisions to promote affordability**
 Francis introduced the scope of the rewriting project.

- The project is at the initial stages of information gathering and background research
 - Density Factor Review – exploring the effectiveness of a requirement introduced in 2002 that uses a set of spatial factors to determine the total number of parcels that can be subdivided from an original parcel, which are then recorded in the form of vested development rights on the new plat(s)
 - Wastewater Feasibility Study – for the village and adjacent areas to examine current conditions and identify potential solutions that may enable ongoing viability of the village and/or development in adjacent areas.
- The revised regulations would reflect the latest statutory impetus to improve provision of (more) affordable housing
- The new regulations might allow for anything up to a triplex as a permitted use, and remove the current

- statutory restrictions such as owner occupancy of the principal structure, for ADUs
- The regulations could encourage PUD type of development that would encourage more clustered development, while establishing shared open space with the potential for a community onsite wastewater system.

The group continued to discuss the land use regulation rewrite project.

Francis suggested that the studies will be completed over the winter and into early Spring. In the Spring the work of the PC will turn to a consideration of the number of zoning districts and the list of permitted and conditional uses to produce the desired land use patterns. An intensive consideration of the map of land use districts would follow this work.

Lubell suggested that the subcommittee could provide a memo to the PC to help guide their work, including supporting ADUs, PUDs with affordable housing bonuses and other measures.

7) Other Business:

- 8)** Lubell asked that members address the need to elect Kathleen Shepherd as Interim Clerk while Francis is Interim Town Manager. Manganiello moved and Loeb seconded a motion to elect Shepherd as Interim Clerk while Francis serves as Interim Town Manager. Motion carried 5 - 0. For: Lubell, Loeb, Manganiello, Shepherd, Greenfield.

9) Comments from the Public: none

10) Upcoming meetings:

November 15

Meeting Adjourned: 7:14pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Rod Francis

Next Steps: Investigation of Fire District Land for Affordable Homes

The following is a description of the next steps for investigating the feasibility of developing affordable homes on land owned by the Norwich Fire District and to which the town has development rights.

At this point, this is simply an investigation of feasibility and not a commitment by the Town or the Fire District to the use of land in this manner.

This is a draft description of the process for consideration by the Planning Commission and has not yet been reviewed or approved by the Commission or any other official body.

Project Overview

The Norwich Planning Commission is seeking a contractor to help it determine whether there might be sites within two large parcels owned by the Norwich Fire District (SPAN: 450-142-11592 and 450-142-12882) that could be developed as residential housing. If the project proceeds, the Commission anticipates that the housing to be developed on these sites will likely be single-family, duplex, or triplex units, but have not made a fixed determination about the exact nature of the structures to be developed and would be open to recommendations regarding what is feasible on the specific sites identified.

The Commission anticipates that the homes would be sold at a discount relative to market-rate housing due to one or more of the following: (a) free or low-cost land; (b) use of housing types with lower per-unit costs, such as duplex and triplex construction; and potentially (c) economies of scale, if multiple structures are developed simultaneously. If sold as for-sale housing, the homes will come with legal restrictions that preserve the long-term affordability of the homes while allowing purchasers to build wealth through shared equity homeownership. If sold as rental housing, the homes will come with legal restrictions that ensure they are rented to qualifying families at affordable rents over the long-term.

The ideal building sites would meet the following criteria:

- Development envelope near Beaver Meadow Road (for SPAN: 450-142-11592) or near Tucker Hill Road or Kate Wallace Road (for SPAN 450-142-12882).
- Reasonable slopes for the development proposed.
- Capacity for on-site wastewater disposal.
- Adequate setbacks for potable water supply.
- Limited environmental impacts, particularly related to wetlands and streams.
- Consideration of abutting homeowners.

The specific tasks to be conducted are noted below.

Tasks

A. Initial Investigation

The following tasks are needed to conduct an initial investigation of these opportunities. The consultant/contractor should review the two large parcels and identify specific sites on which it would be feasible to develop affordable homes. To the extent possible, the sites should meet the ideal site criteria listed above.

1. **Topographic Mapping:** At a minimum, study sites should include 2-foot contour intervals from LiDAR available from the Vermont Center for Geographic Information (VCGI). Each site considered should include a base map at an appropriate scale for analysis and planning.
2. **Natural Resources:** At a minimum, study sites should present wetlands, agricultural soils, and deer yards from VCGI for analysis and planning.
3. **Site Reconnaissance:** Site evaluation will include at least reconnaissance using a hand auger to assess soil conditions for on-site wastewater disposal potential and hydric conditions that would indicate wetlands. Any consultant engaged must have licensure and knowledge of the Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rules effective April 12, 2019 and at least a general understanding of wetland delineation parameters. The product for this effort will, at a minimum, include work sheets that present findings for the sites evaluated.
4. **Conceptual Planning:** For sites with potential for development, conceptual planning will be required to show existing conditions, proposed units, driveways, water and wastewater systems, regulatory setbacks, and grading at 2-foot contour intervals for the developed area.
5. **Opinions of Probable Cost:** Viable sites shall be evaluated in terms site and building costs. This task should include a design professional familiar with site construction to prepare an itemized list of materials with quantities and unit costs. This task should include experienced building contractors to offer opinions about the cost per square foot for various building sizes and configurations.

B. Follow-up Work

Depending on the outcome of the initial evaluation, additional follow-up tasks could include:

1. **Formal Wetland Evaluation**
2. **Test Pits.** The Town Department of Public Works could assist with this task, which is needed for on-site wastewater disposal design and permitting.
3. **Hydrogeological Analysis.** Depending on soil conditions and for sites requiring 2,000 gallons per day or more for on-site wastewater disposal, it will be necessary to engage a qualified hydrogeologist as required by the rules.
4. **Design, Permitting, and Construction Assistance**