

NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE

Agenda

Monday, July 20, 2026, 6:00 pm

Hybrid Meeting: In-Person at Tracy Hall and via zoom:

Topic: Affordable Housing Subcommittee

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83194128919>

Meeting ID: 831 9412 8919

1. Approve meeting agenda
2. Public comment
3. Approve June meeting minutes
4. Updates
 - a. Village Master Plan Project
 - b. Other
5. Completing discussions from last month on relationship of zoning and affordability
 - a. Zoning districts, allowable residential uses and density, and impacts on housing affordability
 - b. Potential zoning reforms to encourage missing middle housing
6. Preparing for next discussions on housing chapter of the Norwich Town Plan

Adjourn

Attachments

6/15/2026 Meeting Minutes

Potential Zoning Reforms to Encourage Missing Middle Housing

NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 15, 2026

Hybrid Meeting: In-Person at Tracy Hall and via zoom. The meeting was called to order on or around 6:04 pm.

AHSC Members Present: Jeff Goodrich, Jeff Lubell (6:15 PM), Brian Loeb, Aviva Tevah, Gregory Hynes

Staff: Steven True

Members of the Public Present: None

1. **Jeff Goodrich, acting as Chair, opens the meeting at 6 PM**
 2. **Motion to approve the meeting agenda** – Passed 4-0
 3. **Public comment** -- none
 4. **Motion to approve the May 18th meeting minutes** – Passed 4-0
 5. **Jeff Lubell joins meeting, resumes as Chair.**
 6. **Updates** were shared about the Village Master Planning project, which had its first kick-off meeting on the 9th, the group goal for the next meeting is to more closely define the project area. Members were also informed that the Starlake Housing Trust and Twin Pines Housing Trust application for revolving funds, was unanimously approved by the selectboard.
 7. **Discussion of zoning districts, allowable residential uses and density, and impacts on housing affordability** Steven True leads a discussion on the current zoning regulations and zoning districts, highlighting the intent of the current regulations are to maintain low development densities in areas of Town with limited and/or poor access to Town facilities and services, to maintain low development densities contiguous to large blocks of conserved public lands, and to encourage moderate to high densities in areas of Town with good access to Town facilities and services and close proximity to the village center. Steven introduced and answered questions about how maximum density for lot allotment is calculated. Steven then walked the members through some scenarios and also discussed the relationship of Planned Unit Development (PUD) review to the subdivision process. Members reviewed the TRORC future land use maps and discussed the potential for incorporating this into municipal zoning districts.
 8. The next meeting isscheduled for July 20 at 6 p.m.
- Adjourn

Potential Norwich Zoning Reforms to Support Missing-Middle Housing

1. Focus Policies Enabling Missing Middle housing in Appropriate Areas

- Adopt future land use categories similar to regional plan.
 - Enable missing middle housing (duplexes, triplexes, quadraplexes, cottage clusters, etc.) in village center, village area, transition areas, hamlets and general rural areas.
 - Align with existing development patterns and smart-growth goals
 - Preserve rural landscape and avoid dispersed sprawl
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2. Permit Missing-Middle Housing By Right in These Areas

- Allow duplexes, triplexes and quadraplexes by right.
- Administrative review only if objective standards are met
- Avoid conditional use review for small-scale missing-middle housing

Possible framework:

- Up to 4 units permitted by right on:
 - lots existing as of adoption date, OR
 - lots meeting updated minimum dimensional standards
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3. Reduce Minimum Lot Size Requirements in These Areas

- Lower minimum lot sizes in these areas.
- Avoid “lot area per dwelling unit” formulas
- Use overall dimensional standards instead

Potential approach. Minimum lot for single unit or duplex =

- 7,200 sq ft in Village Center:
- 10,000 sq ft in Village Area and Transitional Areas
- 12,500 sq ft in Hamlets, Rural General.

Require 25% additional square feet for a triplex and 50% additional square feet for a quadraplex

4. Shift Toward Form-Based Regulation

Focus regulation on:

- building height,
- setbacks,
- footprint,
- lot coverage,
- frontage,
- open space,
- wastewater capacity,
- and stormwater impacts

Avoid excessive regulation of:

- number of kitchens/units inside a building

Goal:

- regulate physical scale and neighborhood fit rather than unit count alone
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5. Allow Conversion of Existing Buildings to Residential Use By Right

Within village and mixed-use districts:

- permit conversion of existing commercial and mixed-use buildings to residential use by right
- allow upper-story housing
- allow mixed residential/commercial buildings

Potential approach:

- Avoid cap on units within existing buildings (or if we set a cap, make it high)
- rely on:
 - wastewater capacity,

- building/fire code,
- parking practicality,
- and existing building envelope as practical limits

Possible safeguard:

- limit major exterior expansion rather than limiting unit count

6. Encourage Cottage Court / Cottage Cluster Development

Allow:

- multiple detached small homes on one parcel
- shared open space
- shared parking areas

Needed zoning changes:

- permit multiple principal residential structures on one lot
- reduce lot area requirements
- allow clustered site design

Focus standards on:

- cottage size,
- spacing,
- pedestrian orientation,
- open space quality,
- and neighborhood compatibility

NOTE: This is probably already possible under PUD, but we should consider making it simpler for small cottage courts – e.g., as of right for smaller projects; explicitly allow multiple parcels on a single lot.

7. Reduce Parking Barriers

Consider:

- reducing parking minimums in village areas
- eliminating parking minimums for adaptive reuse projects
- allowing shared parking and tandem parking

Recognize that parking requirements are often a major barrier to:

- infill housing,
 - adaptive reuse,
 - and village-scale development
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8. Streamline Review Procedures

For smaller projects meeting objective standards:

- use administrative review rather than discretionary review
- simplify site plan and subdivision review
- create predictable timelines and standards

Goal:

- reduce uncertainty, delay, and development costs
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9. Treat Existing Lots and Buildings Flexibly

Allow redevelopment/adaptive reuse on:

- legally existing lots,
- existing village structures,
- and historically nonconforming parcels

Avoid requiring:

- unnecessary subdivision,
- excessive dimensional compliance,
- or modern standards that older village properties cannot reasonably meet