



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON HOUSING COMMISSION

February 16, 2022, 6:00PM

Whipple Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Nichols, (Vice-Chair), Amy Kaplan, Tim Lund, Marilyn Kidder,

MEMBERS ABSENT: Tom Vannatta, Winfried Feneberg, Steve Theroux, Randy Foose

OTHERS PRESENT: Nancy Rollins, Selectman, Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator, Mark Fougere, Fougere Planning and Development

Call to Order – Peter Nichols, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Update on MTAG grant status

Kim Hallquist noted that she spoke with Tiffany McNamara of PlanNH about the town's grant application and they have decided not to give New London a grant at this time; they encourage us to apply again in about six months. PlanNH, and their partners NH Housing Finance Authority and UNH Technical Extension, wants more time to evaluate the work of the Housing Commission to be more comfortable with the direction the Housing Commission is going in.

Mark Fougere – Presentation: Workforce Housing Definitions, Demographics, Regulatory Review Highlights

Mr. Fougere noted that at the last meeting there was some confusion over the definition of affordable housing as it related to workforce housing. He noted that there are several definitions of affordable but the one that is relevant to the work of the Housing Commission is the statutory definition that looks at household income of the people who live in the home.

Mr. Fougere reviewed his initial review of the town's provisions of the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and site plan regulations for items that might impact the development of workforce housing (see attached). Mr. Fougere pointed out that regulations that require large buffer zones can be problematic because it is expensive to have land that can't be used in the development. Mr. Fougere does not see an unusually high number of items that should be addressed in the town's regulations.

Next steps

Mr. Nichols asked the group to consider next steps. Mr. Fougere suggested that starting outreach now would be helpful. There was discussion of how members of the community, citizens and employers could be surveyed for their thoughts. It was noted that during the summer months many of the summer residents have returned to town and they would be available to survey.

Nancy Rollins noted that they need to get information out about what they mean by workforce housing as some may think it is a 5-story building like they have in Lebanon, these would be homes where people come to live and be a part of the community. Mr. Fougere agreed and noted there needs to be a mix between owner/occupied units and rental units, some units could be workforce units and some at market rates.

Mr. Nichols noted that when he was at the CAC meeting he tried to explain what he sees as the capital “A” affordable housing, which is the old model subsidized housing versus small “a” affordable under the workforce housing statute. The group agreed that this is a difficult distinction to communicate in layman’s terms, noting that people’s perceptions of workforce housing can be quite different from what it is in reality.

There was a discussion of the “Town of Hopkinton Key Informant Interviews” handout and who the committee should attempt to interview including: employers from varied sectors (retail, healthcare, manufacturing, hospitality, transportation), longtime residents and new residents, young parents, volunteers, high school seniors, school placement staff, welfare & social service people, municipal boards & committees, builders & developers. All members were encouraged to come to the next meeting with 4 or 5 people to interview and 6 good questions to ask to help the group develop a broader survey. There was a discussion about how long each interview would take. All agreed that the scope; what they want to learn from people, is important to be clear on before the interview questions are prepared.

The next meeting will be held on March 10, 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 7:31PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kimberly Hallquist
Town Administrator