

## **Town of Warren Housing Plan Steering Committee**

January 7, 2021

5:00-6:10pm

Meeting held via Zoom

IN ATTENDANCE: Tim Angevine, Diane Engle, Roger Grace, Victoria Sahadevan Fossland, Jack Travers, Missy Woodward, Jocelyn Ayer

### MINUTES:

Reviewed new Housing Plan related resources available:

- Ayer reviewed the resources available to the Committee and members of the public that are now on the NHCOC website at: [www.northwesthillscog.org/housing](http://www.northwesthillscog.org/housing). This includes a link to the Warren housing plan project page, a list of Frequently Asked Questions about Town Affordable Housing Plans, recorded webinars and videos on related topics, and the new “Planning for Affordability in Connecticut Guidebook”.

Reviewed resident housing needs survey responses to date:

- Ayer noted that there were 170 responses to date and reviewed some of the results including:
  - 21 (12%) interested in accessory apartment on their property (most not used for longer term tenants)
  - 57% of respondents not aware of what WAHC is proposing; only 25% are aware.
  - 54% think town needs senior housing options
  - 49% think town needs “downsize” options
  - 47% think town needs rental housing options
  - 58% think cost of housing affects young families
  - 39 respondents provided their email address for further direct communication on this topic.
- The Committee then discussed whether to close survey or keep it open to get more responses. It was decided that we would send the survey out again in hopes of getting more residents to respond and that along with the survey link we’d send along a link to the Frequently Asked Questions and the date for the first public forum on this housing plan.

Reviewed goals and strategies:

- Ayer reviewed the goals and strategies related to meeting Warren’s housing needs from the 2019 Town Plan of Conservation & Development. She also presented example housing goals from the towns of Salisbury, CT, Fairfield, CT and Cornwall, CT. Each of those towns decided to have a number of units as a goal to create over the next 10-year period. The types of strategies designed to meet those goals were also reviewed and discussed briefly including zoning strategies, capacity building strategies, and funding strategies.
- Sahadevan Fossland asked for more details about the project that the Warren Affordable Housing Corporation (WAHC) was proposing on the land that the Town Hall is located on. Travers noted that the Town had agreed some time ago to lease the land to the WAHC for 40 years for \$1/yr so that the WAHC (a private non-profit organization) could build approx. 10 units of housing on about 4 acres for seniors and young people. The committee discussed having a short presentation about this project, like the one the WAHC did some time ago, at the first public forum on the housing plan for those residents who don’t yet know about this.

Began planning for public outreach forums:

- Ayer reviewed the idea of having 3 public forums during the course of this planning process to develop the towns housing plan. The first forum could review FAQs, housing needs data and survey responses, and the WAHC's project. The second could review and solicit feedback on possible goals and strategies that could be included in the Housing Plan, and the third could present the draft Plan with another opportunity to provide feedback. Ayer asked the Committee to think of ways to make the forums interesting enough that residents would want to attend (they will be held via Zoom due to the ongoing pandemic) and to think of ways to get the word out to as many residents as possible.
- It was decided that the Committee would try to hold the first public forum in mid to late February on a weekday evening.

Next steps and next meeting date:

- Ayer will send a draft agenda and possible date for the first public outreach forum to the Committee members.
- Ayer will send revised/updated text soliciting more responses to the Housing Needs survey to Angevine next week including the FAQ link and public forum date.
- Ayer will try to create a webpage for the Warren Affordable Housing Corp. with information on the board members, mission, and project information.
- The next meeting will be held via Zoom on **February 4<sup>th</sup> at 5pm**. All meetings will be noticed by the Town Clerk and are open to the public.