
WASHINGTON HOUSING PLAN

JANUARY 12TH STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING



NHCOG
— Northwest Hills —
Council of Governments

AGENDA

1. Review new Housing Plan related resources available
 - NHCOG website- Housing Page and project webpage
 - Planning for Affordability in Connecticut Guidebook
2. Review resident and employee survey responses to date
 - Discuss whether to close survey(s) or keep open
3. Begin discussion of goals and strategies
4. Outreach & public input forums
5. Next meeting date & Next steps



HOUSING RESOURCES & FAQs

Northwesthillscog.org/housing

- Links to town housing plan project webpages
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Videos and webinars on housing topics
- LINKS- AH Plan Guidebook, Housing Data Profiles, Stories, RHC website, etc.

FAQs

- Why is the Town working on an Affordable Housing Plan?
- What is the role of the town in the creation of affordable housing?
- What IS “Affordable Housing”?
- Will this effect the rural character of my town?
- What does affordable housing look like?

SURVEY RESPONSES TO DATE

Resident Housing Needs Survey

- Goals- start to engage residents in process, hear what they think the needs are + specific needs of their family
- **273 responses to date**
- Review responses- highlights:
 - 53 (19%) interested in accessory apartment on their property (less than half used for long term tenants)
 - 36% have experienced barriers to finding the type of housing they would like to have in town
 - 28% report limited supply of homes in their price range
 - 40% (110) anticipate having to move out of town
 - 65% think town needs “downsize” options
 - 60% think town needs rental housing options
 - 74% think the cost of housing affects young people/families
 - Received 107 email addresses

Employee/Worker Survey

- 46 responses to date
 - 33 responses from “education”
- **Keep surveys open or close?**

2019 AFFORDABLE HOUSING APPEALS LIST*

TOWN	Total Housing Units 2010 Census	Government Assisted	Tenant Rental Assistance	Single Family CHFA/ USDA Mortgages	Deed Restricted Units	Total Assisted Units	Percent Affordable
Morris	1,314	20	4	7	0	31	2.36%
Litchfield	3,975	140	2	25	19	186	4.68%
Washington	2,124	14 **	3	4	23***	44	2.07%
Warren	811	0	0	1	0	1	0.12%
Bethlehem	1,575	24	1	9	0	34	2.16%
Roxbury	1,167	19	0	5	0	24	2.06%

*Updated in March of every year

** Dodge Farm

*** Riverwoods + Church Street

TIMELINE

Housing Needs Assessment

Survey Interviews

DEC- JAN

Develop draft Goals & Strategies

JAN-FEB

Public Input Sessions

FEB-MARCH

Draft Housing Plan

APRIL

Public Input/Revisions

MAY

Adoption Process

JUNE?

- **GOAL:** The goal of this process is “to undertake a proactive Planning process and lay out a strategy for meeting the housing needs of existing and future residents and workers” as required by Section 8-30j of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS).
- Endorsed by Planning Commission; Adopted by BOS

TOWN AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN GOALS & STRATEGIES

DRAFT Table of Contents for PLAN:

- Purpose of Plan
 - Goal, process, steering committee
- Background
 - Town Plan, local housing organization, existing AH
- Housing Needs Assessment Summary
 - First-time homebuyers, workforce rentals, seniors
- Housing Production Goals
- Strategies
 - Zoning
 - Capacity Building
 - Funding resources
- Implementation Plan

Start with 2014 Town Plan Housing section:

ISSUE: High housing prices in Washington are preventing many young families, singles, and other diverse household types from living in the Town.

GOAL: Washington should encourage and enable the development of a wider range of housing types that create opportunities for a more diverse population. In order to accomplish this, the Town's Zoning Regulations must be modified to permit additional housing options in Washington.

What specific issues have you seen in the housing data or survey results that we want this Housing Plan to address?

STRATEGIES FROM 2014 TOWN PLAN

- **Modify Washington's Zoning Regulations to permit denser residential uses** such as condominiums, age- restricted and/or congregate housing, and assisted living facilities by Special Permit **in the village centers.**
- **Restore annual funding to the Housing Commission** to help it pursue affordable housing opportunities. Support the newly created **down payment assistance fund** for first-time low- and moderate-income homebuyers.
- Institute a **payment in lieu of affordable housing program**, with collected funds used to finance affordable housing initiatives.

PLANNING FOR PUBLIC OUTREACH, FORUMS, WORKSHOPS

Possible **FORUMS** (Zoom)

Public forum 1: FAQs, Review housing needs data, survey results, refer to next steps (goals & strategies)

- How does the housing situation effect young people? seniors? (people who could speak to this?)
- How does housing effect education in Washington? (school principal?)
- Why did the Washington Community Housing Trust get started? What projects does it have in the pipeline?

Public forum 2: Draft goals & strategies, have attendees vote and/or provide input through polling

Public forum 3: Present draft Housing Plan, get feedback, invite all town boards & commissions

Possible **WORKSHOPS/ CASE STUDY CONVERSATIONS**

- What does affordable housing look like in NWCT's small towns? Case studies
- How is affordable housing funded in NWCT's small towns?
- Fair Share Housing Model for CT's towns
- Why is it important to not just have single family, 3+ bedroom housing in my town? Or meeting the housing needs of young adults and young families in NWCT

DISCUSS: Topics, Possible dates, other forms of outreach

THE WAY FORWARD

A New Narrative for Housing in Fairfield County



In order to build public will for the creation and preservation of equitable housing options for residents of all incomes in Fairfield County, we need a new narrative.



Put the “Big Rocks” in First: Trust, Stake, Belonging

- ▶ Craft a case that connects to people’s values and mobilizes them to action.
- ▶ Center equity as part of every housing conversation.
- ▶ Help people visualize what housing equity means and make sure that everyone can see themselves in that vision!

NEXT STEPS

- Try to get additional employee/worker survey responses
- Possible date for 1st public forum? Late Feb./early March
- Next meeting date: **February 9th**
 - Invite Washington Community Housing Trust & Habitat
 - Plan for 1st public forum
 - Discuss Housing Plan goals

