

AHTFC MEETING September 21, 2023

Town of Stockbridge Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee Meeting held in person and via Zoom, September 21, 2023

Members in Attendance: Member Mills, Chair Warner, Member Wheeler, Member Donovan, Member White, Member Auerbach
Online: Member Ackerman
Consultant Karen Sunnarborg

Approval of the minutes of the meeting held on August 14, 2023. Member Mills made the motion to approve and Member Donovan seconded. All in favor.

Discussion: HHPP Community Housing Survey

Survey monkey results are in but hard copies are not yet. All will be in the final HPP

The members reviewed the initial results. Voter turnout was 77 responses so far from 49 Full Time residents, 13 Part Time residents and 4 Non-residents. The initial survey was shared at the meeting and will be updated at the next meeting after other factors are reviewed.

Importance of Affordable Housing (using a scale of 1 - 10)

60 of 75 8-10 Average 8.4

Issues of concern if Stockbridge lacks housing?

Availability of volunteers for critical services, availability of trades, housing options as one ages or to stay in one's home, ability to run local businesses, accessibility of home improvement services

Comments: Lack of school age children. Age diversity and age disparity and lack of young families.

Greatest challenges to produce affordable housing in Stockbridge?

Top 4 - High cost of land and construction, lack of local support, zoning restrictions, limited town property for development

What kind of housing units should the town focus on?

Top 4 - Clustered homes to preserve open space, Multi-family rental development, Small cottage-style homes or bungalows, ADU's

Comment: Build affordable housing but stay out of the real estate market

The best locations for new housing development might be?

Redevelopment of existing properties, close to but not in downtown, individual projects in existing neighborhoods, undeveloped land

What populations do you believe have the greatest housing need?

Top 4 - Young adults and families, work force, first time home buyers, people on fixed incomes

What do you think are the most important actions or strategies for the town to pursue to address priority housing needs?

Inventory Town-owned property and identify parcels for housing, pursue adaptive reuse of vacant or underutilized nonresidential property, revise zoning to allow development of Cottage Era properties, allow two-family dwellings by-right in more areas, allow more ADU's

Initial Summary:

Focus on housing for young adults, families, and individuals with fixed incomes.

Pursue cluster homes, multi family rentals, and ADU's

Re-develop existing and/or Town owned properties, preserve open space.

Revise zoning to allow development of cottage era properties in keeping with Stockbridge's character.

What's Next?

Look at the obstacles moving forward; mitigation measures; Look at zoning- does it support AH?; Infrastructure challenge; Climate challenge; Transportation; Schools.

When completed the committee can move on to Housing Strategies

Karen will come up with a draft in a month or so

Then finalize a doc and present to the community, then to the Planning Board and Select Board before being submitted to the state.

Look at Lenox, Sheffield, Williamstown, and Gt Barrington's HPPs to see if there is anything we may have missed.

Chair Warner - Lenox, Vice Chair Ackerman - GB, Member Mills - Williamstown, Member Donovan - Sheffield

Do we want to look at strategies used on the Cape? Karen has information.

Next meeting: October 12 at 4:00. Go over what the HPP suggested.

Member Mills:

Community Development Block Grant was granted for help with home rehabilitation...roofs, boilers etc....It's Federal and the State gives it out. Dalton was the administrator of the 4 towns on this grant. It's administered by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. (2020/2021) Was stalled for 18 months during Covid.

Only 3 - 4 Stockbridge residents applied, one got it and didn't pursue it. Total available for Stockbridge would have been about \$330,000 and if you don't sell your house the deferred interest would be forgiven after 15 years. It would have helped 4-5 homes.

Was it brought to the town's attention that the town was losing the grant?

Encourage another round of grant money. Member Mills and White will pursue the question:

Where did the Stockbridge money go?

Vote: all in favor to pay Karen Sunnarborg.

The Lieutenant Governor would like to speak to us via Zomm, the head of the Springfield Office and the new person in the Department of Housing. They will advise us how to get money for housing from them.

Invite: Anne Gobi, Paul Mark, Smitty Pignatelli too. Date to be determined. Discuss among the committee what the priorities of the AHT are before the meeting.

Selectboard is discussing the **RE Transfer Fee**. There are already 18-20 town applications going to the state already and all would be granted at once for permission from the legislature to craft a bylaw that would include a transfer fee. Could be a minimum of 0.5% to Max 2%

Note: Check the town's website for the diagnostic report of the zoning in town.

Member White made a **motion to adjourn**, Member Wheeler seconded. All in favor.
Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by,

Elisabeth Wheeler

Affordable Housing Trust Fund Committee and Planning Board Member

Full meetings of the affordable housing trust fund committee can be viewed at [ctsbvtv.org](https://www.ctsbvtv.org). Go to "government" in the search bar, type in Stockbridge, then look for the date of the meeting you want to listen to.