

# *Committee to Assess and Recommend Strategies for Housing Creation Within the Town*

Selectmen's Conference Room 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Town Hall Building  
367 Main Street Hyannis, MA 02601

Rick Presbrey: Chair  
Councilor Paula Schnepf  
Councilor Betty Ludtke  
Councilor Charles Bloom  
Councilor John Crow  
Councilor Gordon Starr  
Maryann Barboza  
Hilda Haye  
Laura Shufelt

November 25, 2024  
3:00pm

## MEETING MINUTES

Town Council Administrator opened the meeting of the Committee to Assess and Recommend Strategies for Housing Creation Within the Town and made the following announcement:

This meeting is being recorded and will be rebroadcast on the Town of Barnstable's Government Access Channel. In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Section 20, the Administrator must inquire whether anyone else is recording this meeting and, if so, please make their presence known. This meeting will be replayed via Xfinity Channel 8 or high-definition Channel 1072. It may also be accessed via the Government Access Channel live video on demand archives on the Town of Barnstable's website: <https://streaming85.townofbarnstable.us/CablecastPublicSite/?channel=1>

The administrator to the Town Council took Roll call, all members present in the Selectmen's Conference Room except for Hilda Haye who arrived at 3:30pm; Also in Attendance James Kupfer, Director, Planning and Development.

**PURPOSE:** Recommend strategies for the creation of housing to serve year-round residents and seasonal workers. The committee shall review the Cape Cod Commission's Regional Housing Strategy, <https://www.capecodcommission.org/our-work/regional-housing-strategy> and the proposed Massachusetts State Housing Bond Bill <https://www.mass.gov/lists/housing-bond-bill> and the Town's Housing Production Plan, <https://www.townofbarnstable.us/Departments/planninganddevelopment/Projects/Housing-Production-Plan-Update.asp> with a goal of recommending 2-4 strategies for the Town to adopt, along with recommendations for implementation and resources needed.

Chair of Committee opened public comment and wanted to leave public comment open for the duration of the meeting. There was no public comment

Chair of Committee asked for the extension for this committee to the end of January  
Chair of Committee felt the goals of this committee would be to offer three ideas that will be achievable and that will improve the situation of the towns housing issue.

Chair of the Committee mentioned Mr. Dewey's presentation on the Provincetown housing ideas, and asked the committee members if they felt that that would be something that could work here in Barnstable. Maryann Barboza has been working with some other community members on presenting an idea to the committee and would like the opportunity to present the idea at the next meeting with the Chair's permission. Maryann wanted to correct the public comment section of the last meeting when Mr. Schwaab stated that he and Maryann had a conversation and wanted him to relay a message to the committee, she wanted to make clear that that never happened, and that she never asked him to speak for her, and never would, if she wanted to say something she would say it on her own.

Councilor Ludtke felt there was some merit to the plan landlords offering renter to local folks and receiving the exemption if you're the homeowner. She would like to know who runs the numbers and would like to see some data on that. We can't make decisions without numbers being run.

Councilor Bloom agrees with Councilor Ludtke, he remembers Mr. Dewey saying it is not a solution but it's a tool, and he also would like to see the numbers.

Councilor Starr asked is there a number that would make the homeowner switch from a seasonal to a year-round rental. Committee member Laura Shufelt said no, there isn't a number per say, it's out of the goodness of someone's heart to say the area needs housing, I am going to turn this into a year-round, the exemption helps but it doesn't lower things drastically. Ms. Shufelt also said it takes special legislation to turn the tax exempt around.

Ms. Barboza feels that this community is not ready to have people move into a community that the individuals have money. The money drives the decisions, so until you can change that attitude then we must also consider rent caps, the rents here are out of control here. There are residents in this town that do not want low-income individuals in their neighborhoods.

Chair of the committee mentioned that he has attended several meetings regarding the Marstons Mills property that use to have a school on it 14 acre parcel, and the Planning and Development Department presented three concept plans at these meetings, (1) was nothing but recreational fields and no housing at all (2) some housing, and recreational (3) recreational with limited housing, at this meeting there were some that attended with signs they held up that said no housing, and some of the people that spoke about no housing here received loud applause; there were probably about 6 people who wanted housing.

Chair of Committee said when making these decisions we also must balance the need with the want.

Ms. Shufelt said that land is a town asset, and as a committee we were charged to look at town assets to assess the land for housing.

Councilor Schnepf said we should keep the vote broad and say that all town assets should be evaluated for housing

Councilor Crow also attended the meetings, and the people opposing this for housing were not money people, they looked like contractors, he would like the Councilors from Marstons Mills to talk to the constituents and find out why they are opposed to housing, or why they would like to see it, and feels that when the Councilors do this, those Councilors should come back and report to the other Council members what they found out from those conversations. Councilor Crow would like to see housing there.

Hilda would like to make a recommendation from this committee that also looks at the housing and the recreation combined. It looked at a plan that had maybe 18 houses and recreation, that is not a lot of housing.

Ms. Shufelt made a motion to say that this Committee recommends strategy for using town owned land to develop affordable housing (80% median or less for homeownership and renters) this motion was seconded by Hilda Haye.

Councilor Starr said he felt uncomfortable voting on anything until a list was formulated from the committee on the ideas to put forth. Councilor Starr would like to add transferable tax to the list for consideration of recommendations.

Councilor Schnepf said we also need to put in some sense of momentum or assertion when motions are made so that it is a solid motion. She also agrees that the committee should look at a list of strategies to recommend and vote on with some discussion as well.

Councilor Crow would also like a list of ideas presented to the committees so that we can talk and vote on them.

Paul Phalan commented that he agrees, he would like to see a white board or something with a list of ideas that this committee is considering and would like to talk about to recommend. He likes all the conversation that is taking place, but there have been a lot of suggestions made tonight, so it would benefit us in the public if there was a list compiled somewhere.

Committee member Shufelt withdrew her motion.

Committee member Barboza does not want to keep meeting to meet and have nothing come out of it. She has been on several committees, and they meet forever, and nothing gets done.

Chair of Committee mentioned the new State Housing bill and one of the major changes made to it was the home no longer must be occupied by the homeowner, and our ordinance in Barnstable says it does, so the town is going to have to amend ours to match the states and wanted to mention this to the members of the committee. Chair of Committee also mentioned that if a homeowner has extra rooms in his or her home, they can rent out that bedroom, they just must register it with the town.

Councilor Crow would like to see the town explore what options we do have as town with the new state bill, and hopes the town is exploring this.

Councilor Ludtke would like to see a short-term rental policy, because she does not believe there is a policy or anything that regulates the short-term rentals. Councilor Crow agrees, this town needs some sort of policy to regulate these short-term rentals.

Committee member Shufelt stated that short term rentals is not part of this committee's charge, and therefore making a recommendation to the short-term rentals is not something this committee should be considering.

Councilor Crow said we should incorporate the discussion in the charge of this committee because he believes that there are too many short-term rentals in the town which is causing a shortage of housing because investors have come in and bought the housing stock and now use it as a short-term rental making huge rents. He also does not believe rent control is a solution, because it causes landlords to back out of renting and cause a shortage in housing.

Maryann Barboza does not agree with Councilor Crow and believes that a rent cap is necessary. Greed and to keep a certain look to a community also drives up the rent prices so that the lower income individuals can't afford it.

Chair of Committee started the discussion on the review of proposed taxes on sales of homes worth \$1m or more and how that money could be used. Committee member Shufelt stated that this refers to the real estate transfer tax, which is not part of the Affordable Homes Act, there is discussion of Special Legislation to do this, but the Town Council would have to take a vote to move it forward. There was also discussion of making part of the discussion for communities designated as a seasonal community Barnstable does not meet currently the definition of a seasonal community, but the town can ask that Barnstable is, but the process has not been established that yet, and there has not been any town in Massachusetts with that designation yet, the bill has not come out of committee.

Chair of Committee introduced the next Item which is the discussion of proposing a minimum percentage of affordable units for each development as well as requirements for maximum household incomes. Councilor Crow stated that there is such a variation because it depends on the building cost, and whether the developer can recoup cost, the more affordable the developer has, the less is the return of investment. Councilor Crow would like to see that number higher, but because of the cost to the developer, it makes it very tough and may discourage a builder if they know coming in for a project, they need to make 30% affordable, and how do they subsidize the income to make up the increase.

Committee Shufelt said an economy feasibility assessment study needs to be done, which looks at the individual community and cost it is to build, then gathers the median income. We need the affordability to be consistent, and right now it's not. The Town needs a Housing Coordinator to look at these issues from the front and back. It would benefit the town to have one so that that person can monitor the affordable housing stock, because we do not know how many we currently have.

Corey Pacheco, Senior Planner, Planning and Development Department will provide a list of the suggestions made tonight to have the committee look at those: the list to date is

- (1) Residential exemption
- (2) Town owned properties for affordable housing development
- (3) Short Term Rental Restrictions
- (4) Transfer tax
- (5) Increase in the Inclusionary Affordable Ordinance
- (6) Higher staff to prioritize to monitor stock and enforcement

Chair of Committee asked for a motion to accept the meeting minutes of October 07, 2024, Maryann Barboza made the motion, this was seconded by Councilor Bloom, all members voted in favor of accepting the meeting minutes as written.

A motion was made by Councilor Paula Schnepf, this was seconded by Councilor Crow, all members voted in favor of adjournment at 5:13pm

ADJOURNMENT 5:13pm