

**TOWN OF GRANBY**  
**AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN COMMITTEE**  
**January 13, 2022**  
**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Chris Chinni, Monica Logan, Rose Mouning, Mark Neumann, Patricia Sansone and Anna Sogliuzzo; Abigail Kenyon, Director of Community Development; and Sandra Yost, Director of Human Services

C. Chinni called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

**Approval of Minutes**

On a MOTION by A. Sogliuzzo, seconded by P. Sansone, the committee voted (6-0-0) to approve the January 6, 2022 special meeting minutes as presented.

**Presentation and Discussion**

Donald Poland, PhD, AICP of Goman + York met with the Affordable Housing Committee and presented *Understanding Housing Markets and Affordable Housing: Economics and Financial Feasibility*. The purpose of the presentation was to explore and explain housing markets, affordable housing and the financial feasibility of affordable housing. Some of Dr. Poland's conclusions and opinions include:

- Quality affordable housing provides social and economic stability for households, families and communities.
- If Granby does not have housing stock to meet the needs and wants of the workforce, it will be difficult to retain and attract jobs. Housing, including affordable housing, is critical for fostering economic prosperity, generational wealth and upward mobility.
- Housing density and rent is highest at the center (urban core) and lowest at the periphery (rural fringe) of the metropolitan area. Housing costs adjust for location and time/distance to employment opportunities. Granby is a rural fringe community. As income increases, land consumption and floor area consumption increase. Wealthy households consume more land and more floor area than households of lesser means. Homes in Granby are 90.6% single-family detached, 90.3% owner-occupied and 84% have three bedrooms or more.
- Affordable housing statutes narrowly define affordable housing and only considers housing receiving government assistance (specific programs or deed restrictions); does not include market-rate housing that sells or rents at affordable to low- and moderate-income households; and does not measure supply, demand or need for affordable housing.
- Housing affordability is a problem of both income and housing cost. A household may earn too little to afford housing or housing is too expensive for households of certain income levels to afford. The solutions are to raise income or lower the cost of housing.
- Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-30g has promoted the development of affordable housing since 1989. The statute includes an appeals procedure to override local zoning denials of affordable housing proposals without just cause, ensuring that municipalities cannot deny a proposal unless there is a meaningful health or safety concern. If at least 10% of a community's housing stock is "affordable", the community is exempt from 8-30g. Granby has 3.289% qualified affordable housing.
- Accessibility to employment opportunities is key to providing lower-income households economic opportunity. Affordable housing policy must seek to strike a balance between the clustering of poverty in the core and the economic isolation of low-income households in the periphery.
- Demand for affordable housing is outpacing supply by double and the greatest housing affordability need is at the lowest income levels.

- Provisions requiring large floor areas and affordable units to be the same size as market rate units undermine financial feasibility and affordability. Allowing for differences in size of affordable units would improve financial feasibility.
- The 10% affordable housing threshold is unachievable for many communities – a well-intended, but unrealistic attempt at a fair share approach to affordable housing. This is not a “free pass” for higher income/peripheral communities to not provide affordable housing. Adjusting the 10% provision to a more achievable level could improve the outcome of providing affordable housing. A requirement that a development must include 30% affordable units can undermine the financial feasibility for developers especially if units must be affordable for those making 60% or less of the area median income.
- Actions to address housing affordability may include: remove Special Permit use requirement for multi-family and affordable housing developments; eliminate minimum unit-size requirements for all housing units; allow affordable units to be smaller than market-rate units; allow accessory dwelling units as-of-right; reduce excessive parking and design requirements that artificially inflate development costs; encourage/permit affordable housing through a zoning regulation aimed at providing affordable housing.
- Explore options for conversion of existing units to affordable units: purchase or lease of existing units; provide tax abatements for conversion or creation of affordable units from existing units; waive permit fees; create an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

The full presentation can be accessed on the Town website at <https://www.granby-ct.gov/affordable-housing-plan-committee>.

### **Discuss Next Steps**

Next steps for the committee will include:

- Discuss and finalize the Community Value Statement.
- Discuss plan recommendations in detail including information from the recent presentations.
- Schedule next presentation with Don Poland.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for Thursday, February 3, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

### **Adjournment**

On a MOTION by A. Sogliuzzo, seconded by M. Logan, the committee voted (5-0-0) to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 p.m. (R. Mouning left the meeting at 6:30.)

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Mazzotta  
Recording Secretary