

**Affordable Housing Plan Committee
Regular Meeting**

June 10, 2021 - 6:30 PM

This meeting was held and recorded via Zoom.us and is available as a recording.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86772002073>

Meeting ID: 867 7200 2073

Phone 1-929-205-6099

Present: Bob Valentine, First Selectman; Mark Harris, Selectman; Jocelyn Ayer, NHCOC (Northwest Hills Council of Governments); Cindy Barrett, Planning & Zoning; Todd Carusillo, Economic Development Commission; Bill Commerford, Economic Development Commission; Martin Connor, Town Planner; Josephine Jones, Goshen Housing Trust; and Chris Sanders, Goshen Housing Trust and Economic Development Commission. **Others Present:** Martha Harris

1. CALL TO ORDER: Meeting was called to order by Bob Valentine at 6:30 PM.

2. APPROVAL OF THE 5/13/21 MEETING MINUTES:

IN A MOTION made by Mark Harris, seconded by Josephine Jones, it was voted to approve the meeting minutes of May 13, 2021, as presented. Vote unanimous.

Jocelyn Ayer, NHCOC, asked to show a slide presentation on agenda item, **5. SUMMARY OF HOW GOSHEN'S HOUSING STOCK COMPARES TO NEIGHBORING TOWNS**, before agenda item 3, as it summarizes findings from the "*Housing NWCT - A Regional Housing Needs Assessment*" that informs some of the strategies for the housing plan. The full 17-page Report is available at www.northwesthillscog.org/housing and it includes information on town-by town comparison data, regional analysis and is being used for municipal housing plans.

Jocelyn presented information on the following main issues that summarize where Goshen's housing needs and housing stock compare to neighboring towns in the region:

COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS: Jocelyn noted that over 10,500 households in our 21 town region, report being "housing cost burdened" which means that the households are paying more than 30% of their income on housing costs. As reported previously, Goshen has about 30% of its residents reporting that they are housing cost burdened which is 174 households.

HOME SALES PRICES: Also reported was that home sale prices have been rising over the last five years with much of the rise occurring over the past year of 2020 and Goshen's median sales price over the past five years has risen over \$133,000. Bob asked how current the data was and Jocelyn stated that it represents data from 2016 to 2020. The report shows data on the median home sale price changes over time in each city or town, the median sales price for 2016, average sales price for 2020, and change from 2016-2020.

ACCESS TO OWNERSHIP: There is quite a large gap between what the median renter household could afford and what they would have to pay for the median priced home in 2020 in Goshen and that gap is \$332,000. Jocelyn noted that over half of the young people between the ages of 19 and 34 in Litchfield County reside in households with their parents due to lack of affordable housing and limited rental housing options.

RENTAL AVAILABILITY: Rental housing options are limited and the rental housing that does exist is very expensive. Goshen has 3% of its housing stock being rentals and this is considered very low. Statewide data shows that 30% of people are renting in the State due to housing costs, college debt burden and lack of appropriately sized homes.

SEASONAL HOUSING: Further limitations are being caused in the rental housing stock due to the increase in short term rentals as opposed to being available for occupancy by year-round residents.

PAGE 2-AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN COMMITTEE 6/10/2021

Jocelyn shared preliminary information on a zoning analysis project they are working on regarding the types of residential uses permitted in each of the 21 towns in the NHCOC and whether they are allowed by zoning permit versus special permit process. A short discussion was had

3. DISCUSS DRAFT STRATEGIES FOR THE HOUSING PLAN:

The draft of strategies for the Housing Plan was emailed on June 7 for review with the Agenda for the meeting. Jocelyn noted that the draft has not really changed much since the last meeting. Bob noted the importance of single family scattered home options being at the top of the list as well as all of the other options. The five overall goals and strategies which had been presented and discussed at the last meeting are:

- **Support affordable, scattered site single family homeownership options**
- **Provide funding support** - Bob noted the importance of keeping the Land Acquisition Fund in the plan for Goshen in regards to possible changes in the future and the uses of it by nonprofits. Discussion was had regarding the funding challenges to acquire land for affordable housing or land preservation facing nonprofits such as the Goshen Housing Trust and Goshen Land Trust. Further discussion was had about a Revolving Loan Fund, possible changes to the LAFund, possible proposals to be presented in the future to Planning and Zoning in regards to zoning regulations and affordable housing. The concept of limited development of land trust parcels was noted by Jocelyn.
- **Encourage the development of "downsizing" options (Unit goal? These are typically not "Affordable Housing" according to the State's definition of affordable housing but would provide housing options)**
- **Support the development of affordable rental opportunities for seniors and young people/families**
- **Help keep seniors in their homes**

4. DISCUSS NEXT STEPS AND PLANNING FOR FORUMS TO SEEK RESIDENT INPUT ON STRATEGIES:

Jocelyn suggested another "Community Wide Forum" where strategies would be explained and that these have been done by Zoom meetings in other towns and the polling feature has been employed to gain feedback regarding the strategies and to continue community conversation regarding the plan. Discussion was had regarding the strategy in the plan of identifying areas in town for multi-family housing and where these areas might be based on septic capacities.

5. SUMMARY OF HOW GOSHEN'S HOUSING STOCK COMPARES TO NEIGHBORING TOWNS: See page 1.

6. NEXT STEPS IN HOUSING PLAN PROCESS AND NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING DATE: Bob asked members to review the draft strategies and to email any comments or suggestions to Jocelyn. The next meeting will be Wednesday, July 8, 2021, at 6:30 PM and it will be a hybrid meeting being held in the Goshen Town Hall Conference Room and on Zoom as well to be inclusive to all residents of the community. A date for the future community forum will be worked on and Jocelyn suggested other means of outreach to residents such as being at the Farmer's Market with fliers or presentations to other committees or Churches in town as possibilities.

7. ADJOURNMENT: **IN A MOTION** made by Chris Sanders, seconded by Josephine Jones, it was voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 PM.

Respectively submitted,

Cynthia Barrett
Cynthia Barrett

Received 6/14/21 9:59 AM

Attest *Raney McDowell* asst.
Goshen Town Clerk