

**Town of Litchfield  
Housing Plan Steering Committee**

January 19, 2022

7:00-8:00pm

Meeting held via Zoom\*

**MINUTES**

In attendance:

**Committee members present:** Will Neary, Cleve Fuessenich, Dean Birdsall, Ted Murphy, Diane Field, Jeff Zullo, Peter Losee and Denise Raap (ex-officio). **Also present** was Jim Simoncelli, Litchfield Housing Authority and Jocelyn Ayer, planning consultant.

The committee reviewed the Litchfield **Resident Housing Needs survey** responses to date. Jocelyn noted that for a 95% confidence level (5% margin of error) they would need 346 responses and they had 351 which was a terrific response rate. She noted that she will send the committee the open ended responses to the survey as well. The Committee then discussed whether to close the survey or keep it open. It was determined that they will keep the survey open for a few more weeks. Diane suggested that they look at the population of people that seem to have the most housing concerns such as the elderly and then see if we needed to get more responses from that population. Denise was surprised that more people who lived with their parents did not respond to the survey. The survey results will be shared with residents at the upcoming town informational forum about the Housing Plan.

Jeff then mentioned that at the last Board of Selectmen meeting there was a conversation about a family in town that had become homeless and how they are trying to assist them. It was agreed that **resources for people who are homeless** or in danger of becoming homeless would be included in this housing plan that the committee is developing. Michael noted that she had three people in the last 5 days come to her needing housing. Jim Simoncelli has the same experience at the Litchfield Housing Authority (LHA) properties and noted the long waiting lists for their properties, some have over 50 people on them. Ted mentioned that he's seen rents in town going up by 30% in the last year.

The Committee then discussed holding an **informational forum on the housing plan**. Jocelyn reviewed a draft agenda for such a meeting and possible topics that could be covered in the meeting including- why are we creating a housing plan, what types of housing does the town need, sharing the survey results, and describing the next steps in the process for creating the housing plan and how residents can provide feedback on the plan. Jocelyn mentioned some communities show the 10 minute video showing affordable housing in small towns in the region. She will email the video link to committee members for them to review prior to the next meeting. Jeff noted that the presentation should note the difference between Section 8 housing and affordable housing and that it would be nice to have prompting questions for the audience after each topic. Jim offered to talk about the LHA properties and their waiting lists. We will also ask Jill or someone else from the Housing Trust to talk about Gagarin Place. They set a date of **March 1 at 7pm** for this meeting. Jocelyn noted that she can draft slides for this presentation which the committee can review at the next meeting.

The committee then reviewed a draft **survey for people who work in Litchfield** but do not currently live in town. Jocelyn noted that this draft included suggestions that Will had provided. Diane asked that a question confirming that the respondents work in town be added. Denise suggested that another option

be added to question 4. It was then discussed that this survey would be distributed through the town's major employers. Ideas for distribution included the schools, LABA, the Litchfield EDC, Rotary, Lions Club, and Stop & Shop. Jocelyn will send out a final version of the survey with an email and poster that can be distributed to Litchfield employers.

The next meeting of the committee will be February 16<sup>th</sup> at 7pm.  
The meeting was adjourned.