

**Town of Litchfield**  
**Housing Plan Steering Committee**

May 18, 2022

7:00pm

Litchfield Firehouse  
258 West Street, Litchfield

In attendance:

**Committee members present:** Cleve Fuessenich, Dean Birdsall, Michael Lyn Cappella, Diane Field, and Denise Raap (ex-officio). **Also present** was Jim Simoncelli, Litchfield Housing Authority; Jill Musselman, Litchfield Housing Trust and Jocelyn Ayer, planning consultant.

Sixteen (16) additional residents of Litchfield also attended.

**MINUTES**

Meeting was called to order at 7:05.

Denise Raap welcomed attendees and thanked them for attending. She introduced the Housing Plan Steering Committee members and planning consultant.

J. Ayer then reviewed the **attached slides** with attendees including information about why the town was creating a housing affordability plan, what will be included in this plan, the definition of dedicated affordable housing, and what housing needs the plan was trying to address.

Ayer said that the committee was considering a goal of creating 30 dedicated affordable homes over the next 5 years and asked the attendees if they supported that goal. One of the attendees said that she wanted to know how the committee thought that homes could be created before she expressed whether she would support that goal or not. Ayer said she would then move that question to the end of the presentation and ask again once the strategies had been reviewed.

Ayer then briefly introduced each goal and the strategies that the housing plan steering committee was considering as possible actions to meet that goal. Polling was conducted by the raising of hands.

Following summarizes the results of the polling:

- Support for the goal of expanding affordable homebuyer options- 22 yes, 0 no, 1 not sure
- Did you know about the Litchfield Housing Trust- 22 yes
- Support for expanding rental options for young adults and seniors- 23 yes, 0 no, 1 not sure
- Support for adding units at Wells Run and utilizing town ARPA funding to assist- 20 yes, 3 no
- Support for the idea of utilizing Bantam Annex for housing options- 19 yes, 3 no, 3 not sure

(There was a fair amount of discussion and questions about this possible strategy. One attendee pointed out that there was a town facilities committee currently considering uses for Bantam Annex and that this use has not come up as a priority use. It was suggested that the Housing Plan Steering Committee talk to the facilities committee about this.)

- Support for the creation/facilitation of accessory apartments- 6 yes, 0 no, 13 not sure

(There were many questions around these strategies to facilitate the creation of accessory apartments. It was pointed out that the Planning & Zoning Commission had recently opted out of the provisions that

would have allowed accessory apartments without a special exception. It was noted that many accessory apartments in town are used as Airbnb's, guest houses, or only for family members. It was questioned whether the town could impose a tax on Airbnb's if they wanted to.)

- Support for preserving the towns existing dedicated affordable homes- 21 yes, 0 no, 1 not sure (It was noted that the Litchfield Housing Authority could use another volunteer board member and if anyone was interested, they should contact Jim Simoncelli for more information.)

There was a discussion around strategies for making sure the plan is implemented including potentially appointing an implementation committee. Some suggested that this housing plan steering committee become the implementation committee since it has representatives from many of the boards/commissions/organizations that would need to be involved with implementation. Another suggestion was to have the economic development commission take this on.

Finally, attendees were polled on their support for a goal of creating 30 dedicated affordable homes over the next 5 years. 20 said yes they supported that goal, 4 people said they would support a higher number of units created over the next 5 years and 0 said they would want a lower number of units.

Ayer then explained the next steps in the process for developing the town's housing affordability plan noting that they expect to have a full draft plan ready in July.

J. Ayer said she needed to request that the Committee change the date of their next meeting. She will poll committee members on their availability for a June special meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20pm.