

AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST BOARD & AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

JOINT MEETING

Minutes

August 1, 2023.

The Affordable Housing Trust Board (AHTB) met jointly with the Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) on Tuesday, August 1, 2023 at 4:30 PM in the Nauset Room at Town Hall and via Zoom. Real-time public access was provided by Orleans Channel 18 on the Town website.

Attending for the Affordable Housing Committee were Chair Nancy Renn, Bill Stoeckert, Fran McClennen, and Susan Carlson. Elizabeth Paine arrived at about 5pm. Attending for the AHTB were Chair McClennen, Ward Ghory, Michael Herman, and Tom Jurkowski in the room and Alexis Mathison, Matt Cole, Katy Wibby and Henry Brehm online. AHC Select Board liaison Andrea Reed attended in addition to Marsha Allgeier and George Meservey from the Planning Department.

Call to Order –

Ms. Renn called the meeting of the Affordable Housing Committee to order at 4.31pm. Mr. McClennen called the meeting of the AHTB to order at 4.32pm.

Housing Needs Assessment presentation and discussion re: Deliverable #3

Housing Stock Goals - Laura Smead, JM Goldson Consulting, conducted a “walk through” of the draft of the *Housing Stock Goals* with significant discussion and input from all members. It was noted that the report focused not on *Affordable* housing stock goals but overall housing stock goals for the town of Orleans. This needs to be clearly stated at the outset of the document.

A. Goal 1: Incentivizing the preservation and creation of year-round “missing middle” housing units, especially near the town center.

It was suggested that more specifics regarding zoning strategies or changes should be included in this section. There was some clarification of the readiness of town sewer to support new units in the town center and how many units could be added.

B. Goal 2: Increase the proportion of year-round housing stock available for rent.

Discussion sought to clarify the cost burdens for renters and how renting provides (usually) a point of entry into the community prior to possible future purchase. Clarification is needed regarding the “affordability gap”. It was agreed it would be more helpful to include clear and plain language to quantify the number of rental units needed and at what income levels.

C. Goal 3: Use policy and zoning strategies to support healthy aging in the community by enabling residents to “age in place” and expand the number of smaller units available to Orleans’ residents, especially accessible units.

(Elizabeth Paine arrived)

Discussion sought to clarify the many options in this section. The sections should articulate the need to ensure housing transferred/sold in the down-sizing process would be made available to year-round residents/community members rather than investors in the summer rental business only. Available housing is needed for one or two resident-households who are aging and/or accessibility-challenged. A build-out analysis would help in developing strategies to address this goal.

D. Goal 4: Understand cost-burdened homeowner needs and continue to support low-income homeowners and Goal 5: Preserve and increase the proportion of deeply subsidized year-round housing stock available to extremely low income households.

It was generally felt the charts were difficult to understand. It was suggested that the more recent data from the 2021 Cape Cod Commission Housing Profile for Orleans would be more helpful and familiar to residents. Some discussion occurred around improved marketing/communication of programs that assist the cost-burdened with home-ownership or rehabilitation.

E. Goal 6: Investigate housing needs to support families with children.

Discussion about this section touched on the need to clearly state the challenge of affordable housing to families with median income. A broader discussion focused on the need to clearly state all goals with action points that move toward solutions in housing. This is instead of using verbs like “investigate” which say less about solving a problem and more about identifying a problem.

Ms. Allgeier restated some of the goals more basically as:

1. Diversify missing middle housing stock.
2. Drive rentals for the missing middle.
3. Deliver smaller, accessible housing for the aging population.

The sense of the meeting was to state goals more simply and in actionable terms.

F. Goal 7: Support a viable economy.

Discussion continued about creating a Goals document based on data but more goal-oriented than data-oriented. In summary, both committees offered recommendations to help develop an even more effective document to guide Orleans’ housing needs.

Specialized Opt-In Energy Code- Introductory Information

(Alexis Mathison left the meeting).

Roger McDaniel, Chair of the Energy and Climate Action Committee, presented about the Specialized Opt-in Energy Code which is currently planned for submission for approval at the autumn Town meeting. He sought input from both committees. Wellfleet and Truro have already adopted the Specialized Opt-in Code to support Massachusetts' objective to reach Net Zero by 2050. Much discussion followed as committee members sought to balance the pressing need to advance the development of affordable housing rapidly (particularly Pennrose/West Rd and HAC/107 Main St.) with the desire to support energy efficiency. It was clarified that, if passed, the Specialized Opt-in Energy Code would not impact the two developments currently at the financing stage, since the proposed code will take effect in July 2024. After much discussion about the cost-burden to developers and options for incentives and funding support, committee members generally recognized the potential benefits of the Specialized Opt-in Energy Code for achieving net zero goals adopted in Massachusetts.

Adjourn AHTB meeting.

Mr. Herman moved to adjourn the AHTB meeting at 6:05pm. Mr. Ghory seconded the motion. All voted Aye. Motion carried. 7-0-0.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Fountain and Ward Ghory*

