

**MINUTES**

**HOUSING COMMITTEE  
PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**CITY HALL, MUNICIPAL COMPLEX, 1 JUNKINS AVENUE**

**8:30 A.M.**

**MAY 11, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councilor Perkins, Chair; Councilor Spear; Councilor Dwyer, Commissioner Kennedy; David Witham, BOA Chair; Rick Taintor, Planning Director; and Jessa Berna, Planner I

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** John Ricci, Planning Board Chair; and Nancy Cobert-Puff, Deputy City Manager

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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

1. Councilor Perkins called the meeting to order. She gave an overview of the need for more affordable housing in the City and listed the three committee objectives: 1. Identify three new areas in the City for either incentive zoning or village centers, with the goal of building authentic neighborhoods. 2. Identify the components that make a desirable neighborhood. 3. Make recommendations to Staff on how to implement the components identified in Objective #2 in the areas identified in Objective #1.
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**II. SCOPE OF WORK AND OBJECTIVES**

1. Mr. Taintor gave a presentation for history and context. He started with a presentation housing data and zoning. He said that there was a lot of growth in the early 2000's and approximately 12,000 new units are anticipated from 2010-2020. A significant number of homeowners in the city are housing cost burdened, paying more than 30% of their income to housing, particularly those making less than \$50,000. He also said that the city does have and allow for a diversity of housing types. However, higher densities are mostly restricted to areas proximate to the downtown.

Next, Mr. Taintor reviewed the Planning Department's 2010 Neighborhood Zoning Study which gave an overview of nonconforming lots throughout the city and proposed creating additional zoning districts more consistent with existing patterns. These changes would reduce nonconformities and decrease the burden for homeowners wishing to make changes to their properties, but would also allow for increased density and create a more complicated zoning map.

In the third portion of the presentation Mr. Taintor summarized a presentation New Hampshire Housing presented to the Planning Board in September of 2015. He explained that Inclusionary Zoning in New Hampshire is very different than in most states because

municipalities are not allowed to mandate affordable housing, but rather offer voluntary incentives such as height and density bonuses. There are incentive bonuses in the Zoning Ordinance right now, but they haven't yet been utilized and may need to be adjusted in order to be more appealing to developers.

In the final portion of Mr. Taintor's presentation he summarized SB 146 – new rules for accessory dwellings. This allows for accessory dwellings in any district that allows for single family residences. Mr. Taintor reviewed the details of the law and outlined the implications of new law.

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**III. MEETING SCHEDULE AND WORK PROGRAM**

1. Brief introductions were made by the committee, and they agreed to the schedule as outlined in Councilor Perkins' memo.
2. The committee discussed the importance of showing successful examples of affordable housing in order to provide a proof of concept for community support. There are already many success examples in the City which can be highlighted.
3. The committee asked for comment from members of the public present. As a follow-up to the PS21 session on affordable housing earlier this year, a citizen-led effort is underway to identify models for various approaches to producing affordable housing. The group will hold a charrette in the next few months to demonstrate how these models might work on specific sites in Portsmouth. In addition, the Workforce Housing Coalition will be holding a charrette in the fall, focusing on redevelopment of the Portsmouth Housing Authority's Gosling Meadows property. The committee asked to be kept informed of any and all ongoing efforts.

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**IV. NEXT STEPS**

1. Councilor Perkins requested that committee members focus on bringing concepts to concrete details. She asked committee members to review the materials provided by Mr. Taintor and come to the next meeting prepared to identify the most effective targeted changes and location.
2. At the request of the committee Planning Staff will create a page for the Housing Committee on the Planning Department website including all materials provided, and any additional materials as needed. Staff will also prepare additional material for the next meeting including maps showing the locations of new dwelling units, the potential sites for accessory dwelling units, and a map of city owned land, referring back to the 2008 study.

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**IV. ADJOURNMENT**

1. The meeting was adjourned.