

# **NEWBURY HOUSING COMMITTEE FAQ**

## **What is the Newbury Housing Committee (NHC)?**

The NHC is an ad-hoc committee of the Newbury Planning Board that was formed to address housing needs in Newbury that are identified in the Newbury Strategic Master Plan (MP) ("Envision Newbury 2027" located on the Town website).

## **Why was the NHC Formed?**

During the development of the Town's most recent MP, affordable, alternative housing was the single most referenced topic by town residents in the "survey" and in "public forums". As a result, in the MP, the highest priority Action Item for both the Planning Board and the Select Board was to review and amend the zoning regulations to encourage development of a variety of housing types beyond single-family residential units. Finally, NH State RSAs (State Regulations) require that all NH towns provide opportunity to create Work Force Housing (WFH). Each town must have land use regulations that permit and support the development of WFH.

## **Who does the NHC report to?**

The NHC reports to the Planning Board but ultimately to the residents of Newbury. Any changes to the Zoning Ordinances that the committee proposes will be presented to the Town at Public Hearings where the residents are free to comment and suggest changes or eliminate the proposal. If the Public Hearing results in a general consensus on the changes or if the Town decides that the changes need to be made the proposed changes will then be voted on in the March Town Meeting. The Town will then vote to approve or disapprove.

## **How was the NHC formed?**

In September 2020 the Newbury Select Board and Planning Board initiated the formation of the Housing Committee. The Committee was formed by posting, on line and in public places, to the town residents for volunteers. Eighteen volunteers stepped forward. Barbara Freeman was asked to chair the Committee because of her experience as a planner and having been a Planning Board Chair in the past.

## **Who is on the NHC?**

Currently the committee is comprised of the following individuals who are all residents of Newbury:

Barbara Freeman, Chair	Wendy Corbyn,
Richard Wright (Planning Board),	Judy Hale,
Joanne Lord, (Planning Board)	Stephanie Spaulding,
Christopher Hernick (Planning Board),	Russell Smith (Planning Board and
Polly Lowe,	Select Board)
Nicole Gage,	Kristen Schultz (Morey)
Matt Mynczywor,	Bruce Healey (Planning Board Chair)
Christopher Millette,	Peter Stanley (Planning Board
Denise Mitchell,	Consultant)
Tom Krebs,	Donna Long (recording secretary)
Alicia Zanderigo,	

In addition, Steve Whitman, of Resilience Planning and Design (RPD), who was consultant for the 2017 Newbury Master Plan (MP), was hired to update the data from the MP and assist the committee with its work.

## **How will the NHC work?**

The committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month via Zoom at 7PM to review and accomplish the work described in the Housing Initiative Scope of Work. All of these meetings are open to the public and have meeting minutes which are then posted on the Town website. There will also be three public meetings to obtain feedback from the wider town at critical stages of the work. Finally there will be one or two Public Hearings to review any proposed changes to the Land Use Regulations proposed by the Committee. The final changes will be brought before the town for vote at 2022 Town Meeting.

The committee is basing all of their work on the Newbury strategic MP that was completed in 2017 with Town wide input and the assistance of Steve Whitman of RPD. We are using these data updated by RPD, and other input provided by town residents.

NHC was charged to focus on and move forward the 2017 Newbury MP “Action Areas” for “Housing and Demographics” (DH 1,2 and 3 in the Plan that you can find on the Town website). In this work the committee will take into account other MP Action Areas that influence and are influenced by housing development in the future (for example: Balancing Newbury’s Resources and Services).

The Committee has developed a scope of work and a work plan. This plan and the MP is available of the Town website.

The intent is to propose some changes to the land use regulations in the early summer. Any significant changes will need further study, which will continue in 2022/23.

### **What is WFH and affordable housing?**

Workforce housing is permanent, year-round housing near employment that is affordable\* for:

- A renter family of 3 making no more than 60% of the area median income
- An owner family of 4 making no more than 100% of the area median income
- Does not include age restricted housing
- Does not include development with greater than 50% of units having less than two bedrooms
- The median income in Newbury is \$93,466. In the State of NH it is \$74,000.

Housing types include but are not limited to starter homes, townhouses, condominiums, apartments and accessory dwelling units.

\*Affordable—no more than 30% of income should be spent on housing (rent + utilities; or mortgage principal and interest, taxes, and insurance).

### **What are the goals for housing numbers and types in Newbury?**

There are no goals for numbers or housing types being set by this committee. The sole responsibility of this committee is to make changes to zoning and other land use tools that Newbury uses to enable developers to consider building different types of housing. That is the responsibility we have as a town by State RSAs. We are not developers nor can we create/control development.

### **Will environmental impacts, be considered?**

We will be working from the existing zoning regulations and the MP, both of which protect our natural resources. We will not be suggesting eliminating any of the existing restrictions.

### **How do I get involved?**

If you would like to get involved or attend any meeting, contact Barbara Freeman at [www.mehrenfreeman@aol.com](mailto:www.mehrenfreeman@aol.com).