

**TOWN OF WOLFEBORO  
PLANNING BOARD  
October 17, 2023  
APPROVED MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Kathy Barnard called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

**II. Introduction of Planning Board Members**

**Members Present:** Kathy Barnard, Chair; Doug Breskin, Vice-Chair; Brad Harriman, Selectmen's Representative; John Thurston, Roger Murray, Vaune Dugan, Members; Julie Jacobs, Steve Webster, Jane Nielsen, Alternates.

**Member Absent:** Peter Goodwin, Member.

**Staff Present:** Tavis Austin, Director of Planning and Development, Michaela Beckwith, Recording Secretary.

*Kathy Barnard appointed Jane Nielsen, Alternate, to sit in for Peter Goodwin, Member.*

**III. Public Forum on Affordable Housing**

Kathy Barnard stated the Board is holding a public meeting to discuss housing and hear thoughts from the public regarding housing needs and how the Board should proceed. She stated last year the Board agreed to review sections of the zoning regulations that relate to housing since many people are finding it difficult to find affordable housing and housing in general in their area and in Wolfeboro. She stated there is a State statute that states each municipality needs to provide reasonable and realistic opportunities for the development of workforce housing. She stated the Board is aware of the NH Housing report and the Lakes Region Planning Commission Housing Needs Assessment. She stated the Board reviewed various ordinances and adopted Inclusionary Housing (2009), Accessory Dwelling Unit (2017), and Multifamily Dwelling.

Doug Breskin stated he believes most residents want greater housing opportunity, both rental and purchase. He stated he is interested to know what ideas could be developed to encourage additional housing which may be done through changes to Town ordinances to ease development restrictions or by financial incentives offered by the Town, State, or other means. He provided examples of what could be done to current existing lots within the Town of Wolfeboro given current zoning regulations.

Kathy Barnard stated a representative from the Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC) is present.

Christine Marion, LRPC, stated there is a demand for housing in the Town, Lakes Region, State and across the country. She stated there is also a demand for seasonal housing due to the tourism in the region. She reviewed the criteria that is reviewed relative to housing in the region and noted that Wolfeboro is one of the lead communities trying to address the issue. She thanked the Board for taking action to approve and adopt the Housing Needs Assessment of the Lakes Region. She stated the LRPC worked together with other planning commissions to develop a Housing Needs Assessment; noting by 2040 the State

estimating that there will be approximately 90,000 additional units of all price points that are required throughout the State.

Vaune Dugan questioned if future mandates from the State may influence every town in NH relative to increased housing.

Christine Marion stated within the RSA there is a requirement for workforce housing. She stated the Towns must also allow for a certain amount of multifamily housing. She stated the Towns have to assess their ordinances for any obstacles to providing workforce housing.

*Kathy Barnard opened the forum for public comment.*

Suzanne Ryan stated there are differences between the types of housing and criteria associated with inclusionary housing (RSA 674:21) and workforce housing (RSA 674:58-61), and she asked what the Planning Board intends to propose. She asked if the Board votes to adopt changes to the ordinance or if such occurs at Town Meeting.

Tavis Austin stated Town meeting.

Kathy Barnard stated the Board is taking comments from the public for consideration of potential zoning changes.

Vaune Dugan stated the Board is trying to increase housing opportunities and comply with State mandates. She stated the Board has to determine what to do to improve the situation.

Mary Schilleriff stated her opinion is her own and is representing herself. She asked how the Board is taking into consideration the impact of insufficient housing as a matter of public health, speaking specifically to the information that came out of the Center for Disease Control Morbidity and Mortality weekly report of April 28, 2023, titled Experiences of Unstable Housing among High School Students Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2021). She reviewed the findings of the report.

Kathy Barnard confirmed Ms. Schilleriff would like the Board to consider the impact of insufficient housing as a matter of public health.

Peter Cooke, 117 North Main Street, asked how the Board can discuss the availability of affordable housing if the Town hasn't addressed short term rental housing and the impact that investor-owned units are having on the housing stock. He stated density is part of the solution and asked why short-term rental housing is not on the top of the Board's list rather than increasing density and if density is an opportunity, the ability to create density comes from the ability to have utilities such as water and sewer to make that happen. He questioned the status of the water and sewer study and if there are any results that could be shared with the public.

Sabet Stroman stated issues that arise from short term rentals should be addressed. She referenced the Short-Term Rental Committee and reviewed excerpts from minutes of that Committee's meeting(s); noting that Committee has since disbanded. She recommended the establishment of a committee that does not include members who have rental properties (a group with no ownership that researches the matter). She referenced and reviewed a 63-page document from the NH Housing Authority. She stated the ordinance needs to be clear with the definition of short-term rentals and noted the Town has the opportunity to be active and not passive with regard to the matter.

Vaune Dugan suggested the definition of short-term rental be the first step in the process; noting the definition was included in the ordinance changes that were not approved last year.

Patty Cooke stated her son put in seven offers on properties in Wolfeboro and missed all seven despite escalation clauses and aggressive offers; noting that three of the properties were purchased to become Airbnb locations. She reviewed the definition of “resident” and noted issues with occupancy and reviewed examples she has found on Airbnb’s website. She stated she is unclear as to occupancy given and hopes the Board looks at the issue broadly and defines both residential use and occupancy.

Cynthia Theodore confirmed the public forum is a continuation of last year’s warrant articles that were overwhelmingly voted down by the residents of Wolfeboro. She asked if other towns are having similar discussions and questioned the Board’s definition of affordable housing. She asked if the Town is looking for affordable or workforce housing. She asked what happened to the development proposal on Pine Hill Road.

Kathy Barnard stated the Board is receiving comments from the public as to what they feel the Board should be looking at. She stated the proposed development does not have Planning Board approval.

Roger Murray stated that proposal is not moving forward.

Doug Breskin stated the Board is looking to restart the discussion the Board had last year and the beginning of this year on the warrant articles. He stated the development on Pine Hill Road is not moving forward and noted such does not have anything to do with the Planning Board rather, that is a commercial issue that the developer is dealing with.

Cynthia Theodore questioned phase three of the Harriman Hill development and when such would become available.

Roger Murray stated this project has been approved by the Board.

Doug Breskin stated questions may be asked however, the Board may not have the answers this evening.

Vaune Dugan stated the Town and the Planning Board are not responsible for developing properties. She stated the Board hears applications and responds based on the rules set forth in the zoning documents.

Maggie Stier stated it would be wonderful if the Town had a housing authority that took upon itself to create housing and challenged the Town to develop a housing commission.

Anne Blodget asked the Board to determine the following items in regards to affordable housing: projected housing needs, long term rentals, short term rental housing market, surrounding towns and their capacity, and revisit the chart of the voting ballot last year. She requested a spreadsheet of housing inventory and research.

Kathy Barnard stated 70% of the employed work in town.

Tavis Austin stated Ms. Blodget is referring to the Regional Housing Needs Assessment: noting that 190 units are recommended in the next 10 years.

Anne Blodget requested the Regional Housing Needs Assessment be provided to the public via the Town's website. She stated she agrees with previous comments regarding short-term rentals.

John Sandeen recommended improving zoning ordinances to increase the housing inventory in Wolfeboro while maintaining the character of the best small resort town in America. He stated if the level of available housing is raised in Wolfeboro and the zoning ordinances have been written correctly, affordable housing will be part of the overall solution. He provided an example of such. He stated the Board needs to determine where additional housing is appropriate, set meaningful zoning ordinances, enforce them fairly, and make incremental changes to the ordinances as necessary.

Brodie Deshaies noted he is speaking as a private citizen. Regarding the statement made about Harriman Hill and that 70% of people who live in Harriman Hill work in Wolfeboro, he stated that although that is true, of the 102 residents of Harriman Hill only thirty are employed therefore, only 22 work in Wolfeboro. He noted those figures are from Lakes Region Developers, Carmen R. Lorentz, Executive Director; noting a fact sheet was provided to his father, Selectman Brian Deshaies. He stated the majority of the residents of Harriman Hill receive their income from Social Security and are not part of the workforce. He stated he is not against housing; noting housing is needed. He questioned the estimated tax impact for infrastructure expansion for high density housing, how much will be collected by impact fees for those developments and, how much by the taxpayers. He stated that unless the taxpayers have those estimates then they cannot make an informed decision on loosening zoning requirements or increasing housing density. He stated taxpayers shouldn't subsidize developers or private enterprises unless it benefits everyone in the community. He stated the current workforce housing development doesn't do enough to increase the capacity of the Town's workforce and noted that the residents of workforce housing may not work in Wolfeboro. He stated neither high density housing nor workforce housing have any guarantees that locals will be filling those housing units. He stated the property taxes collected for high density housing is less than single family homes or duplexes; noting the latter doesn't increase the cost for infrastructure and reviewed immeasurable costs. He reviewed issues associated with costs for increased density housing.

Ann Blodget distributed copies of New Hampshire Housing's "How Do We Talk About Housing?" document to the Board. She questioned whether the Board has contacted schools, businesses and religious organizations and if so, what the Board has learned.

Audrey Cline, recommended the Board develop examples of what inclusionary housing looks like on paper. She stated inclusionary zoning doesn't allow for many affordable housing opportunities and questioned the goal of the Board. She questioned what the Town doesn't have in their ordinances that have prohibited proposed developments. She noted the Board allows for duplexes, ADUs, workforce housing, and inclusionary housing however, the opportunities are not being utilized and recommended a thorough review of the manufactured housing ordinance. She questioned how to incentivize housing for employees of local businesses. She stated last year's proposed ordinance changes were too broad and recommended a definition of short-term rentals; noting issues need to be sorted through and defined.

Troy Lucas, Lucas Roasting Co., reviewed the rental market and wages regarding affordability. He stated if the issue is to be addressed the Town needs to look at lower income affordable housing.

Christine Marion, LRPC, stated there are several towns evaluating housing needs and town ordinances, including Sandwich and Plymouth. She stated LRPC could offer assistance to towns with regard to such.

Kathy Barnard asked Ms. Marion if surrounding towns are working together or with LRPC on the matter of affordable housing.

Christine Marion stated no. She stated the surrounding towns are working independently with the State and receiving funding to address their housing needs. She referenced the State toolbox and resources available from such.

Bobbie Boudman questioned the chart Tavis Austin referenced in regards to the 190 units.

Christine Marion addressed the question of 190 units, noting the chart includes projected housing needs not exclusive to affordable/workforce. She stated the number of projected units needed in Wolfeboro by 2040 is 333.

Roger Murray stated the Board cannot control the housing market or what is done with a purchased property.

Bobbie Boudman questioned the problem relating to rental properties or the real estate market for homes to be purchased, noting the length of time a house in Wolfeboro is on the market is brief. She questioned the RSA that refers to workforce housing in regards to length of time or turnover.

Kathy Barnard questioned Ms. Boudman's question in regards to inclusionary zoning, noting that the workforce or affordable unit needs to be kept affordable.

Roger Murray replied the ordinance states forever.

Sabet Stroman questioned the continuing process in regards to voting.

Vaune Dugan recommended public support of defining short term rentals.

Roger Murray stated the Board is required to hold at least one public hearing on the topic however, can have more than one public hearing.

Peter Cooke stated the only thing the Short-term Rental Committee agreed on was the definition of a short-term rental. He stated the push back from last year's regulations was a result of the inability to enforce the regulation.

John Sandeen stated last year's articles were obtuse and did not describe what the voters were being asked to vote upon. He recommended informing the public of the changes.

Audrey Cline disagreed with Peter Cooke and stated the goal would be to establish the definition of short-term rentals; noting there can't be regulations without including a definition.

Ken Perry stated the articles were voted down because they neglected to include proper descriptions.

Suzanne Ryan stated the inclusionary housing discussion and how the article was written was town wide. She stated the land drives the use; the land will dictate what can exist. She recommended the Board utilize the Tool Box. She stated seasonal rentals are taking away from year-round rentals. She stated she doesn't think the Town is in a dire situation.

Bertha Luongo asked if there is a percentage of rental properties mandated by the State. She stated there is a big need for the rentals to provide people with the opportunity to get their feet in the door. She also questioned if there is a developer involved.

Vaune Dugan stated there are multiple developers with proposals however, the Board does not control construction and execution.

Christine Marion stated the mandate is within the workforce housing provisions; to provide affordable housing. She stated such has to be by right and not by Special Exception. She stated a Town cannot exclude affordable housing to be built. She stated towns have to provide an opportunity for affordable housing. She stated Wolfeboro does not have a specific fair share number.

Cynthia Theodore stated she is representing a concerned taxpayer of Wolfeboro and asked when the public will be able to ask the Board questions that the Board will answer.

Doug Breskin stated the Board has not said this evening that the public cannot ask questions rather, the Board may not be able to answer the questions.

Kathy Barnard stated the Board will answer questions following research and when they have more information.

Steve Webster stated there needs to be a collaborative effort and asked the public to bring forward constructive ideas for the Board to consider. He suggested there be another meeting regarding affordable housing.

Tavis Austin stated the Town voted on an inclusionary zoning document. He stated this is a Board work session and the Board is requesting public input on the matter.

Kathy Barnard stated the Board is planning to have another work session on the topic of affordable housing.

Carrie Duran stated she has been a resident of Harriman Hill for ten years; noting it is important for her perspective to be shared. She stated there are resources available for families/people of all circumstance. She welcomes the public to ask questions and provide helpful comment to the Board.

Doug Breskin thanked the public who attended the meeting for their input.

John Thurston questioned Troy Lucas directly, asking what an employer in Town could afford to pay their employees if there was some type of employer incentive.

Troy Lucas stated there are many different types of businesses in Town however, he is not aware of what other businesses pay their employees. He speculated that food service workers may make \$15-\$20/hour. He reviewed his housing background (noting he managed 92 units of HUD housing) and mentioned the housing inventory and the affordability of such.

Bobbi Boudman stated the median income is \$1674/month for workforce housing. She stated the demographics of Town will change drastically by 2040 with a large elderly population, noting that the unit mandate may not include this detail.

Kathy Barnard thanked the public for their input and noted there will be an advertisement for the next meeting on the affordable housing topic.

**IV. Discussion items**

**a. Shorefront Regulations**

The Board tabled such to November 7, 2023.

**V. Public Comment**

None.

**VI. Approval of Minutes**

**October 3, 2023**

Page 3, Voluntary Merger; add to the motion; “upon the condition the applicant provides information that there is no mortgage on the property and if there is mortgage the applicant provides consent from the mortgagee.”

Page 7, Housing Update, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph; add “the housing fair share table” following “exclude” and 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph; strike “full” and “of”

**It was moved by Kathy Barnard to approve the October 3, 2023 minutes as amended. Jane Nielsen seconded the motion. Kathy Barnard, Jane Nielsen, Doug Breskin, Vaune Dugan, Roger Murray, Steve Webster voted in favor. Brad Harriman, John Thurston abstained. The motion passed (6-0-2).**

**It was moved by Kathy Barnard to adjourn the October 17, 2023 Planning Board meeting. Roger Murray seconded the motion. All members voted in favor.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:09PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Michaela M. Beckwith*  
Michaela M. Beckwith

\*\*\* Please note these minutes are subject to amendments and approval at a later date. \*\*\*