

MEETING MINUTES
 AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST (AHT) COMMITTEE
 FULLER MEADOW SCHOOL, NATHAN MEDIA CENTER
 143 SOUTH MAIN STREET, MIDDLETON, MA 01949
 Wednesday February 5, 2025 at 5PM

This meeting was in person & recorded for playback.

The Trust reserves the right to consider items on the agenda out of order. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

Board/Committee Representatives appointed through 2026: Brian Cresta, Select Board; Maria Paikos-Hantzis, Housing Authority; Richard Gregorio, Finance Committee; Herman Learmond-Criqui, Community Preservation Committee; Jason Bernhard/Planning Board. At-Large members appointed through 2025: William Renault; Beth Andres-Beck

With a quorum present the Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 5:09 pm. AHT Members present: B. Cresta, Chair M. Paikos-Hantzis, Vice Chair; R. Gregorio, Treasurer; H. Learmond-Criqui, Clerk; J. Bernhard; B. Andres-Beck. Not present: W. Renault.

Also present: Assistant Town Administrator Jackie Bresnahan; Anna Bury Carmer, Planning Director; John Ericson, Finance Committee / Master Plan committee; Kosta Prentakis, Select Board/ Community Preservation Committee; Ann Tragert Cote, Zoning Board of Appeals; Annie Wilton, Master Plan Committee

Training for Trust Members on Inclusionary Zoning Changes - Katie Lacy, Senior Planner, Massachusetts Housing Partnership (a non-profit) was present via Zoom. K. Lacy has experience in supporting the development of affordable housing through local initiatives and policy changes (inclusionary zoning). This technical assistance was provided by the state at no cost to the town.

A. Bury Carmer introduced K. Lacy and provided an overview of the training based on the AHT having completed the 5-year Strategic Plan. The training will focus on policy and advocacy to help the Trust understand how to best go forward with creating more affordable housing using what is available and what makes the most sense for the town.

K. Lacy referenced a slide deck and began the training with talking about Inclusionary zoning as a way to increase subsidized housing/affordable housing in town. The definition of affordable housing as it applies to Middleton, as being a greater Boston HUD Fair Market rent area, as an eligible community for subsidized housing with 80% median income or lower; the median income is \$149,900/ 80% is \$130,250.

Aspects of Inclusionary Zoning By-Law/Ordinance may be mandatory of incentive based; offsite units, payment in lieu (to the AHT), type of development, geographic coverage, minimum site threshold, percentage of affordable units, affordability level, duration of affordability requirement.

It was noted the EOHLC (Executive Office of Housing & Livable Communities) does not allow AHTs to monitor subsidized housing; typically third party monitoring agencies are engaged by the municipality. In Middleton, the Planner tracts the subsidized housing units in Middleton. The variables of zoning and utilities requires each town to tailor their bylaw, make it feasible to work with developers to build affordable units such as density bonus, decrease cost of projects with reduced permitting fees or tax relief.

K. Lacy reviewed some reasons Middleton housing cost is high: i.e. dimensional requirements, restrictive zoning, large single family lot (1 acre), historical sections of the community are small and non-conforming; housing relates to income/cost.

Affordable units built under inclusionary zoning are approved through local action unit program and permitted on the SHI (Subsidized Housing Inventory). A local action unit must be approved by the EOHLC, must meet 40B design and construction standards, subject to income & cost restrictions, approved fair market plan/ lottery, subject to Regulatory Agreements, Restrictions, and Monitoring.

As part of the wider zoning bylaw review, J. Bresnahan questioned success strategies used by other communities.

K. Lacy responded inclusionary zoning works best when applied to areas where slightly higher density is allowed ie. multi-family housing. The chair mentioned the value of raw lot in Middleton is \$625,000 and the town will be unable to get affordable units built and opined inclusionary zoning may “stifle” affordable housing. Given the towns current zoning it is unlikely there will be opportunities for the building of affordable units and passing too much cost on the developer through inclusionary zoning is likely to discourage any builders/construction in town.

It was noted the largest percentage of undeveloped land in Middleton is owned by two families and under chapter land; Middleton has a large percentage of wetlands and unbuildable areas.

One question was the possibility to rezone business areas as residential or mixed use zoning. The Chair suggested the AHT begin the inventory process of land and what it would look like for inclusionary zoning, or adding residential zoning in business zoned areas. Limited septic capacity of the land was observed as problematic.

The training presentation will be provided to the Trust and a list of communities that have inclusionary zoning. K Lacy reminded the Trust there is expertise to assist the town/AHT with the development of municipal land. The training ended at 6:03pm and K. Lacy left the meeting.

The Select Board is beginning discussions on the use of the town owned parcels/buildings after the various departments move to the new public facilities building; fire station, police station, town hall, council on aging. The AHT will be included in these discussions. The use of the town owned Locust St property is also being considered by the Select Board.

Review & Approval of Minutes: *The Trust voted unanimously to approve the minutes of December 4, 2024 & January 8, 2025.*

Working Session on 5 Year Action Plan

- Discuss implementation strategies of plan

The Chair reviewed the Fire Chief and COA are working to offer the ability for the Fire Department to do assessments and help identify those that may benefit from assistance. The AHT may be able to assist with this plan and discussion will be on an upcoming agenda.

Treasurer’s Update – December’s report was not available for this meeting but was anticipated for the March meeting.

February 20, 2024 Harborlight & Habitat will be presenting at the MAPC meeting; information will be sent.

Next meeting: March 5, 2025

Adjourn- *The Trust voted unanimously to adjourn at 6:23pm.*

Respectfully submitted by

Catherine Tinsley, 2.8.25

Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary
The minutes were prepared from video



Herman Learmond-Criqui, AHT Clerk

Respectfully submitted as approved by the HDC at the _____April 2, 2025_____ meeting.