

To: Board of Selectmen

From: Lynne Vanderslice

Date: July 20, 2020

RE: Proposal for a Wilton Housing Committee

Wilton has a range of housing options: single-family, including affordable, townhomes, condos, accessory dwellings, rental apartments with affordable units and senior and individuals with disabilities housing with affordable units. Over the last several years, we have discussed the need for additional diverse housing.

Our recently adopted Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) includes the following goal: *Wilton recognizes the need to diversify its housing stock in order to accommodate all life stages, including its workforce, families with children, single-persons, and empty nesters. This includes providing housing at a greater variety of sizes, styles, and price points and modifying the Town's regulations to enable and incentivize this type of development. A diverse housing stock can support existing residents, attract new residents, and provide a larger employee and customer base for Wilton businesses.*

Within the Plan, the Board of Selectmen is responsible for the attached Human and Economic Environment Objective 1.2, Strategy 1.2.4, which includes *explore establishing an advisory housing committee to evaluate the needs.*

I recommend we establish a Housing Committee as described below. This proposal has been developed following a review of Housing Committees in other municipalities and with input from Social Services Director Sarah Heath and Director of Land Use Management and Town Planner Michael Wrinn. Both will be at the June 21st meeting to participate in the discussion of the proposal.

Proposed Housing Committee

Purpose:

The Housing Committee's purpose is to evaluate, define and monitor the need for diverse housing options and affordable housing in Wilton

Responsibilities:

- Study and document the need within Wilton for each housing type, including affordable housing
- Seek input from various stakeholders, including residents, developers and Town personnel
- Create an inventory of existing housing types and affordable housing units in Wilton
- Identify ways, including funding sources, to encourage diverse housing development
- Make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen

Membership:

Term: Two years

Number: Seven

Preferred Background: Interest. Varied stages of life. One or two members with real estate related experience.

Examples of CT Municipalities with Housing Committees:

Fairfield: <https://www.fairfieldct.org/ahc>

Washington: <https://www.washingtonct.org/housing-commission/pages/housing-study-committee>

Examples of CT Municipalities with exclusively Affordable Housing Committees:

Ridgefield: <https://www.ridgefieldct.org/affordable-housing-committee>

Old Lyme: <https://www.oldlyme-ct.gov/affordable-housing-committee>

North Stonington: <https://www.northstoningtonct.gov/affordable-housing-committee>

Human and Economic Environment

Objective 1.2: Diversify the price points of Wilton's housing stock				
	Strategy	Lead Entity	Support Entity	ÉT•iöéfé.ät0é,
1.2.1	Evaluate requiring a set aside of 10-20%, or greater, of all units as affordable, consistent with CGS 58-30g requirements, community needs, and market conditions, in any new residential and/or mixed-use development, including mixed-use residential development in the Wilton Center (WC) zone. Evaluate regulatory incentives for greater set-asides, including density, bulk, and setback requirements, among others, with appropriate protections for public health and safety, historical asset protection, and environmental resources protection.	PZC	Dept.	S
1.2.2	Encourage legislative changes to CGS 58-30g to better address community concerns about public health and safety arising from overaggressive design, intensity of use, and overdevelopment, particularly where the community already has zoning regulations promoting meaningful affordable housing development and has demonstrated a history of achieving affordable housing goals.	BOS, Legislators	pzc, puz Dept.	S
1.2.3	Explore tools and incentives to retain existing affordable units with expiring affordability covenants.	PZC	Dept.	S
1.2.4	Explore establishing an advisory housing committee panel of local and regional experts to evaluate the housing needs of all segments of the community.	BOS	Dept.	S
1.2.5	Consider use of a housing trust fund and/or a payment in lieu of affordable units system to fund the construction, rehabilitation, or repair of affordable housing, but generally favor mandatory set asides in commercial districts.	BOS, BOF	pzc, Dept.	
1.2.6	Consider using Town-owned properties to meet housing needs, as feasible and appropriate.	BOS	pzc, Dept.	

1.2.7	Promote energy efficiency in new housing as a means of reducing overall housing utility costs.	WEC	PZC	O
1.2.8	Support education of the community on the means and importance of having a diverse housing stock.	Dept.	pzc, BOS	O