

Approved at April 4, 2022 Affordable Housing Plan Committee Meeting



**CITY OF DANBURY**  
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**AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**FEBRUARY 28, 2022**

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The web based meeting hosted on Zoom was called to order by Sharon Calitro, City of Danbury ("COD") Planning Director, at 3:04 PM.

Present were Committee Members Sharon Calitro (COD Planning), Jennifer Emminger (COD Planning), Kara Prunty (COD Health), Denise Chance (COD Health), Robert Botelho (Victorian Associates), Robert Taborsak (City Council), Paul Rotello (City Council), Jen Delaney (HACD), Perry Salvagne (PC), Christie Stewart (SHWorks), and Ari Rosenberg (ARC)

Present from FHI Studio was Francisco Gomes.

Absent: Ted Haddad, Jr. (ZC) and PJ Prunty (Chamber of Commerce)

Paul Rotello motioned to accept the December 20, 2021 minutes, Perry Salvagne seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.

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Sharon Calitro welcomed the Affordable Housing Plan Committee and turned the meeting agenda over to Francisco Gomes from FHI Studio ("FHI").

Francisco briefly reviewed the agenda for the meeting, which includes a brief review of the virtual workshop and survey findings, discuss key issues and themes, and Plan goals and strategies, and review the Affordable Housing Plan document outline.

The findings of the virtual workshop were discussed. Issues identified by workshop participants included the need to protect neighborhoods from the impacts of growth, the availability and cost of housing vouchers, and rising rental costs. Ideas offered by the workshop participants included offering more affordable housing for seniors, bolster the State rental voucher program, construct affordable housing in areas near transit and economic centers, and provide more aging in place and workforce housing.

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The working draft of the Affordable Housing Plan Vision Statement was further discussed. The working statement was discussed by Committee members and Francisco continued to take live notes as Committee members finalized the Vision Statement. The finalized vision statement is “Danbury will foster the sustainable growth of quality housing that will accommodate and be accessible to all residents, through different stages of life, with a focus on inclusion, equity, and affordability”.

Francisco next provided a summary of the findings from the Affordable Housing Survey.

The key issues and themes that come from the workshop and survey included the cost and availability of housing, displacement of residents and increase in rental costs, overcrowding, impact of development on schools and City services, addressing the needs of the City’s most vulnerable residents, the need for housing for all age groups, specifically seniors and young adults, and a greater variety of housing.

Francisco discussed four main goals and their strategies. Goal 1 is to increase the supply and range of affordable housing and maintain an affordable housing supply in excess of 10%. Strategies discussed include reactivating Danbury’s Housing Partnership, develop a promotional campaign to raise awareness about the need for affordable housing, partner with institutions to establish affordable housing in the City, establish and administer a property tax credit program for the creation of affordable housing, and implement inclusionary zoning that requires the provision of affordable units in all multi-family development with 10 or more dwelling units and which also includes a fee in lieu of payment option that directs fees paid to Danbury’s Municipal Housing Trust Fund. Additional strategies under goal 1 include revising the zoning regulations as appropriate to relax dimensional standards, use Housing Trust funds to provide grants to applicants and/or non-profits for the construction of affordable housing units, revise the zoning regulations to allow the adaptive reuse of commercial and institutional buildings for development of affordable housing, and remove the prohibition of using the Housing Incentive Option on redevelopment under the Housing Redevelopment Option to incentivize construction of affordable units.

Goal 2 is to increase the supply of age-restricted and assisted living housing with an emphasis on affordable units. Strategies include revising the zoning regulations to allow adaptive reuse of commercial and institutional buildings for the development of age restricted housing, revise the zoning regulations to allow for the development of multi-generational housing in appropriate residential districts, and revise the regulations to allow the development of affordable age-restrict accessory dwelling units in appropriate residential districts.

Francisco discussed Goal 3, which is to increase the supply of housing in, and proximate to, Danbury’s Downtown with an emphasis on affordable units. The strategies include developing a TOD Zoning District to replace existing downtown districts and downtown overlay zones with a density incentive for the creation of affordable housing, which includes expanding the district north to I-84 and south to South Street, relax building height restrictions in the C-CBD and Main Street Historic Overlay Zone to allow increased density for the provision of affordable units, and reduce parking requirements for Downtown residential developments that provide affordable housing.

The last goal is to foster relationships that ensure that the housing needs of the City's most vulnerable residents are met. Strategies discussed include advocating for a regional approach to address the issues surrounding homelessness, continue to work with local social service agencies and providers to ensure the needs of the homeless are met, and add Universal Design provisions to the zoning regulations.

Francisco discussed the outline of the Affordable Housing Plan which includes the Introduction, Outreach Summary, Affordable Housing Trends, Housing Needs Assessment, Land Use and Zoning assessment, Vision Statement and Implementation Plan.

The next steps include preparing and review the draft plan.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 28 at 3 PM via Zoom. Sharon agreed to send the powerpoint viewed at today's meeting to each committee member.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer L. Emminger  
Deputy Planning Director