



Small Group Advisory Committee Meeting – June 27th, 2018
Focus: Affordable Housing

After our September 2017 Advisory Committee ("AC") meeting, it was suggested by several AC members that this committee meet more often throughout the year to discuss specific topics. Building on that great suggestion, we scheduled our first small group advisory committee meeting for February. For our second small group meeting, we chose to discuss the year-round housing crisis on Nantucket, with particular emphasis on Chapter 40B in Massachusetts.

Any AC member is invited to attend if the subject matter is of interest to them and if they would like to join the conversation. We were pleased to have 14 attendees self-identify and participate in this session.

Margaretta Andrews, Executive Director, began by welcoming and thanking everyone for attending this "Small Group Advisory Committee Meeting". Margaretta spoke to the high value the Foundation places on the input from this group of community leaders.

Tucker Holland, Outreach Committee Chair, introduced Judi Barrett as this meetings' guest speaker. Judi is an urban planner and community development professional. She has been hired by Affordable Housing Trust Fund to work on a strategic implementation plan for the Town's approved Housing Production Plan, and her knowledge of 40B and around housing issues across the Commonwealth is extensive.

Judi provided a brief background on the history of affordable housing policy in Massachusetts and chapter 40B. By definition, chapter 40B is a state policy, which enables local Zoning Boards of Appeals to approve affordable housing developments under flexible rules if at least 20-25% of the units have long-term affordability restrictions¹. Judi also explained the Massachusetts affordable housing requirements. Tucker provided map of Nantucket's current Subsidized Housing Inventory ("SHI") units (attached) and how we stack up against the required 10% threshold mandated by the state. Nantucket is required to have 490 units on its SHI list. Currently, there are 121 existing units, 324 planned, and 45 remaining. The newest proposed 40B, "Surfside Crossing" would add 39 units toward the threshold.

Tucker continued the conversation and opened the room to questions. The first question was on how successful the 40B legislation is and whether it is the best solution to Nantucket's affordable housing crisis. Judi explained that there are ways to work around 40B, but there are pitfalls to any alternatives due to the lack of proper management at the state level. The subsidizing agencies are not providing enough support to local communities thereby allowing for developers to build large developments with only

¹ <https://www.mass.gov/chapter-40-b-planning-and-information>

20% / 25% being affordable, thus only perpetuating the need for affordable housing particularly in resort or seasonal communities.

The rising cost of land and complex zoning restrictions make it difficult and not cost effective for developers to build. The chapter 40B laws act as an incentive and thus open the door for developers to build in towns with a high demand for housing. Tucker explained that this is why the Town's project at 6 Fairgrounds was effective; by providing land at nominal cost (a long-term ground lease) and requiring it to be rental units, the developers were able to propose to build a development that will be 80% income-restricted (the Select Board wanted some market rate included) and 100% (all 64 units) would count on the SHI list.

It was noted that some neighbors are appealing the Planning Board approval of 6 Fairgrounds, which could have potentially provided two years of safe harbor for the community from 40B proposals that might not be deemed in the best interest of the Island.

The group continued the conversation by discussing how a large development, like Surfside Crossing, would impact the current housing crisis and the overall community. Judi explained that the number of units being added, 39 units, would help the housing crisis. However, the scale and density of the other units will also have an impact on the Nantucket community, in particular will most likely increase the school aged children on-Island. The Housing Appeals Committee only looks at physical impacts of 40B developments not community or municipal impacts. In order for HAC to find on the side of a community, the community needs to demonstrate that the local concern outweighs the need for regional housing.

The group all agreed that community education and a better understanding of Massachusetts's affordable housing policies is key to helping solve our current housing crisis. Solving the issue will take the whole community working together to address the issue proactively vs. reactively. Furthermore, the group all agreed that there needs to be more community education around the role of our local zoning board of appeals when dealing with a 40B development.

Community Foundation for Nantucket

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Small Group Advisory Committee Meeting – February 20, 2018

Attendees:

Jason Bridges

Janis Carreiro

Michael Cozort

Rachel Day

Ella Finn

Tucker Holland

Anne Kuzspa

Gene Mahon

Jim Perelman

Phil Stambaugh

Geoff Verney

Cathy Ward

David Worth

Michael Varbalow

Judi Barrett (Guest Presenter)

Margaretta Andrews (Staff)

Carlisle Jensen (Staff)

Jeanne Miller (Staff)