

## Nahant Housing Plan Production (HPP) Sub-committee

Thursday, February 23, 2023

via Zoom

### Meeting Minutes

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#### **Committee Members**

- Mark Cullinan, Vice Chairman, Board of Selectmen
- Lynne Spencer, Community Preservation Committee
- Patty Karas, School Committee
- Michael Rauworth, Zoning Board of Appeals
- David Wilson, Nahant Housing Authority
- Patrick O'Reilly, Planning Board (joined at 6:45 PM)
- James Walsh, Resident Member
- Michelle Capano, Resident Member
- Heather Goodwin, Resident Member

#### **Massachusetts Area Planning Council (MAPC)**

- Christian Brandt, Interim Community Engagement Director, MAPC

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#### **Town of Nahant**

- Josh Antrim

#### **Public Attendees**

- Kerry Collins
- Ken Carangelo
- Peter Barba

### **Agenda**

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Discussion and continuation of plans for first Community Engagement – March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023
3. Next Steps for Committees
4. Old / New Business for HPP
5. Citizen's Forum
6. Adjournment

#### **1. Call Meeting to Order**

The Chair of the Housing Production Plan Sub-committee ("HPP") called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM. The Chair reaffirmed the for members of the public the committee is the "Housing Production Plan Advisory Sub-committee" and stated as a reminder this committee is a sub-committee of the Nahant Board of Selectmen.

The Chair confirmed a quorum of the committee and not-present was Patrick O'Reilly.

The Chair reviewed the agenda and highlighted the meeting will focus on reviewing the story boards for the upcoming community engagement meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### **2. Discussion and continuation of plans for first Community Engagement – March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

The Chair reviewed the agenda and highlighted the meeting will focus on reviewing the story boards for the upcoming community engagement meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Christian Brandt from MAPC is attending tonight's meeting to review the story boards and obtain additional committee feedback. The Chair stated preparations are underway to have Town Hall prepared for the community engagement event including necessary audio/visual equipment to support the event.

Mr. Rauworth asked about who will be speaking and what visual aids; the Chair confirmed this will be included in today's discussion.

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The HPP Committee walked through each story board and provided feedback to MAPC.

- What is Affordable Housing?
- What is a Housing Production Plan?
- Who struggles with housing costs in Nahant?
- Can you afford to rent or buy a home in Nahant?
- How much Affordable Housing is in Nahant?
- What should the future of Nahant Housing Look Like?
- What type of housing should Nahant have?
- Where do you live?

**What is Affordable Housing?** The committee felt the content need to be revised slightly. The Chair mentioned it would be helpful to clarify what is AMI and the distinction between capital “A” and lower case “a” as it pertains to affordable housing concepts.

Mr. Cullinan stated that a member of each committee should be assigned to each board. Mr. Brandt highlighted a similar forum on 3A in Millis and agrees that this would be helpful for the public with a MPAC staff and HPP committee member. Mr. Brandt also mentioned developing talking points for each of the story boards.

Mr. Cullinan suggested that if there are any committee member is comfortable with one board over another to let the Chair know or the Chair will make assignments.

Mr. Rauworth agreed the information is valuable; however, felt that the newness of the information may be a concern for members of the public. The Chair stated that this will be one of the objectives of the community engagement is to educate the public on the concepts of affordability housing so that everyone is speaking from the same terminology.

Mr. Brandt added agreed to revising the board and Mr. Rauworth suggested **bolding “Affordable Housing”** for ‘capital “A” references.

**What is a Housing Production Plan?** Mr. Rauworth stated that points #1 (Plan to meet local housing need) and #2 (Proactively influence development) are distinct from comply 40B and felt they are ill defined. Mr. Rauworth is concerned about points #1 and #2 and the Chair re-affirmed that this work is about putting a plan together until it is presented and accepted by the Town. Mr. Brandt asked a follow-up question about examples from around the region and what the strategies might be. Mr. Rauworth agreed this may be helpful.

Mr. Cullinan does not disagree with Mr. Rauworth and stated these boards will be available and reviewed by the public prior to the presentation. Mr. Cullinan also stated that its important what the community engagement will and will not be. Mr. Brandt also stated that there will be a presentation geared towards “What is Affordable Housing” that will help inform further members of the public attending the community engagement event and will include additional areas linking all of the information together.

Mr. Rauworth asked about questions that may be raised by public attending such as “unmet housing need” and what this really means. How do members of the committee address these types of questions. Ms. Capano stated this would be where the talking points would help support the committee in addressing the public.

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Mr. Rauworth further stated while we have mandates of Chapter 40B and 3A, why are points #1 and #2 and concerned about unspecified objectives and why does Nahant have to do anything related to points #1 and #2.

Mr. Cullinan reflected back to the early data presented on what is an affordable unit and stated that approximately 40% of the residents in Nahant may qualify for affordable housing and the only reason they are not experiencing any issues is that some of these residents already own their home with no mortgage or do not have a large mortgage and are able to meet their housing expenses. Mr. Rauworth then cited an example of elderly resident seeking to downsize but desires to live in Nahant but there are no opportunities for housing. Mr. O'Reilly (joined at 6:45 PM) stated this is also cited by the data which shows the population in Nahant declining slightly; however, is correlated with fewer people per household and increasing aging households.

Mr. Walsh asked about the area 'What is Chapter 40B' and comparing to the Housing Needs Assessment draft whereas 40B requires all Massachusetts municipalities need to have a 10% subsidize housing inventory (reference page 20). Mr. Brandt confirmed this is correct and the subsidized housing inventory is name used for the listed deed restricted affordability housing units and collectively SHI refers to deed restricted properties under Affordable Housing.

Ms. Spencer also wanted to include "essential housing" as it pertains to residents who work in Nahant such as police, fire, teachers, nurses, etc. who cannot afford to move to Nahant. This would be another good example as well. Mr. Brandt also mentioned creating a housing architecture of examples which would be helpful. Mr. Rauworth agreed that these hypothetical examples will further illustrate the need of affordable housing in Nahant.

#### **Who struggles with housing costs in Nahant?**

Ms. Capano highlighted this board reviews cost burden by age and number of households in Nahant. Mr. Cullinan recommended this board should go before the one that was last reviewed. Mr. Brandt stated we can re-organize the boards in any order.

#### **Can you afford to rent or buy a home in Nahant?**

Mr. Cullinan recommended this board and the next board be #1 and #2 in order of presentation. Ms. Spencer stated that residents may not sequence the boards so the order may not matter. Ms. Capano stated that the ½ the board will be divided across the hall, but we could group like data points together.

#### **How much Affordable Housing is in Nahant?**

Ms. Capano reflected this board goes more closer to the board on definition of Chapter 40B and housing stock discussions. Mr. Brand agreed that this board aligns with the early board discussed. Mr. Cullinan also pointed out the data point on "For approximately every 13 income-eligible households in Nahant there is 1 Affordable Housing unit in town.: which goes back to Mr. Rauworth' s early comments on 40B requirements. Mr. Cullinan stated examples of the elderly, public works, police, fire, etc.

Mr. Walsh stated he is concerned about the desire of affordable units as being the same as the 48 subsidized housing units and we can have other kinds of deed restricted properties that can be counted to the 40 B requirements. The way this board illustrates we have only Housing Authority units, and we would be looking to add more to Nahant which is not the goal of HPP.

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Mr. O'Reilly stated that is not the goal of the committee to add more subsidized housing in Nahant; however, it could be a recommendation to expand the Housing Authority inventory later. Mr. Rauworth clarified that it could, adding to the Housing Authority and achieve the 40B safe harbor and achieve the differences in other ways but both are independent of the overall need of affordable housing in Nahant which is greater than achieving the 40B safe harbor threshold. Mr. Cullinan agreed with Mr. Rauworth on this point.

Mr. Walsh is unsure if the work of HPP is a means to expand the Housing Authority and the committee needs to make that distinction that is not the primary objective of the committee. Adding Housing Authority units is one means, and Mr. O'Reilly reminded the committee that all recommendations need to be considered. Mr. Brandt asked if the confusion is that subsidizing housing includes various compositions to achieve SHI.

Mr. Walsh clarified that we do not have market rate rental units that count towards our minimum. There are no deed restricted properties that count toward the 10% under Chapter 40B. Mr. Brandt stated buildings that are built through comprehensive permit that allocated 20-25% to affordable rental units, there market rate rental units can also be counted to the overall subsidized housing even though they are not deed restricted affordable housing. Mr. Brandt highlighted this is confusing distinction in the affordable housing topic related to what counts to subsidized rental housing and what does not.

Mr. Rauworth expressed the complexity on the affordable housing topic and need for a mastery on this lexicon. Mr. Brandt highlighted Nahant only has 48 affordable housing units which is 2.85% of the SHI and Nahant needs to increase its inventory to Mr. O'Reilly's point could include Housing Authority units, deed-restricted units or other combinations and tools that developers can use to achieve the housing needs. Mr. Rauworth suggested we disassociate the calculation of SHI from this board related to 40B where the 48 units come from the 645 households that qualify for affordable housing and later turn to social need of affordability. Mr. Brandt will share this feedback with John Cruz, Senior Housing Planner from MAPC.

Mr. Cullinan agreed with Mr. Rauworth's comments and feedback and that the focus is on the affordable housing need in Nahant and why we need it. Separate discussions on 40B and other aspects follows. Mr. Rauworth requested from MAPC further information to help address the definitions and terms under the affordable housing subject. Mr. Rauworth also stated that in reviewing each of the boards, do they clearly address the affordable housing need and generalized social need or is it about 40 B and make them exclusive. Mr. Cullinan suggested focus on the affordable housing need in Nahant whereas Mr. Rauworth stated that is focused on the persons in the community with the greatest need – elderly, first responders, who need a place to live then shift to 40B which are distinct.

Mr. O'Reilly added that the capital "A" Affordable and smaller-case "a" affordable is confusing especially when context on the boards would be capitalized. Mr. O'Reilly suggested using SHI as it's the big "A" Affordable or somehow that includes deed-restricted housing. Mr. Walsh stated that "deed restricted" is better terminology; however, all not all deed restricted is public housing where all public housing is deed restricted. Mr. Brandt stated it is the role of the MAPC to use the same terminology as the State – subsidized housing inventory which is confusing. Mr. O'Reilly stated that there are subsidized inventory and market rate housing that may or may not be affordable referencing the housing assessment and 48 is the SHI. Mr. Walsh stated that objective is to put forth a housing plan and a zoning plan that may need 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote at Town Meeting. Mr. Cullinan clarified that any housing related changes before the Town will only require a simple majority. Ms. Capano confirmed that the State Legislature removed the 2/3<sup>rd</sup> voting requirement on zoning changes that increases housing and Mr. O'Reilly further stated that any zoning change that increases housing will only require a simple majority vote by the voters.

Mr. Walsh stated that if residents focus on the subsidized housing it would mean Nahant residents would be included on the State list of Massachusetts residents seeking a subsidized housing unit in Nahant

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and that another Massachusetts resident could be put ahead of a Nahant resident. Ms. Capano reinforced that there are qualifications where placement is for those seeing subsidized housing in Massachusetts and that the committee needs to focus on the affordable housing plan, educating the public on what this means to Nahant.

#### **What should the future of Nahant Housing Look Like?**

The Chair explained this would be an interactive board where residents would place write down their views or feedback on sticky notes and help define their future of housing in Nahant that addresses affordable housing needs. Mr. Brandt expressed this is a visioning question for broad intake by residents attending the community engagement.

#### **What type of housing should Nahant have?**

The Chair stated this would be photos to show residents different types of housing combinations that can be built and structures that shows affordable housing look and feel. Mr. Rauworth asked if we would ask residents to “dot-vote” which preference they could see in Nahant. Mr. Brandt confirmed that was the objective of this story board. There will be options for participants to add other ideas not already shown.

Mr. Rauworth asked if there is State legislation pending that would override local zoning for accessory dwelling units (ADU) that can be built as a matter of right. Mr. Cullinan confirmed that legislation is pending. The Town can place regulations on where they would be allowed. The co-sponsor of this legislation is Senator Brendan Creighton. Ms. Capano stated that this is all “Yes In My Back Yard” (YIMBY) and was sent to the committee previously.

#### **Where do you live?**

The Chair recommended revising the tagline on the story board as the reference “the islands” is something not used with residents in Nahant. Mr. Rauworth stated we are asking people to identify where they live as opposed to where they think there is land subject to be considered.

### **3. Next Steps for Committees**

The Chair moved to the next agenda item. MAPC will review the committee feedback revise the story boards and consult back with Mr. Cruz. Ms. Capano suggested a meeting next week to review updates and final designs, if possible. Ms. Capano proposed the next meeting of March 2<sup>nd</sup> and Mr. Brandt will confirm with Mr. Cruz.

### **4. Old / New Business for HPP**

Chair moved to the next agenda item. Updates on action items will be sent over email to the committee. Ms. Capano stated the only item outstanding was the revised timeline from MAPC which Mr. Cruz was addressing with the Town.

No new business was put forth to the committee.

### **5. Citizen’s Forum**

The Chair moved to next agenda item.

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Peter Barba, 22 Emerald Road. Mr. Baba referenced one of the early slides where data was referencing unmet housing needs. He stated from prior meetings there has been focus on 40B and affordable housing while affordability is important, he would like the committee to also consider other aspects such as elderly housing – size, one-floor and configuration. Another in this community is young families, and when he was on the School Committee the student population was around 200 pupils and declining. The need of young families to move into Town is critically important to keeping the elementary school sustainability.

The Chair asked Ms. Karras from the School Committee for the student population in Nahant. Ms. Karras stated there is plenty room for growth at the Johnson Elementary Schools and current enrollment is about 160 children.

Mr. Rauworth stated that Mr. Barba's points are well taken and do have more ramifications that the committee needs to consider. Mr. Cullinan added there is an alignment to the two resident populations related to affordability – senior and young families. Mr. Rauworth concluded are their programs for elderly housing that also need to be reviewed.

Mr. Cullinan suggested that ADUs would be something to consider for elderly where they are looking to downsize and stay in Nahant, sell there home to a family member and live in the ADU. Mr. Rauworth added this raises the concept of ADU and raises the questions on Airbnb uses. The committee should be thinking and how HPP efforts may intercede with short-term rentals in Nahant.

Ms. Capano stated Short Term Housing Committee voted to limit the number of short-term rentals to 4% which will not negatively impact to develop or identify affordable units. There will be cap on Airbnb's in Nahant. This will require approval of Town Meeting.

Mr. Rauworth raised concerns of a developer(s) building and taking over the marketplace of Airbnb's. Ms. Capano said that the Planning Board is having two public hearings on the Articles March 13, and March 14 on the similarities and differences and address the non-owner occupied topic and how many units someone can operate. Mr. Cullinan added that the proposed by-law on Airbnb's addresses most of the issues and allows the Board of Selectmen as the licensing authority to set reasonable rules and regulations. This process will be fine-tuned as it continues and important a cap was an important first step. Mr. Rauworth stated limiting the cap on the quantity of ownership one can control by one entity or individual and you do not want to embed an monopoly.

No further citizen comments.

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**6. Adjournment**

The Chair asked for motion to adjourn the meeting. So moved by Mr. Rauworth and seconded by Mr. Wilson.

Roll-call vote taken as follows:

Mr. Walsh - Yes

Mr. O'Reilly – Yes

Mr. Cullinan – Yes

Ms. Karras – Yes

Mr. Rauworth – Yes

Mr. Wilson – Yes

Ms. Capano - Yes.

Meeting ended at 7:35 PM.

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**Respectfully submitted as approved at March 9, 2023 Housing Production Plan Advisory Sub-committee Meeting.**

**By:** Michelle Capano, *Chair*.