

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING**  
**September 7, 2021**

**Present:** Mark Winne – Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC), Ginny Bromage - PZC, Leon Litvak - PZC, Melissa Mack - First Selectwoman, Kathie Harrington - Board of Selectmen, Dave Colangelo - Suffield Community Aid Board of Directors, Kevin Goff - Suffield Community Aid Board of Directors, Kerry O'Brien - Housing Authority Executive Director, John McGuire - Economic Development Commission, Robin Zatony – Social Services Commission, Marcia Dufore – Social Services Commission, Mark Messenger – Suffield Housing Authority, Glenn Chalder - Planimetrics, Bill Hawkins - Director of Planning & Development

**I. ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM as a hybrid in-person and Zoom video/teleconference meeting and Mr. Hawkins took the roll call of members and others present that comprise the advisory committee. First Selectwoman Mack addressed the group to say that a Chair would be appointed at the next meeting as we are still waiting for two groups to select members to serve on the committee.

**II. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN DISCUSSION**

Mr. Hawkins stated that the goal of the meeting is to review Briefing Booklet #6, Possible Housing Strategies, that Planimetrics developed for the project. Glenn Chalder of Planimetrics began by describing the purpose of the booklet, which is to outline possible strategies to be considered by the committee for inclusion in the housing plan. Some suggested strategies could be implemented in the next five years while some would be a lower priority that could be considered in future years.

The first category of possible strategies in the booklet relate to housing location, type, and design. There was discussion regarding guiding housing locations, diversifying housing types, and guiding housing design as possible strategies. The booklet had examples of what “middle housing” could look like and discussion took place regarding what types of housing might be appropriate for Suffield including multifamily housing, courtyard apartments, cottage courts, and mixed use buildings. Mr. Chalder was asked if there are examples of a “cottage court” housing development nearby that committee members could visit. A cottage court development was described as a group of small one to one and a half story detached structures situated around a shared court visible from the street. Mr. Chalder stated that he would research cottage court developments in the area and send the group more information on his findings.

The next section of the booklet centered on assisted housing and whether a strategy of the plan should be to increase this type of housing in Suffield. The Suffield Housing Authority was discussed and Executive Director Kerry O'Brien described their facility, the capacity to take on more units, and elaborated on some of the deliberations the housing authority board has had with regard to possible expansion. Other discussion points included identifying a location, obtaining funding to expand the housing authority, and type of units (elderly, disabled, family).

The booklet offered possible strategies for increasing the amount of deed restricted housing that is developed in town. Discussion took place about how to incentivize and/or require deed restricted housing. Possible options include changing zoning regulations and considering tax credits or abatements. There was discussion around the current zoning regulations and how they are set up to encourage large homes on small lots, which are not typically affordable.

The next set of possible strategies related to considering ways to convert existing housing units to deed-restricted as affordable. There was discussion about what other towns do in this regard as programs to convert housing units to be deed restricted as affordable typically require money or tax incentives to work. Other possible strategies include increasing the town's capacity to monitor, manage, and retain deed restricted affordable units.

The last section of the booklet had to do with possible ways increase housing options including reviewing and updating the zoning regulations to address the provisions of Public Act 21-29. Other possible strategies would be to identify and/or modify provisions in the zoning regulations, which may unnecessarily affect housing options in the town. The committee members suggested which possible strategies should be included in the plan and which were a higher priority.

Mr. Chalder explained that the next step is for him to put these strategies into more of a report format, come back to the committee, and discuss the report prior to drafting the plan. The briefing booklet will be finalized and placed on the town webpage for the affordable housing plan. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for October 5, 2021.

### **III. ADJOURNMENT**

With nothing further, a motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Bromage, seconded by Ms. Harrington and approved unanimously at 9:05 PM.

Submitted,

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Bill Hawkins, Director of Planning & Development

cc: Assessor, Building Official, Conservation Commission, Selectmen, Town Clerk, Town Engineer, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Commission Counsel