

Special Meeting on Affordable Year-round Rental Housing

Tuesday, March 20, 2007 at 6:00 p.m. at the MVC

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introduction (5 minutes)

2. Break-out Conversations (60 minutes)

- A Zoning Incentives
- B Funding
- C Permitting and Technical Assistance

3. Plenary (25 minutes)

- Each group presents its results.
- What other issues should we be looking at?
- Red-dotting of choices or priorities

Issues for Breakout Conversations - Affordable Rental Housing

A Zoning Incentives

- There seemed to be a consensus at the first forum that it should be possible to increase residential density –within existing buildings (as of right) and possibly in new construction – provided the extra units are affordable and/or year-round rental housing (assuming state codes, building codes and Title 5 wastewater regulations have been are met). If this is done:
 - Should the only requirement be that it is rented on a year-round basis, or should there be income restrictions (e.g. 80%, 150% AMI)?
 - Should this apply only to adding accessory apartments within existing houses? Should it be allowed for an addition to an existing house? For conversion of a single-family home into a two-family or multi-family building? Would it be acceptable to build guest house for this purpose?
 - Should the number of bedrooms be limited (e.g. only one bedroom for an accessory apartment)?
 - Should higher density be allowed for new, multi-family, year-round/affordable, rental construction?
 - Should the various possibilities apply across the Island or only in certain areas (e.g. in town or other “smart growth” locations)?
 - How much of a density bonus would be appropriate?
 - Should zoning allow sub-standard lots to be developed for year-round/affordable rental housing?
 - Should accessory apartments, multi-family conversions, and other forms of increased density be “as of right” or should these land uses be regulated by the Planning Board or ZBAs (special permit, site plan review, etc.)?
- Several of these measures already exist in some Island towns. Which ones work and which are not, and why not?
- How should enforcement and monitoring issues be dealt with (e.g. income levels, avoiding short-term rentals)? Who would be the enforcement officer (building inspector? housing authority?) What is the recourse for non-compliance?
- Should there be an amnesty program for illegal apartments to encourage property owners to renovate those units to building code?
- Should there be Growth Incentive Zones where higher density is allowed, whereby a development plan and Memorandum of Understanding are drawn up by the town and MVC, and conforming projects are then reviewed without further MVC review?

B Funding

- How can we generate funding for the development costs of public and not-for-profit affordable rental projects?
 - How effectively is the Community Preservation Act being used for affordable rental housing? Can this be improved? Could CPA funding be used to support the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority's Rental Conversion Program (RCP).
 - What is the status of the Housing Bank and what can be done to move this along?
 - Should each town create a Municipal Housing Trust Fund to earmark town funding for affordable housing projects?
 - Can a linkage program be created that would require financial mitigation for the construction of large new houses and or commercial projects, to be used to fund affordable rental housing?
 - Should weekly rentals be taxed as a business? Alternatively, should property owners with weekly rentals be required to register with the town (say \$100 per unit per year), with revenue earmarked for year-round affordable housing projects? Should such a registry be town-by-town or Island-wide?
- How can the indirect costs of affordable rental housing be equitably borne by the people of a town and by the whole Island community (town-to-town equity)?
 - Should towns absorb a portion of a project's infrastructure costs (e.g. wastewater treatment)?
 - Can a mechanism be set up whereby there is greater Island sharing of the costs of related to building of affordable housing in some towns, both for infrastructure (e.g. water, wastewater, and roads) and for ongoing service costs (e.g. increased school enrollments, maintenance, potential loss of property tax revenue)?
- Should tax incentives be given to residential and commercial property owners to rent apartment units on a year-round basis at affordable rates?
- Are market-driven 40B projects (only 25% affordable) appropriate for the Vineyard?

C. Permitting and Technical Assistance

- Should an Island-wide housing partnership be established in order to pool funding and professional services (e.g. through the Dukes County Regional Housing Authority)? Could it offer a service of pre-screening renters for public, not-for-profit, and private owners?
- Should there be a streamlined permitting process for affordable housing projects? What might this entail?
- Should there be uniform standards for applications for affordable rental housing? Could there be a common Island-wide administration?
- Should local preference be for residents of the town or the whole Island?