

MINUTES
Rockingham Planning Commission

January 8, 2020
Hampton Academy, Hampton NH

Commissioners Present: B. Kravitz, Chairman, M. Olson, A. Carnaby (Hampton); G. Coppelman, P. Coffin (Kingston); J. Foley (Epping); A. Davis (Hampstead); L. Cushman, P. Hollasch (Stratham); M. Rabideau (Seabrook); B. Moreau, P. Britz (Portsmouth); J. Kiszka (Plaistow); M. McAndrew (New Castle); S. Gerrato (Greenland); A. Brubaker (H. Falls); C. Cross (Newington); B. Donahue (Salem); P. Merrill (Kensington)

Guests: P. Bushway; L. Sonnett; P. Lovejoy; M. Edgar; G. Taillon; J. Bachand; W. Griffith; A. Fries; S. Wrightsman; S. Kravitz

Staff: T. Roache (Executive Director); A. Pettengill (Business Manager)

1. **Chairman Kravitz called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.** and welcomed everyone to the new school addition. She thanked Mark Olson for supplying refreshments and introductions were made around the room.
2. **Minutes of September 11, 2019**

Coppelman moved to approve the Minutes of September 11, 2019 as presented; Coffin seconded.
SO VOTED.

3. **NH's Housing Shortage Discussion – Alex Fries, Policy Advisory-Governor's office; Sarah Wrightsman, Executive Director-Workforce Housing Coalition; Willis Griffith-State Rep**

Roache began by welcoming the panel, Alex Fries, Willis Griffith, and Sarah Wrightsman. He noted that although NH has a strong economy and unemployment is low, there is a housing shortage that needs to be addressed. Alex and Willis are members of the Governor's Task Force and are here to educate us on two proposed Bills to address the housing crisis.

Alex Fries explained that the Governor created a small group to address the affordable housing crisis for various income groups. The goal is to enhance local control, create process predictability and investment, and to leverage the State's capacity through Office of Strategic Initiatives and NH Finance Authority. Willis Griffith noted that many Reps have worked on this legislation and have spent time traveling all around the State to talk to developers, housing coalitions, and municipalities so that this Bill can become the framework for a solution. All

perspectives are encouraged to attend the next Legislative Hearing on Tuesday, January 21st at 9:30 a.m.

Alex & Willis reviewed the major categories of the legislation. Enhancement of local control, create process predictability and accelerate the investment in housing. Key factors in each category include: requiring training for local land use board members and improving local inclusionary zoning options that towns can adopt if they choose to; also posting of fees and costs, an update of definitions and fair housing incentives and create a fair and predictable appeals process; Expansion of TIF districts and tax restructuring to incentivize investment and grow a lower cost housing market. Discussion followed on many topics including current housing stock, local control, inclusionary zoning & sewer funding and data on vacancy rates. Sarah explained that the Workforce Housing Coalition works with communities to create zoning that allows for workforce housing at the local level to enhance the supply and diversity of current housing stock.

4. Commissioner Roundtable- Comments and suggestions were heard around the room relating to the proposed legislation.

The Panel members thanked the RPC for holding the meeting and asked that everyone feel free to reach out to them with stories and experiences, and to come testify at the hearing or call the Committee members. Kravitz thanked the Panel members for an interesting and concise discussion on the issues and their leadership on this topic.

5. Public Comment – None

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Pettengill, Recording Secretary
