

**Housing Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**December 14, 2023**  
**7:00pm**

**Present:** Bill Hanson (co-facilitator), Ian Rogers (co-facilitator), Janice Loz, Karen Coyne, Mike Tardiff (CNHRPC), Bob Holmes, Bob Bower, Jackie Germain, James Gaffney, Andy Bodnarik, Dana Myskowski (arrived late)

Co-facilitator Ian Rogers opened the meeting at 7:00pm. Co-facilitator Bill Hanson distributed the minutes from the November meeting. Bill proposed a motion to approve the minutes with minor amendments, and it was approved.

Ian briefly summarized the community engagement ideas from the previous meeting. The ideas can be sorted into three categories: 1) Ways of sharing the survey, 2) Doing an event, and 3) Ways of talking to people in the community. These will be discussed in more detail in January.

Ian reminded the group that if anyone has ideas for topics for future meetings, they can let either of the co-facilitators know so they can add the topic to a future agenda.

Regarding housing data, Andy has spoken with Stephanie Alexander from Central NH Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC), who clarified the difference between Census tracts and Zip Code tracts. Andy believes it will be best to use the actual geography of the town for examining data. CNHRPC uses the data from the 2020 Census, with estimates for 2021 and 2022 from the 5-year American Community Survey (ACS). In these cases, it's best to cite data sources. Mike Tardiff from CNHRPC added that comparing different data sources (the Census and the ACS) can be like comparing apples and oranges, and examining smaller communities can be more difficult, with higher margins of error. The 2020 data can be a good starting point, with other data sources added as part of the mix.

James raised a concern about how COVID has affected populations trends moving in and out of the state, to which Mike recommended using the survey to address this. Mike also recommended using the survey to get a narrative—allowing people to give a paragraph, and share their stories.

Andy noted that newer structures and building changes will need to be captured in the data, including ADUs. Building an ADU requires a building permit. The building cards, however, have not been computerized. It may also be possible to find the data using computerized records from Assessing. Select Board Secretary Judy Newman-Rogers may also have an Excel spreadsheet of all the building permits.

Ian asked Mike how we can judge whether data is reliable. Mike suggested that differences between the Census and the ACS are one indicator, along with a gut check. The methodologies for the research are also available. Mike also recommended leaning on Stephanie from CNHRPC for data.

Bob Bower asked which categories of data are being collected, and expressed a concern about using population projections. Mike spoke to how projections are collected, along with greater population trends: though more people are coming into the state, more people are also dying. CNHRPC uses a calculation for the number of recommended units based on statewide trends.

James also spoke to the need to look at regional trends, as opposed to townwide or statewide trends. The CNHRPC Regional Housing Needs Assessment is available on the Town website. A discussion about population projections followed. A fact sheet explaining more about these projections is on the NH Department of Business and Economic Affairs website.

Moving on to the Town Housing Survey, Ian reminded the group about how the 2008 Town survey was conducted (by mail and online via Survey Monkey). Mike noted that in recent years, paper survey responses have decreased dramatically, and may not be worth the time and cost. One option is to send a postcard to residents, which can note that a paper copy is also available. Pros and cons of different survey methods were discussed, particularly regarding older residents. Bob Holmes noted that the library has a list of people who receive the library newsletter in hard copy, who may also want a paper survey. Andy also noted that sharing a URL (rather than just a QR code) is important.

James raised a concern about methodology and the integrity of the survey, with discussion about the possibility of people filling out multiple surveys and how to prevent this. Mike replied that CNHRPC has talked about this issue over the years, but found that “people just don't fill out four of these things.”

Janice asked about how the open-ended questions on the survey will be used. Mike replied that the CNHRPC staff can read through all of the responses and come up with a summary, as they recently did with Canterbury. If a bunch of responses say one thing, this could give the HAC ideas for how to proceed. We could start to see some themes, and larger numbers of people who say the same thing; the HAC could then examine how this translates to the Master Plan. There was also discussion about the size of the response field and how much people can write.

Janice also raised the concern that questions on the survey should directly relate to the Master Plan. Bill voiced that there was no harm in asking, and we might find something useful. Mike added that a preamble explaining what the survey is and is not could be beneficial.

There was some discussion of demographics, their importance, and how they could be used. This led to discussion of who decides what goes into the Master Plan. Bob Holmes noted that the Master Plan was about the future of Warner, though Karen noted that it was not up to the HAC to decide the future of Warner. Mike summarized that the Master Plan is the Planning Board's document, and that it provides the basis for zoning ordinances and potential changes.

Mike explained options for distributing the survey, and noted that CNHRPC has a newer survey program with more graphic capabilities. The HAC can send CNHRPC a text file with survey questions, and CNHRPC can conduct the survey, along with creating a postcard mailer. Many members voiced their agreement to this suggestion.

Because the discussion ran long, it was agreed on that the survey would be finalized in January. Mike also suggested that a small test group could take the survey first.

Finally, Janice showed the updates to the HAC brochure, which now includes different types of housing and housing-related quotes, along with a disclaimer that these are not the opinions of the HAC. The brochure is not yet ready to go out, but could be used as an icebreaker for community engagement. Mike added that quotes like these could also be used in the Master Plan (“What the Community Said”).

The meeting adjourned at 8:27.