



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Barney Heath
Director of
Planning & Development

Malcolm Lucas
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Members

Esther Schlorholtz, Chair
Donna Rigg, Vice-Chair
Beatrice Flores
Judy Korzenowski
Josephine McNeil
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CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Fair Housing Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Date: October 2, 2024

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Place: Virtual (Zoom)

Members Present: Esther Schlorholtz, Chair

Donna Rigg, Vice Chair

Judy Korzenowski

Josephine McNeil

Tatjana Meschede

Steve West

Beatrice Flores

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Malcolm Lucas, Housing Planner

Jini Fairley, ADA/Sec. 504 Coordinator

Lara Kritzer, Director of Housing and Community
Development

Allison McIntyre, Housing Development Planner

Public Present:

Pam Wright, Council

Andreae Downs, Council

Mignonne

Malcolm Lucas, Housing Planner served as recorder, Esther Schlorholtz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

To view meeting documents, [click here](#).

1. Approval of September 2024 minutes

- Upon a motion by TM, SW seconded the motion. The September 2024 minutes were approved 6-1-0, with one abstention.



2. Fair Housing Training Plans

- ES thanked AM for providing information about an upcoming fair housing training for property managers in October 9, 2024. Regional Housing Services Opportunities is hosting the training, and the presenters are Suffolk Law. ES stated that she and BF will attend and hoped that the other members would attend. The time will be during the day. ES stated that in addition the FHC is planning to host a training for real estate professionals. ES stated that she will work with JK to plan for January/February 2025. ES asked if there were any questions, there were no questions or comments.

3. Housing Navigator Massachusetts

- ES introduced AM to the committee and AM began the presentation with explaining to the committee of her work with the Housing Navigator staff. AM stated that she wanted to make sure that the Planning Department and the Fair Housing Committee stay coordinated on the efforts, knowing the FHC has also been working with the Housing Navigator and they are not separately working on the same work which would be counterproductive. AM stated that she would like to support the FHC in their efforts and what is acceptable with her supervisor and when she has the availability.
- AM began to state what the Housing Navigator is and walked through the website's capabilities and gave an example of what a person who was searching for affordable housing steps. AM explained that this tool maps out affordable housing occupancy, lotteries and waitlist throughout the state and it also provides resources and data reports if needed. She stated that the website has a wealth of information and if there is a piece of information that is not available or visible in the platform a person is directed to contact the Housing Navigator directly.
- AM also shared with the FHC that the Housing Navigator staff collects data and uploads everything by hand and stated that she has a spreadsheet that she created to gather data from property owners that helped her to communicate with the Housing Navigator staff what is available in Newton. AM stated she also wanted to focus making sure that the accessibility and adaptability information is available for Newton properties on their platform. AM stated she can also find this information in documents that is associated with funding agreements and leases.
- AM posed a question to the FHC on why a property would not appear on the Housing Navigator website. ES stated congregate housing and housing that is reserved for special populations that is being served for security issues. JM stated that the program is voluntary so people who do not want to put their property on the Housing Navigator does not have to. AM agreed with both answers.
- ES asked if the subsidized housing inventory is required through EOHL. ES stated it is a requirement because the process of 40B and these projects are also required to pay a fee. AM stated that it may be a requirement but thinks that it would be automatic because the SHI units are affordable. AM stated that she would look into this, but she wanted more clarification and asked what the reason for would be having this information for someone who is looking for affordable housing on this platform. ES stated in the presentation the Housing Navigator gave the staff person stated that they were meeting with the NHA and the City of Newton in talking about creating a partnership and setting up a formal process for reporting updates. ES thought that there was not a formal process. LK stated that Newton is a part of the Housing Navigator and Googled it and shared the information on the page with the FHC. LK stated that there is a relationship, and the Housing Navigator has a

very complete assessment with Newton's properties. She also stated that the updating/reporting is largely the responsibility of the property management companies. ES stated that this is great to hear. ES thanked AM and stated that she is looking forward to hearing the designated affordable unit are required by the state to report to the Housing Navigator.

4. IZ Update

- ES gave a brief updated and thanked LK for putting her in touch with the consultants who have been working on the five-year reporting requirement that the city has to ensure the zoning program is functioning properly. ES stated that it was a very good discussion and stated that it was a follow up discussion from the recommendations that were made by the committee. The three priority categories that were focused on was affordability, accessibility and enhancing the city oversight and data collection of IZ units. Discussion also was about the affordability and accessibility issues that are affected by financial feasibility.
- ES stated that RKG is very knowledgeable and feels that they have a thorough review. ES asked when the report was due. LK stated that she believes the process was six months and estimated that they will come back in the new year to check in and to report back. LK stated that there are a few more steps in this process. LK stated that the findings need to be presented to the Zoning and Planning Committee and the Housing Partnership, so timing is not a set time because it depends on agendas that is why there is some flexibility. LK invited to the Housing Partnership when it is ready to be presented. Right now, they are still doing interviews with stakeholders and people who had done development. City Council and developers are meeting with the consultants as well. Planning is trying to get as many voices as possible.

5. Housing Priorities Task Force Update

- ES gave an update about the task force. The task force focuses on, an affordable housing need in Newton and the region. It includes representation by the Affordable Housing Trust, the Newton Housing Partnership, and the Fair Housing Committee. ES stated that this is very valuable and stated that LK has been deeply involved and spoke about the analysis that the group came up with which was instructive, related to rental and ownership housing. The total inventory and qualifying reported is a little over 4000, half of that coming from the comprehensive permit and another 1500 from the special permit but only 63 by right.
- This includes the SHI and affordable units that have deed restrictions. There are around 311 homeownership qualifying units. After ES brief review she asked if TM or JM had any comments. TM thanked ES and stated that she gave a great summary and stated that the task force is definitely a work in progress, and it takes longer that they would have thought. TM stated that it is challenging to figure out what are good comparisons within in the region. Cities like Newton are wealthier. TM did state that they have ran into data challenges to get demographic information for Newton alone. She stated that there is a huge segregation pattern of housing in the greater metropolitan area and that the group wants to stay away from reinforcing this pattern. TM stated that she thinks the policy recommendations are important, but data is also a important piece. JM stated that her view was that the group has not discussed priorities and still needs some refinement and asked LK for clarification. LK stated that planning staff has worked diligently on this, and they are still fine tuning some things and most of the data has been collected at this point. LK did agree that the priority discussion has not been discussed and is hoping this will be the next step. JM stated that she and TM have been working together and suggested that data should also be collected from market rate renters and low-income renters to help define

our priorities based upon the need and from a fair housing perspective. This is also a task that they have been working on as well.

- JF stated that she also attended the group, and she was also interviewed regarding the assessable apartment availability in Newton. JF stated that she was working on and looking into because she did not have exact numbers. ES encouraged JF to attend the task force meetings because she has great knowledge and information.

6. Subcommittee Updates

- **Lottery Results & Lease-ups Sub-Committee**
 - There are not any updates at this time.
- **Membership & Nominating Sub-Committee**
 - ES asked DR if there were any updates. DR stated that there were not any updates at this time.
- **Fair Housing Award Sub-Committee**
 - ES stated that there were not any updates at this time. ES stated that they will not start this process until the New Year and asked members to think about nominations.

7. Fair Housing Committee Priorities Discussion

FH Protected Groups

- **Promote housing choice for diverse populations to advance Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH), with focus on race/ethnicity, public subsidy, family status, and disability**
- **Promote Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in Newton**
- **Promote effective processes/practices for new affordable homeownership and resales**
- **Promote improved practices for real estate professionals to achieve more housing choice for diverse populations**
- **Identify and work to overcome barriers to successful tenancies and to improve processes/practices for tenant selection in lottery and market rate multifamily rental housing**

Learning/Teaching

- **Enhance FH literature and website information and access for the public**
- **Promote FH training for real estate professionals, landlords, tenants, the public and committee members**

Data and Analysis

- **Promote data collection on multi-family rental and new homeownership occupancy**
- **Enhance Project Review of Housing Developments to advance AFFH**
- **Support AI/Consortium Fair Housing Testing and FH testing in Newton**

Collaboration

- **Collaborate with Related Newton Commissions and Committees to increase affordable housing for households of various sizes and lower incomes and to encourage increased funding for affordable housing**
- **Promote affordable housing production in coordination with other City commissions and committees**
- **Support federal, state and city initiatives that promote AFFH**
- **Collaborate with Human Rights Commission on Fair Housing Complaint Process**
- **Contribute to Newton's FH-related plans**
- **Address committee membership appointments with representation from Human Rights Commission and legal counsel with FH specialty**

Next meeting: Wednesday, November 6, 2024.

*Supplementary materials are available for public review in the Planning Department of City Hall (basement) the Friday before the meeting. For more information contact **Malcolm Lucas at 617.796.1149**. The location of this meeting/event is wheelchair accessible and Reasonable Accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities who require assistance. If you need a Reasonable Accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance (2 weeks for ASL or CART) of the meeting/event: jfairley@newtonma.gov or (617) 796-1253. The city's TTY/TDD direct line is: 617-796-1089. For the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), please dial 711