

Housing Advisory Committee

Friday, November 15, 2019 Meeting

Draft Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Nancy Belanger, John Mueller, Molly Cowan (Select Board Representative), Pete Cameron (Planning Board Representative), Lindsay Sonnett and Tim Roache, Executive Director of Rockingham Planning Commission.

Absent: Russ Dean, Town Manager and Dave Sharples, Planning Department

Also in attendance: Peter Francese.

Meeting began at 8:35 am

- a. Review and approval of meeting minutes: October 11, 2019 Meeting and November 1, 2019 work session meeting minutes approved.
- b. New Business/ Old Business: None
- c. Peter Francese attended our meeting to talk about the upcoming release of Communities and Consequences II.

Mr. Francese shared his findings while researching for his upcoming book. Main points were that NH is the second oldest state in the country. Housing crisis is dire and starting to negatively impact our economy as there isn't housing available for workers. This is largely attributed to age restricted housing that is pervasive.

In 1990 - age distribution mirrored the country
Currently - the age distribution

Rebalancing of NH's Human Ecology
Lorraine Merrill/Peter Francese

According to NH Housing Finance Authority studies age restricted housing is the most popular housing being built.

12,000 units in 2006
17,000 units in 2019
There has been a 40% increase

All other housing went up 6%

Mr. Frances recommended a recent report issued by Dr. England on behalf of the NH Association of Realtors/kids Report:
[https://www.nhar.org/assets/pdf/England_student_enrollment_Final_Report_to_NHAR\(2\).pdf](https://www.nhar.org/assets/pdf/England_student_enrollment_Final_Report_to_NHAR(2).pdf)

The issue of how property tax abatements and especially tax exemptions are affecting the tax base and the funds communities have available to them. Property tax exemptions in Exeter are among the highest in the state. We are currently losing \$700K-\$800K in taxes because of the exemptions.

The only affordable housing is for elderly folks and is age restricted housing. There is an estimated 980 age restricted housing units in Exeter.

Mr. Frances also touched on Pelham, NH and that the town abolished age restricted housing by ballot in 2018 - by a vote of 2-1. They are now focused on working on workforce housing initiatives.

Amtrak is critical to Exeter. So is Philips Exeter Academy. It was predicated years ago that "college towns would be the factory towns of the future."

NH Growth since 2010 is at 7%. Growth rate will double in the next few years.

Another concern is that deaths exceed births in NH by a factor of 2 to 1.

Immigration is the largest growth of towns in NH. "New Americans" are revitalizing many towns in NH.

The greatest demand for housing are going to be for families with children. One of the reasons is because employers can't find workers.

The State of New Hampshire has done a carve out from real estate transfer tax to finance workforce housing throughout the state (\$5million).

1. 10% decline in the number of children statewide and in Exeter - total cost of public education has been virtually flat in the same time. The fact that school populations have been flat or declining but the cost of public education has not declined is something that people are still not understanding. The average size of classroom has gone from 24-22. This is the only result of flat or declining school enrollment.
2. Capacity in the schools: Build the housing and bring the students. We have capacity in the schools.
3. The mythology that every single dwelling unit puts 2 kids in schools (100 housing units of non-age restricted housing will put maybe 20 kids into public schools)

Our next meeting will be on Friday, December 13, 2019.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 am

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Belanger

Chair of Housing Advisory Committee