



Agenda Abstract

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Meeting date: April 25, 2022
 Department: Town Board
 Public hearing: No
 Date of public hearing: N/A

For clerk's use

AGENDA ITEM:

	4.B	
Consent agenda	Regular agenda	Closed session

PRESENTER/INFORMATION CONTACT

Commissioner Mark Bell

ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED

Subject: Draft Affordable Housing Guiding Principles

Attachments:

Draft Affordable Housing Guiding Principles

Brief summary:

Receive a report from Commissioner Bell regarding draft affordable housing guiding principles.

Action requested:

Receive report and discuss next steps.

ISSUE OVERVIEW

Background information and issue summary:

The Comprehensive Sustainability Plan is in development and will include detailed information about the town's vision for housing in Hillsborough, including affordable housing. So far this year, multiple development proposals that include a substantial number of residential units have been brought to the attention of the board. The board would like to articulate guiding principles around affordable housing to help focus our efforts and provide developers and stakeholders a concise statement of the board's intent while we await the Comprehensive Sustainability Plan later this year. This draft list of guiding principles was compiled following individual interviews with the mayor and board to further this effort.

Financial impacts:

None.

Staff recommendation and comments:

At the April regular meeting, Commissioner Bell indicated that the Community Home Trust needed to know the town's priorities or policies related to affordable housing to guide their discussions with applicant developers. The attached list is Commissioner Bell's work following discussions with board members. Staff will be preparing guidelines for how any local funds designated for this purpose may be spent and investigating what steps and guidance are needed to move away from a case-by-case discussion of expectations for applicant housing developers. In staff's opinion, the attached list should be viewed as a stop-gap document to fill in until the Comprehensive Sustainability Plan and staff work is completed. This work should be complete in coming months and certainly prior to the end of the calendar year.

Draft Guiding Principles for Affordable Housing

1. Pause approval of new residential developments until adoption of affordable housing guiding principles that will ultimately be synthesized with the Comprehensive Sustainability Plan later this year
2. Establish a affordable housing fund and begin contributing to it in the upcoming FY, ramping up to 2% of general fund over 3-5 years; funds will be used for all aspects of our housing efforts
3. Prioritize surplus town-owned land for potential affordable housing
4. Dedicate at least 1/3 of remaining buildable train station land to future affordable housing in partnership with a trusted entity; the town is not likely to build, own, or manage the housing ourselves
5. Increase funding of programs to help residents stay in their homes by supporting repairs and efficiency improvements; help residents navigate other agencies and organizations that provide similar services
6. Require 15% affordable housing units in new residential developments, more if a property is zoned other than residential, but also have flexibility to achieve overall goals of the town
7. Develop a diverse portfolio of affordable housing for various income levels and priority populations, such as disabled individuals, senior citizens, veterans, and middle-income residents; strive for an appropriate mix of ownership and rental units
8. Add inclusionary zoning to the UDO, if necessary, to require developers to adhere to our affordable housing requirements
9. Consider affordable housing payment in lieu only for smaller developments and dedicate these funds to the new affordable housing fund
10. Target real permanence for housing units, not short term such as 30 years
11. Avoid approval of development on parcels that will place a burden on residents or funders of affordable housing because of issues such as siting, topography, above-average construction costs, and restrictions by funders or regulators
12. Include consideration of connectivity and access to public transportation when reviewing proposals for affordable housing development
13. Strive for new affordable housing that is appealing and meaningfully integrated into larger developments
14. Develop a dashboard for the town website that tracks affordable housing progress, highlights challenges and successes, and is reviewed quarterly
15. Identify a town staff member to run point on affordable housing, including to work with developers, maintain an inventory of units, identify relevant resources, and collaborate with stakeholders and peer municipalities to learn about best practices and funding opportunities