



**City of Torrington  
Housing Plan Steering Committee  
June 28, 2022  
MINUTES**

Present: Jocelyn Ayer, Planning Consultant  
Sharon Waagner, former City Councilor  
Claudia Sweeney, Torrington Housing Authority  
Jeremy Leifert, Torrington City Planner  
Nate Nardi-Cyrus, Asst. Torrington City Planner

Not Present: Starley Arias, Torrington Planning and Zoning Commissioner

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m., via Zoom on line

**1) Approve meeting minutes- April and May**

Passed until later in meeting.

**2) Discuss committee comments on DRAFT housing affordability plan**

Ms. Waagner said she had spent much time reviewing the plans provided by Ms. Ayer. She has spoken to many residents regarding affordable housing in Torrington. Renters have expressed much difficulty with applications, such as the Pennrose property application process. Consideration should be given to providing a method of assistance to help people move forward with their applications.

Ms. Waagner has been explaining to people the definition of affordable housing, and the negative comments she has received regarding Section 8. Ms. Ayer noted it is not permitted for a landlord to not allow Section 8.

Committee members noted the negative perceptions of Section 8, and Ms. Waagner and Ms. Ayer agreed further education is needed regarding this program, and to provide a method where landlords can learn more about what is required. Information is needed to dispel myths about Section 8. Ms. Waagner has received many negative comments from landlords about Section 8, and this needs to be addressed. A workshop and written material could be helpful to educate people. Per Ms. Ayer, real estate agents are aware there cannot be discrimination against Section 8. Ms. Ayer will prepare draft information regarding this topic.

Ms. Ayer screen shared the draft City of Torrington Housing Affordability Plan.

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus provided comments regarding his experience with land conservation efforts, and affordable housing. The open space map in the plan appears to be outdated. Mr. Leifert will provide an updated Open Space Map. Ms. Ayer noted 23% of land in Torrington is

protected, and housing will not be built in those areas. Mr. Leifert stated the State of CT targets 21% of land targeted as preserved, and Torrington is over that amount with 23%. Ms. Ayer suggested more clarity in this area.

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus provided information on preservation and open space areas accessible to residents. Most areas of open space are located further away from the most suitable land for affordable housing. Mr. Nardi-Cyrus noted clarity is needed for the open space land that is not suitable for development. Ms. Waagner noted State parks and the trails network areas.

Mr. Leifert said the City will be reviewing open space parcels, and thought will be given on what to do with less valuable parcels, the City may be in a position to market some of them close to town. Ms. Ayer said such parcels may be good for first time home buyers, and there could be a possibility of grant money.

Minus the Torrington Water Company land, the map could be revised per Mr. Nardi-Cyrus.

**3) Discuss date for informational meeting with P&Z, City Council, and invite residents  
Outreach for informational meeting on draft plan**

Committee members discussed timing of meetings going forward with Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. Ms. Ayer will speak to Mayor Carbone and Rista Malanca, Economic Development Director, for their input and review of the draft plan. The final draft plan would be posted on the City's website for 35 days prior to the City Council's adoption of the plan. (Ms. Claudia Sweeney joined the meeting at this time.)

Ms. Sweeney clarified terminology for Section 8, the term rental assistance will work. She reviewed the numbers on the inventory of dedicated affordable housing units.

The residential section of the Torrington Zoning Regulations was reviewed by Ms. Ayer. Parcels that could accommodate multi family housing, eight acres or more, both developed and undeveloped now. Mr. Leifert noted the 30 acres of land owned by TDF, and the 60 unit multi-family housing development that was denied. Mr. Leifert suggested noting the total number of developable acres in town. Zone Changes are not possible in the RWP zones.

The Committee was comfortable with this proposal going out as the Draft Plan.

**1. Approve meeting minutes- April and May**

MOTION by Ms. Sweeney to approve the amended March 2022 minutes, the April 2022 minutes and the May 2022 minutes, seconded by Ms. Waager, Ms. Ayer noted correction to April 2022 minutes, page 2, "Torrington Affordable Housing Association", to delete the word "Association". TAH, Torrington Affordable Housing.

Ms. Ayer noted on the May 2022 minutes, page 2 near to bottom, Ms. Ayer is not working with the Torrington Housing Authority Board to move forward. Ms. Sweeney noted additional Board members are needed.

Motion by Ms. Sweeney to approve the April 2022 and May 2022 minutes with corrections, motion seconded by Ms. Waagner, unanimously carried.

**4) Next meeting date (July 26<sup>th</sup> at 4pm)**

Ms. Ayer will speak to Rista Malanca this week for any updates, and timing of meetings going forward. Torrington Planning and Zoning Commission, Economic Development Commission, and the Blight Task Force should receive a copy. Rista will be asked if Torrington Development Corporation should receive a copy. Committee members can forward copies to interested parties as well.

Ms. Sweeney emphasized it is important to briefly meet with Mayor Carbone with the draft report in hand. Mr. Leifert said he has a standing meeting every Monday morning with Mayor Carbone and Rista Malanca. Ms. Ayer can attend if needed.

Ms. Ayer will keep the Committee updated on the next meeting date. It is beneficial to meet with Mayor Carbone in preparation for the City Council meeting. Ms. Sweeney noted more so than any town she has worked in, many Torrington residents love their town, and any changes are carefully scrutinized by many residents. Ms. Waagner agreed, and more preparation is key.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.