

## City of Torrington

### Housing Plan Steering Committee

#### Meeting Minutes (amended on 3-22-22, Page 2, Paragraph 1)

January 25, 2022

Present: Jocelyn Ayer, Community and Economic Development Director  
Northwest Connecticut Council of Governments (NWCOCG)  
Jeremy Leifert, Torrington City Planner  
Claudia Sweeney, Director, Torrington Housing Authority  
Sharon Waagner, Torrington City Councilor

Not Present: Starley Arias, Torrington Planning and Zoning Commissioner  
Rista Malanca, Torrington Economic Development Director

Jocelyn Ayer called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. via zoom on line.

- 1) Discuss Resident Housing Needs Survey results to date
  - Sample size for 95% confidence level
  - Discuss whether to keep survey open and/or do more/different outreach
  - Worker survey outreach & results to date
  - New Opportunity client housing needs survey

J. Ayer stated 278 responses have been received to the English survey, and 26 responses to the Spanish survey

J. Leifert noted the surveys are slanted towards people owning a single family house, with some commuter responses. We need a push for different survey versions to hit other groups for responses.

S. Waagner suggested surveys placed at Friendly Hands food bank and Senior Housing and Senior Center, to hand our paper surveys.

C. Sweeney noted her clients are not moving, and won't do any responses on a computer. The library is a good resource to utilize. A high percentage of people responded who live in a single family home.

J Ayer suggested flyers and paper copies be available in the library. She has spoke with Maria at New Opportunities, who indicated people there would probably not complete the survey. Her staff may assist people with completing the survey for them. J. Ayer provided Maria an abbreviated version of the survey to provide their clients, as 17 out of 20 people who call New Opportunities have housing needs.

S. Waagner noted some residents may be hesitant to go to a government entity such as a library and complete a survey on line. There may be reluctance on the part of non-citizens to fill out such a survey. J. Ayer will provide information for S. Waagner to get to the library.

J. Leifert will work with Richard in the City's Economic Development Office.

J. Ayer noted the high costs of heating, and there are many programs for heating assistance, and this issue shouldn't be that much of a concern. J. Ayer noted accessory apartments, and there is a low response interest in accessory apartments.

***J. Leifert noted approximately 45% of adults are interested in downsizing. J. Ayer stated there were many comments about high property taxing. S. Waager noted discussion is needed on what residents are receiving for their tax dollars. (paragraph amended during minutes approval at the March 22, 2022 meeting)***

J. Ayer stated on the worker survey, Richard has prepared both in English and Spanish a survey geared to workers in the area, there was zero response to the English survey and one response to the Spanish version. She will be following up with JoAnn Ryan, Rista Malanca and Richard.

2) Plan for informational forum on the Housing Plan- date, agenda, outreach

The agenda and ideas were reviewed by Committee members. Mayor Carbone will be asked if she wants to give the introduction. C. Sweeney can explain what units she has available for housing, etc. C. Sweeney noted past City Council meeting, many people were irate because they thought housing would be Section 8. Some people do not recognize the difference between affordable housing and subsidized housing. S. Waagner stated this is a valid point, and there is much misunderstanding of this issue. C. Sweeney stated it can create a cloud over whatever you are trying to do, and the need for housing is enormous.

J. Ayer will develop some slides, and the forum will take place via zoom. Details of how the meeting will be held were discussed. March 9, 2022 is the suggested date for the forum.

3) Next steps and next meeting date (Feb. 22 at 4pm)

- Homework- based on the housing data analysis, survey results, and your experience, what housing needs should this plan focus on creating?

February 22, 2022 is the next Housing Plan Steering Committee meeting, and the informational forum will be discussed further.

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.