



BOARD OF HEALTH

~ MINUTES ~

Wednesday, September 30, 2025,

Meeting Trailer Room A, 131 Pleasant, Nantucket MA, 02554

This meeting was held via remote participation using ZOOM and YouTube.

Staff in attendance: Roque Miramontes, Director of Public Health; John Hedden, Chief Environmental Health Officer.

Members attending: Ann Smith (chair), Meredith Lepore (Vice-chair), Kerry McKenna, James Cooper, Thomas Dixon

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hill called the Select Board meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

Vice Chair Topham called the Planning Board meeting to order at 4:02 PM.

Chair Sullivan called the Affordable Housing Trust to order at 4:02 PM.

Chair Smith called the Board of Health to order at 4:02 PM.

II. JOINT HOUSING MEETING WITH PLANNING BOARD, AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST AND BOARD OF HEALTH

Discussion:

- Ms. Ferrantella reviewed the purpose of the meeting.
- Ms. Barrett called for introductions around the room, which followed. Ms. Barrett reviewed her role as the Facilitator and reviewed the agenda materials. Ms. Barrett asked for input on housing values.
- Ms. Mohr joined the meeting remotely at 4:11 PM.
- Mr. Kitchener, Ms. Dey, Chair Hill, Mr. Lowell, Mr. Sullivan, Ms. Lepore, Mr. Fee, Mr. Topham, Ms. Mohr, Ms. Rayport, Ms. Smith all commented on housing values.
- Ms. Barrett opened the discussion for the next agenda item, relating to housing permitting, specifically what works well and what could be improved. Chair Hill commented that the complexity of the permitting process has increased significantly. Ms. Barrett encouraged discussion as to what could make things better. Mr. Fee spoke on streamlining for small projects. Mr. Topham agreed. Ms. Dey spoke on the expense that Massachusetts procurement requirements can add to municipal projects. Mr. Sullivan concurred with Chair Hill, as did Ms. Mohr. Ms. Mohr noted that current requirements for professional services need to change and suggested that grants be made available for deed-restricted properties for professional services. Ms. Lepore suggested a checklist. Ms. Barrett asked about improving communications among departments, if that is an issue. Mr. Iverson noted that complex properties have complex permitting. He said there are ways to simplify permitting for single family homes. Mr. Lowell spoke on some of the history around housing permitting. Ms. Bloise-Murphy spoke on the benefits of centralized permitting and said there are internal efforts to move in this direction. Mr. Topham spoke on a “slow down” being with some of the regulatory boards. Ms. Rayport spoke in favor of hiring a Historic District Commission coordinator; and a re-write of the HDC design guide. Ms. Barrett suggested focus on specifically how the boards communicate. Mr. Fee suggested that it is typical for applicants to get approval from a “lenient” board and then go to other boards. Chair Hill added if there are permit conditions, they may still require approval from another board and there tends to be an assumption of approval. James Cooper relayed an account of a Board of Health permitting issue, and emphasized that “following the rules makes things simple”. Mr. Kitchener spoke on how to create more developable land. Ms. Dey spoke on zoning changes and incentives for year-round housing. Mr. Dixon commented that this meeting is helpful for the boards to “get on the same page” and that a meeting like this could be helpful, more frequently, especially for town meeting initiatives.
- Ms. Barrett opened discussion on agenda item # 5, affordable housing policy direction. Chair Hill said focus on the subsidized housing inventory (SHI) should be replaced with a focus on workforce housing. Mr. Fee said the Town’s focus must be on housing town employees. Mr. Bell spoke on the “missing middle” that does not qualify for affordable housing but cannot afford a market unit. Mr. Sullivan stated that Nantucket’s housing problem is not new and added there are many ways to slow down housing projects. Mr. Sullivan said that the AHT should be exploring solutions for the missing middle housing referred to by Mr. Bell. Ms. Mohr spoke on the need to develop a central narrative that all the boards support, using data. Ms. Mack suggested that part of the narrative should be how municipal employees benefit the community. Some discussion followed on this and on the benefits of town employee housing. Mr. Sullivan spoke on identifying what area of the community needs the most support. Mr. Dixon spoke in favor of updating the existing covenant program. Ms. Lepore suggested the “faces” of town

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	employees be publicized. Ms. Rayport spoke on examining taller buildings and re-zone some areas for multi-family housing to increase density. Mr. Sullivan spoke on zoning changes that have recently occurred which do provide opportunities for some of this. • Ms. Barrett moved to agenda item # 6 as to opportunities for year-round housing. Ms. Dey reviewed housing appropriations which have been approved by voters and noted numbers of units that have been added to community housing inventory. Mr. Lowell spoke in favor of improving and updating the covenant housing program. Chair Hill spoke on the potential benefits of denser housing in certain areas, including with height. Mr. Fee said good planning principles need to be followed. Mr. Iverson spoke on initiatives that have begun that may need zoning changes that need to be approved by the voters. Mr. McKenna spoke on the need to maintain water quality of the aquifer. Discussion followed on developing a central location for information about the options for affordable housing. Ms. Mohr spoke in favor of ensuring proper housing that meets the needs of those who need it. Ms. Rayport said the planning department needs more capacity. • Ms. Barrett noted the planning efforts that are underway or about to be and asked for input as to what could be incorporated into those plans. Ms. Dey suggested that research be done on what type of housing people want. Mr. Lowell spoke on the difficulties of public agreement on housing solutions. He added that much progress has been made but it is very hard to get the public to acknowledge it and to explain complex solutions. Ms. Rayport suggested to “plan for community support” and encouraged support for a warrant article sponsored by the Planning Board at a special town meeting in November. Some discussion followed on short-term rental demands and impacts on year-round housing. Ms. Barrett requested that the group re-direct itself to solutions through planning efforts. Mr. Fee suggested that pictures be used to show how housing could actually look, that is reminiscent of downtown Nantucket. Ms. Mohr said that “scattered site housing” should be addressed and consistently explained. Mr. Lowell spoke on zoning in Tom Nevers. Ms. Barrett reiterated the need to explore planning initiatives. Discussion followed. Ms. Dey suggested an analysis of infill opportunities. Chair Hill suggested working with what exists now, promote it, don’t make any changes, fill vacant positions, and provide housing for them. Mr. Sullivan suggested a focus on how projects impact people. Ms. Barrett said that before people leave, they should feel free to put up additional ideas on the boards around the room. Chair Hill suggested a follow-up meeting to take place after the Select Board’s annual strategic plan meeting and then after the special town meeting in November
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III. ADJOURNMENT

Action:	adjourn at 5:59 PM;
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Submitted by: Tomeka Gary