



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK FORUM

KENT HOUSING PLAN- DRAFT GOALS AND STRATEGIES

June 22, 2022

WELCOME!

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK!

FORUM AGENDA:

- **Recap from last meeting**
- **What housing needs is the Kent Housing Plan trying to address?**
- **What goals and strategies are the Kent Steering Committee proposing for feedback?**
- ➡ ■ **Your feedback on proposed goals and strategies!**



KENT'S HOUSING PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Steering Committee Members

- David Birnbaum (Planning & Zoning Commission)
- Tegan Gawel (Templeton Farms and Board of Finance)
- Alice Hicks (Planning & Zoning Commission)
- John Johnson (Zoning Board of Appeals)
- Connie Manes (Conservation Commission)
- Justin Potter (Zoning Board of Appeals and Kent Affordable Housing)
- Jean Speck (Board of Selectmen)
- Virginia Bush Suttman (Kent Affordable Housing)

Planning facilitator

- Jocelyn Ayer- consultant providing technical assistance



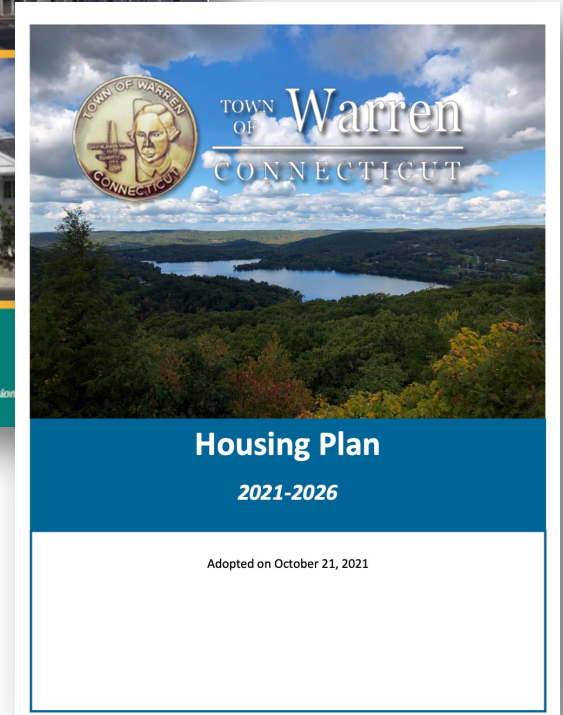
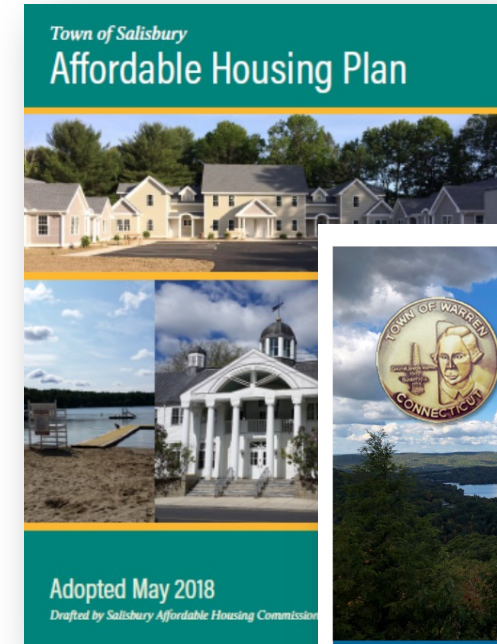
Steering Committee meets monthly

- 4th Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm
- Meetings open to the public
- Agendas and minutes posted on the town website:
www.townofkentct.org

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN A TOWN HOUSING PLAN? (RECAP)

1. **Assessment of current Housing Needs**
 - Resident Housing Needs Survey Results
 - Data analysis
2. **Assessment of existing Housing Stock**
3. **Goals and Strategies** to meet identified housing needs

*Note: this is being **coordinated** with the Town's Plan of Conservation & Development update. This will be a guidance document not regulatory.*



WHAT HOUSING NEEDS IS OUR PLAN TRYING TO ADDRESS?

1. Options for **young adults and young families**
2. Options to **downsize**
 - 1-2 bedroom
 - Lower maintenance
 - **Accessibility** features
3. Options for **people who work in town**



One of Kent's pressing housing needs is for dedicated affordable housing for those who live or work in Kent, especially in these three demographic groups.

What is dedicated affordable housing?



CT General Statutes Definition:

- **Affordable** = Housing that costs 30% of the income of a household earning 80% or less of the area median income (AMI).
- **Dedicated** = This housing must be monitored in some way (deed restriction, state agency, etc.) to assure households are income eligible and rent/mortgage stays affordable.

Kent currently has **67 units** that qualify as dedicated affordable

TABLE: **Income limits** (2021) to qualify for affordable housing

	Household Size			
	1 person	2 people	3 people	4 people
80% of AMI	\$57,680	\$65,920	\$74,160	\$82,320
50% of AMI	\$36,050	\$41,200	\$46,350	\$51,450

EXAMPLE:

- 2-person household at 50% AMI earns \$41,200
- Monthly rent + utilities in affordable housing = less than \$1,030

What shows the need for dedicated affordable housing in Kent?

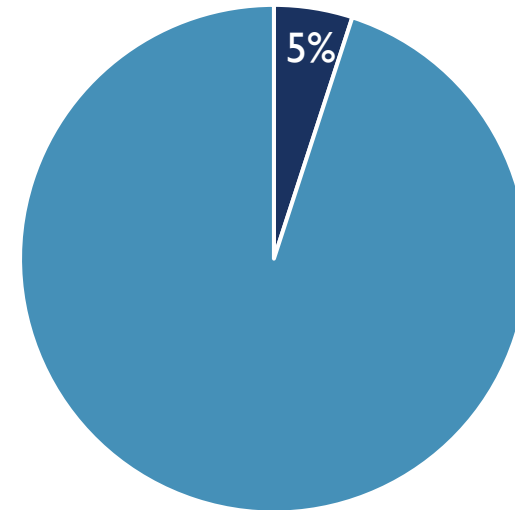
- Kent had **460 households under 80%** of the area median income. These households would be eligible for affordable housing.
 - This represents **40% of Kent's households**
- Kent has **67 homes** that are dedicated to remain affordable to households in this income bracket.
 - This represents **4% of Kent's housing stock**.
- **199 households** are **severely cost burdened** (paying more than 50% of their income on housing costs).
- **107 households** are **currently on waiting lists** for the dedicated units:
 - Templeton Farms- 79 senior households waiting
 - Stuart Farm & South Common- 28 households waiting



HOW MANY DEDICATED AFFORDABLE HOMES WOULD WE WANT TO SEE CREATED OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS?

- Proposed goal: creating **20 homes** over 5 years
- Mix of homeownership and rental
- If Kent was able to add 20 homes over next 5 years, it could get the town to 5% of its housing stock that is dedicated to remaining affordable to these households.
 - 5% of the town's homes would then be dedicated to remaining affordable for the 40% of households in Kent that earn below 80% AMI.

5% percent of homes would be dedicated to remaining affordable for 40% of Kent households



1

Expand and preserve
dedicated affordable
housing in Kent

2

Support affordable
home-buyer options

3

Support the creation
of accessory
apartments

4

Increase the
diversity of Kent's
housing stock

5

Help meet the
housing needs of
those who work and
volunteer in Kent

5 HOUSING PLAN GOALS - OVERVIEW

PROPOSED GOAL 1:

EXPAND AND PRESERVE DEDICATED AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN KENT

2 polling questions

DRAFT Strategies for Feedback:

1. Consider utilizing appropriate town owned properties for this purpose. Properties could be donated, leased, or sold to non-profit housing organizations such as Kent Affordable Housing.
2. Explore the feasibility of additional units at Templeton Farm and South Common, where the waiting lists are often years long.
3. Conduct outreach to Kent landowners to let them know about the option of donating or selling land or old houses to Kent Affordable Housing.

PROPOSED GOAL 2:

SUPPORT AFFORDABLE HOMEBUYER OPTIONS

2 polling questions

DRAFT Strategies for Feedback:

Increase awareness of CHFA (CT Housing Finance Authority), HDF (Housing Development Fund) and FHLB (Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston) **down-payment assistance for income eligible first-time homebuyers and free first-time homebuyer education classes** through an annual article in the town newsletter and other outreach.

Increase awareness about CHFA and USDA programs that **help with mortgages** for income eligible homebuyers. (4 Kent homeowners are already utilizing this program according to the state's affordable housing appeals listing. The sales price limit for CHFA mortgages is currently \$367,580)

Conduct outreach to Kent landowners to let them know about the **option of donating or selling land or houses** to Kent Affordable Housing for their **Parcel Program**. Land could also be donated to NWCT Habitat for Humanity to create affordable homebuyer options.

Explore partnership options between land trusts and Kent Affordable Housing. In the case of undeveloped land not appropriate for conservation, ensure landowners are aware of Kent Affordable Housing and its ability to accept charitable donations.

Establish a **town revolving loan fund** for down payment assistance.

WHAT IS KAH'S “PARCEL PROGRAM”?

- Lots are leased for 99 years to households earning up to 100% of the area median income, reducing the cost of the home.
- Families build their own homes or renovate existing homes

Examples from Cornwall:



PROPOSED GOAL 3:

SUPPORT THE CREATION OF ACCESSORY APARTMENTS

3 polling questions

DRAFT Strategies for Feedback:

1. Include an article in the town newsletter twice per year to let people know about the option of creating an accessory apartment on their property and let them know where they can get more information on this option.
2. Publish a brochure that includes the permitting steps for creating an accessory apartment, benefits, requirements, and available resources. Post on town website.
3. Amend the zoning regulations to allow one attached accessory apartment AND one detached (in accessory building or converted barn/garage) per property.
4. Look for ways to encourage residents to rent their accessory apartments longer-term (rather than AirBnB). This could include a tax deduction, help with credit/background checks on potential tenants, and other technical assistance supporting rentals.
5. Establish a subsidy fund for adding accessory apartments.
6. Provide pre-development technical assistance to property owners considering building an accessory apartment.

PROPOSED GOAL 4:

INCREASE THE DIVERSITY OF KENT'S HOUSING STOCK

- 78% of Kent's housing stock is single family detached homes
- Only 15% of Kent's households have children and yet 60% of the housing stock has 3+ bedrooms.

DRAFT Strategies for Feedback:

1. Publish a fact sheet on what housing options can be created under Kent's zoning regulations including dividing properties, conversions to duplexes, creating accessory apartments, mixed use and village housing.
Post on town website.
2. Encourage development in the town's Village Housing Overlay Zone and Village Mixed Use Overlay Zone. Consider investing ARPA, CDBG or other funding in a town road and/or expanding sewer system capacity as needed in these areas.
3. Consider zoning changes to promote more multifamily housing such as:
 - Eliminating the minimum lot size of one acre for multifamily housing;
 - Reducing the lot area required per unit from 4,000;
 - Raising or eliminating the 8 unit per building cap;
 - Increasing lot area coverage beyond the current 25%;
 - Reducing the parking minimums from 2.5 per unit.
4. Reach out to developers to discuss the feasibility of building multifamily housing in Kent and determining what zoning changes would need to happen.

2 polling questions

PROPOSED GOAL: 5

HELP MEET THE HOUSING NEEDS OF THOSE WHO WORK AND VOLUNTEER IN KENT

DRAFT Strategies for Feedback:

Meet with the **town's larger employers** once per year to find out what their employee housing needs are and discuss ways they could partner with the town and/or Kent Affordable Housing to meet these needs.

Meet with the **Kent Volunteer Fire Department** once per year to find out what their volunteers housing needs are and discuss ways to meet those needs.

Develop and update annually a list of **contact information** for existing landlords and housing developments in Kent to provide to employers and volunteer organizations. Consider using town e-newsletter to let people know about housing opportunities as they arise.

SUPPORT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

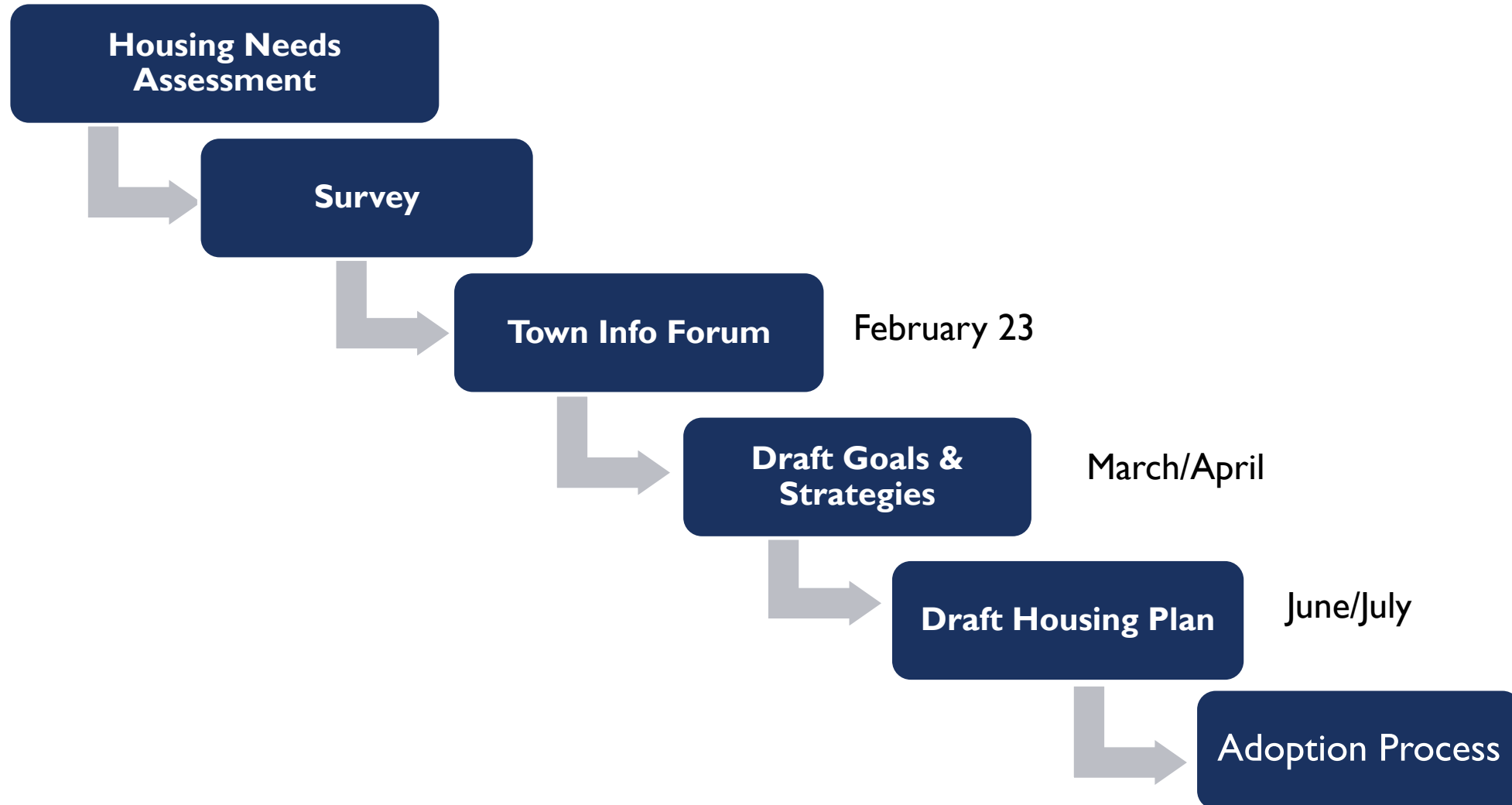
How to we ensure that the strategies in this housing plan will be implemented?

DRAFT Strategies for Feedback:

1. Schedule twice yearly meetings of an **implementation committee** with reps from board/commission listed as responsible for implementation to report on progress.
2. Appoint/hire a town housing coordinator—volunteer or paid—to chair the meetings and assure progress. Such an employee has been recommended in Kent's POCD since 1989.
3. Make the Housing Plan part of the updated Town Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD)
4. Consider establishing a **town affordable housing fund** (like Salisbury, Washington, and other CT towns) to support the achievement of the goals and strategies in this plan. Research what other towns have done and consider what might work for Kent.
5. Continually carry out activities (events, media, etc.) to increase awareness about the housing needs in Kent and how residents can help address these needs.

2 polling questions

NEXT STEPS IN KENT'S HOUSING PLAN PROCESS



QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, FEEDBACK

- **Other ideas for strategies that would help the town address its housing needs?**

