

Introduction to the Hanover Affordable Housing Plan “Housing Needs Assessment”

The Hanover Housing Authority is overseeing the preparation of an Affordable Housing Plan that will suggest a range of options to meet community housing needs and to achieve the state mandated 10% goal under Chapter 40B, the state’s affordable housing development law. Due to the rising costs of housing, including escalating costs associated with taxes and utilities, many residents are finding it increasingly difficult to afford to remain in Hanover. Children who grew up in the town are now facing the likely possibility that they may not be able to return to raise their own families locally. Long-term residents, especially the elderly, are finding themselves less able to maintain their homes and keep up with increased real estate taxes but unable to find alternative housing that better meets their current life styles. Families are finding it more difficult to “buy up,” purchasing larger homes as their families grow. Town employees and employees of local businesses are increasingly hard pressed to find housing that is affordable in Hanover. More housing options are required to meet these local needs and produce Hanover’s fair share of regional needs.

The first part of this planning process is a Housing Needs Assessment that presents an overview of the current housing situation in the town of Hanover, providing the context within which a responsive set of strategies can be developed to address local housing priorities. The Assessment, which is included on this web site, represents a critical step forward in better understanding housing issues in Hanover including the review and assessment of documentation and research already compiled as well as the collection and analysis of new information to document the range of local needs and existing resources, remaining gaps in housing services and programs, local development patterns, as well as current obstacles to affordable housing development. This information, in addition to substantial opportunities for community input, will ultimately provide the context for the Town to chart its own course on affordable housing development.

While Town leaders recognize the importance of becoming more proactive on the issue of housing, the skyrocketing housing prices and heightened interest from developers in producing housing in Hanover through the Chapter 40B comprehensive permit process, has created some urgency in the matter, establishing the importance of learning more about existing housing needs and detailing strategies to meet these needs that would create new affordable housing opportunities more in line with community priorities. The development of Planned Production goals of 33 affordable units per year would further enable the Town to deny unwanted comprehensive permit applications and better control new housing production.

The Housing Needs Assessment forms the foundation for a proactive Affordable Housing Plan which provides specific recommendations to assist Hanover in the “Planned Production” and preservation of affordable housing.