



ATTLEBORO COUNCIL ON HUMAN RIGHTS

MEETING MINUTES

MEETING INFORMATION

Date: Thursday, June 10, 2021

Location: Zoom virtual meeting

<https://brown.zoom.us/j/92229592519?pwd=Zi9TSHVQK3ZSVWpNU2grVEh1Um9uQT09>

Time: 7:30-9pm

Meeting Type: Council on Human Rights Special Meeting to discuss housing concerns forum

Attendees: ACHR members: Jessica Reagan Salzman, Mac Borgellas, Mary Flaherty, & Stephanie Gray. Guest: Janet Richardi.

- I. Secretary Stephanie Gray called the meeting to order
- II. Identify areas of concern relating to housing in Attleboro
 - A. Bristol County – landlords not being fair with rental increases
 - B. New construction is expensive
 - C. Gentrification/displacement of POC
 - D. Gateway city
 - E. Will development lead to bedroom community?
 - F. Seniors on fixed incomes being displaced
 - G. Accessible housing – who is tracking this? (Housing authority)
 - H. Cumbersome process – long wait list
 - I. Cliff effect – forgotten population (those who do not qualify for assistance but cannot afford housing in Attleboro)
 - J. What are politicians doing to entice developers to include affordable housing? Or to contribute to a rental relief fund?
 - K. Rent control bill only affects mobile home parks
 - L. Massachusetts rental voucher program – are we accessing this resource?
<https://www.masslegalhelp.org/housing/types-vouchers>
 - M. United Way Mass Bay tenant relief fund – are we accessing this resource?
<https://unitedwaymassbay.org/news/united-way-calls-for-robust-housing-investments-and-financial-relief-for-tenants/>
 - N. Transition folks out of low income housing with community supports
 - O. Zoning reform – land use
 - P. Land use tax
 - Q. Tax freeze for senior housing

III. ORGANIZATIONS DISCUSSED:

- A. DHCD: Department of Housing and Community Development
- B. GBCATCH: Greater Bristol County Attleboro Taunton Coalition to end Homelessness
- C. United Way – Mass Bay
- D. MA Affordable Housing
- E. Fair Housing of Bristol County and Northern RI
- F. American Credit Counseling
- G. Neighborworks
- H. Attleboro Housing Authority – Paul Dumouchel
- I. Community Development Office – Gary Ayrassian and Dorothy Brissette
- J. Tenants’ rights - Portia Gray-Goffigan
- K. Councilor Ty Waterman – senior citizen concerns

IV. TOPICS/PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED:

- A. Relief fund
 - i. United Way flexible spending pool of money for housing
 - ii. Stronger Together fund
 - iii. Area developers contribute to this fund
- B. Vouchers available across MA – how can we tap into this?
- C. Transitioning people out of affordable housing
 - i. “Cliff effect” (those who do not qualify for services but cannot afford housing)
 - ii. Credit/home ownership workshops
- D. Zoning reform/land use tax

V. WHAT IS THE GOAL?

- A. Engage/establish stakeholders, connect residents with resources/officials
- B. Meet with people/groups in Attleboro already doing this work
- C. Advocate for rental relief/identify barriers
- D. Identify available community resources to share with residents

ACTION ITEMS IDENTIFIED:

1. Send information about community groups discussed in tonight’s meeting – Janet
2. Request discovery meeting with Mayor Heroux - Stephanie
3. Email Lisa Piscatelli for the AAIC’s community resources list - Janet
- 4. Email Sarah Angelovski for APS’s community resources list - Stephanie**
5. Research “affordable housing” criteria
6. Update the chair and rest of the council at the next monthly meeting
7. Schedule follow-up special meeting to continue planning housing concerns forum/workshops

Next meeting: Wednesday, June 16 from 6:30-8pm