

*Town of Weymouth
Massachusetts*

Robert L. Hedlund
Mayor

75 Middle Street
Weymouth, MA 02189



Office: 781.340.5012
Fax: 781.335.8184

TTY: 781.331.5124

Press Release

For Immediate Release – April 2, 2018

Town's Housing Production Plan approved by state

Contact(s): Jane Kudcey, Housing Coordinator
jkudcey@weymouth.ma.us, 781-340-5015

Weymouth, MA – Mayor Robert Hedlund announced today that the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has approved Weymouth's first-ever Housing Production Plan (HPP) for planning and developing a more diverse housing supply and meeting the Town's future housing needs. The HPP was submitted to the DHCD following its approval by the Town Planning Board in January 2018 and the Town Council in February 2018. The HPP is expected to increase the Town's competitiveness in future grant applications as well as provide greater control over potentially undesirable comprehensive permit applications for affordable housing, more commonly known as Chapter 40B applications.

"This Housing Production Plan is the first of its kind for Weymouth," **said Mayor Robert Hedlund**. "It's a significant accomplishment, and will be an important tool for guiding our development strategies and controlling potential Chapter 40B developments. The Planning Department's staff and consultants did an excellent job in assessing our needs and identifying realistic and thoughtful strategies for progress. I look forward to working on these strategies and ensuring that housing resources in Weymouth continue to meet residents' needs."

A HPP is a community's proactive strategy for planning and developing a diverse housing supply based on a comprehensive needs assessment of its housing resources. Using the assessment, the community establishes a numerical goal for annual housing production; identifies qualitative goals for building a more diverse housing supply; and proposes strategies for municipal action to achieve these goals, including [targeting areas](#)

throughout the community for housing production. Communities that obtain a DCHD-approved plan are eligible for competitive grant funding and other opportunities through state agencies that support construction or substantial rehabilitation of affordable housing developments.

Weymouth's HPP was prepared by the Town's Planning and Community Development Department with technical assistance from RKG Associates of Boston. Sources of information for the plan included U.S. census data, population projections, focus groups, two online surveys, two community meetings, and a series of interviews with Town leaders and staff. The project was funded with \$23,582 in local Community Preservation funds, and incorporates a [public health addendum](#) that examines connections between people's health and housing, as well as establishes goals to improve health outcomes.

With a DHCD-approved plan, the Town may have greater control over Chapter 40B applications, which are typically submitted by developers to override local zoning bylaws to create affordable housing. A community's decision to deny a Chapter 40B application (or to approve it with conditions unacceptable to the developer) can be overturned by the state's Housing Appeals Committee (HAC) when less than 10 percent of a community's housing stock is defined as affordable or when less than 1.5 percent of it land area is occupied by affordable housing. If, however, a community has a DHCD-approved HPP and is granted a DHCD certification of compliance with that plan through creation of affordable housing, then the community's decision to deny a Chapter 40B application would be deemed "consistent with local needs" and would be upheld on appeal.

While the HAC has previously found the Town in compliance with Chapter 40B, the HPP's [goals and strategies](#) are intended to assist the community in maintaining this status. The following table summarizes the HPP's goals for meeting Weymouth's current and future needs:

| Housing Production Goal | Potential Strategy to Achieve Goal |
|--|--|
| Encourage development of a mix of housing types appropriate for an aging population. | Build partnerships to invest in affordable housing for seniors and veterans. |
| Integrate affordable units into a broader range of housing types throughout Weymouth's established neighborhoods and new developments. | Provide incentives for developers to include affordable units in market-rate developments (i.e., inclusionary zoning). |
| Continue to invest in Weymouth's existing housing stock and neighborhood infrastructure. | Provide incentives for owners to preserve deed restrictions on expiring affordable-housing units. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Encourage mixed-income housing through mixed-use development in business districts and village centers. | Amend the Town's zoning ordinance to allow a mix of land uses in target areas. |
| Strengthen and expand resources that support pathways to homeownership for first-time homebuyers. | Expand the South Shore HOME Consortium's First-Time Homebuyer Assistance Program. |
| Increase the Town's capacity to spearhead initiatives to create and preserve affordable housing. | Establish a local Affordable Housing Trust with Community Preservation Funds. |

"I want to thank the public for their input, as well as the Planning Board and Town Council for their thoughtful review of this plan," **said Housing Coordinator Jane Kudcey**. "Now that it has been approved by the state, this plan will provide a road map for the Planning Department's future efforts as well as positively impact our ability to receive grant funding from the state."

Weymouth's DCHD-approved HPP is available online, along with its Health Addendum: <http://www.weymouth.ma.us/planning-community-development/pages/housing-production-plan-hpp>. For more information or to ask questions about Weymouth's HPP, please contact Housing Coordinator Jane Kudcey at (781) 340-5015 or send an email to jkudcey@weymouth.ma.us.

###