

MEETING AGENDA

Call to Order - 6:00

Roll Call:

- Sara Bayer - Present
- Philip Mones - Present
- Sophie Grant Present
- Vickie Starr - Present
- Deb Dolan - Present

Greetings to any audience members + Introductions

GUEST: Kai Lord-Farmer, Sr. Planner, Ulster County

The topic for the meeting was to present the “big picture” findings in the Housing Site Inventory Map Kai’s office developed for us this year in conjunction with the housing committee. Some of the key themes included:

- The need for zoning code changes to allow ADUs and mixed-use developments
- the constraints of current zoning codes
- the potential for inclusionary zoning to prioritize workforce housing, senior housing, and housing for young families, giving priority to local workers, responders, and government workers for housing
- The idea of creating a zoning overlay districts for flood zones and specific building code requirements to guide development

The conversation also highlighted the importance of community engagement. We also discussed the impact of existing housing stock on affordable housing, the distinction between affordable and moderate income housing and the challenges of managing short-term rentals, including enforcement and permit issues.

Zoning Constraints and Potential Remedies

- Kai pointed out the constraints of zoning districts, including:
 - current zoning code limits multi-family housing, and is overly restrictive around building ADUs
 - Cluster development (cottage courts, etc.) are difficult to build with our current zoning code, despite the obvious benefits of such development, such as shared infrastructure, which would make these houses more affordable to build.
 - 35-foot height limits and minimum lot size requirements.
- We also discussed the concept of inclusionary zoning, which mandates affordable housing requirements in certain areas. (Olive was referenced as a town working on something like this)
- Another idea is to focus on undersized lots for potential development

- Kai also suggested that density bonuses and other housing smart actions could help increase affordable housing without overburdening the zoning code.

Focus on Building ADUs and Mixed-Use Development

- Kai suggested that allowing ADUs by right could be a first step towards more flexible zoning regulations, and suggested our goal should be to allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by right in certain zoning districts.
- There was a discussion of taking a phased approach to our zoning updates, which could start with short-term changes in the zoning code to allow for ADUs before embarking on the larger zoning overhaul.

Community Engagement and Public Outreach

- The group discussed the importance of community engagement and public outreach in any zoning update, along with clear communication and transparency in the zoning update process.
- Kai suggested the potential for use of existing housing typologies and case studies to inform zoning updates – potentially including images to illustrate the types of housing Shandaken might want to build and see which images people prefer.

Legal and Regulatory Considerations

- The group discusses the legal and regulatory requirements for changing zoning codes, including the need for public hearings and town board approval..
- The conversation included the potential for using strike funds and other mechanisms to facilitate quick acquisition of properties for affordable housing.

Protecting current Affordable Housing

- The group discussed the potential impact of property sales on existing affordable units, such as the Skyrise apartment complex on Ava Maria Road in Phoenicia, which is currently on the market for \$1.9M and contains a number of “affordable” apartments.
- The group discussed the potential for good cause eviction and rent stabilization laws to protect tenants, such as adopting the Emergency Tenant Protection Act (ETPA)
- Specific metrics mentioned were the area median income (AMI) of \$80,000 for home ownership and \$60,000 for rentals, and the need for good cause eviction laws to protect tenants.

Discussion on Environmental Health and Septic Systems

- The Department of Health for Ulster County is constrained by the New York State public health code, limiting leeway for innovative approaches.

- Massachusetts is mentioned as an example of innovative approaches to alternative systems, but New York has not rewritten its state health code.

Motion to close the meeting made by Sophie Grant at 8:15. Motion carried.

Minutes taken by Vickie Starr

The next Housing Smart Committee meeting will take place on Monday, October 27 @ 6pm @ Shandaken Town Hall.