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# Nantucket Housing Summit 2023

Getting to 75 Units Per Year

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## Introduction

On April 28, 2023, fifty-three people convened at the first-ever Nantucket Housing Summit. Housing Nantucket, the Island nonprofit dedicated to preserving and providing equitable housing solutions for Nantucket residents, hosted the event. Real estate developers, private lenders, public sector officials, municipal and state government representatives, nonprofit leaders, philanthropic leaders, key local employers, representatives of island conservation organizations, other community supporters, and guests came together to reflect on the needs and opportunities for affordable housing on Nantucket. Housing and Community Development Consultant Ann L. Silverman facilitated the conversation.

**Participants agreed that there are critical housing challenges for low, moderate and middle income residents of Nantucket County<sup>1</sup>.** There are insufficient rental and homeownership opportunities for people who work and live on Nantucket year round. The Town and key stakeholders have worked diligently to develop a number of tools to address these critical challenges. There have been some successes—including new homes, new funding, and other focused efforts by the Town, Housing Nantucket, private developers, and key employers.

**But the barriers are great**—including the rising median price of housing, and the availability of land, funding, and development expertise on the Island. Participants agreed to collaborate to address those barriers and come up with solutions to this crisis. In a survey completed by more than half of the participants before the Summit, people **agreed on a target of producing 75 units per year to meet affordable housing needs on Nantucket going forward.**

This report outlines the problems and strategies identified, and specific action steps that participants agreed to work on. Subsequent reports will identify progress made and further actions to be taken.

**ISLANDWIDE TARGET FOR HOUSING PRODUCTION OVER NEXT 3 YEARS**



**75 + UNITS PER YEAR**

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this report, low income is defined as below 80% of areawide median income (below \$94,150 for a family of 4 in Nantucket County as of 2023), moderate income is defined as at or above 80% and below 150% of areawide median income (\$94,150-\$205,500 for a family of 4) and middle income is defined as from 150 to 240% of areawide median income.

## LAND

## FUNDING

## DEVELOPMENT

## OPERATIONS

## ADVOCACY

### The Problems

**There is not enough land available to be developed**—Nantucket is an island with a limited amount of space on which to build new or put existing buildings, and restrictions (conservation, zoning) on much of the land.

**Nantucket is an expensive place to build, with limited funding targeted to affordable housing<sup>2</sup>**—Construction costs are very high here, in part because of land costs, in part because of access to materials, and in part because of the desirability and high demand for both year-round and seasonal vacation homes.

**Affordable housing development takes time, infrastructure, and specialized expertise**—Nantucket Island has limited public infrastructure and limited capacity to carry out housing development, as well as a finite workforce, regulatory restrictions, and competing demands for other year-round and vacation homes.

**Affordability restrictions and quality must be maintained over time**—Enforcement of affordability requires tools (for example, deed restrictions or ground leases) and people to do the monitoring. Additionally, any restrictions (income, family size, year-round use) must be clearly stated so that residents understand eligibility. Capital needs of the housing must also be addressed over time.

**Community education and advocacy are required**—There is some opposition to creating more affordable housing on Nantucket (NIMBYism). Supporters must band together to build political will and help people understand the problems and the potential solutions.

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<sup>2</sup> For purposes of this report, “affordable housing” is defined as housing for people of low, moderate or middle income as defined above.

## **The Opportunities—What Can We Do?**

Collaborating in small groups at the Summit, participants came up with a series of strategies to address the above noted problems. These strategies are grouped below in accordance with the problems identified.

### **LAND**

#### **Use the land we have**

- Inventory all available land, including town-owned land, to identify zoning or other restrictions that are keeping that land from being developed.
- Identify land to move available houses to (see below).
- Expedite zoning changes, including increases in density in targeted areas (e.g. 40R districts) to make it easier to build affordable homes.
- Expedite the Request for Proposals (RFP) process to get available town-owned land out for affordable housing development.
- Explore opportunities for land conservation organizations and affordable housing organizations to collaborate, including land swaps and land banking for affordable homes.
- Lobby at the state level to include land donation in the Community Investment Tax Credit (CITC) Program.

### **FUNDING**

#### **Expand the funding resources for affordable housing on the Island**

- Subsidize the cost of development with further government allocations and private money.
- Advocate for the \$6.5 million override for affordable housing at the May 6, 2023 town meeting.
- Continue to advocate at the state level for the real estate transfer fee.
- Create and hold a local “sweepstakes” lottery to raise funds for affordable housing.

# DEVELOPMENT

## Remove barriers and reduce the costs of affordable housing development

- Research wastewater treatment capacity and needs at available sites and assess the cost of package plants for those sites.
- Find ways to reduce the cost of delivering building supplies to the Island, including discounting barge or ferry delivery of modular structures for affordable homes.
- Streamline the permitting process, and offer sample building plans that have been previously approved by the Town to affordable housing developers.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of zoning bylaws.
- Subsidize the cost of preserving and moving structures for affordable housing.
- Allow for increased density and higher building heights for affordable year-round housing.

## Incentivize affordable housing development

- Offer cash grants or other incentives to people with large properties to build accessory dwelling units for year round deed restricted affordable housing.
- Incentivize adding ground cover at existing dwellings.
- Explore bargain sales and other opportunities to donate homes.
- Develop an inclusionary zoning program.
- Expand the Covenant Program.
- Explore further strategies to retain and possibly increase housing restricted to year round use.
- Identify opportunities for local nonprofits to partner with off-island affordable housing developers who have expertise accessing state and federal resources, to develop properties on-island together, and build local nonprofit capacity.
- Design a community impact fee that is imposed on all developers.



## OPERATIONS

### Invest for the long haul

- Complete a comprehensive analysis of what affordable housing exists on Nantucket.
- Invest in additional staffing at the Town, or possibly the Land Bank, to track ownership and sales of land and buildings.
- Subsidize homeowners association fees for deed restricted homeowners.
- Standardize deed restrictions.
- Explore whether a Town office should monitor deed restrictions.
- Examine whether to change to a City Council governance structure.
- Create a community land trust with buildings on ground leased land.
- Prioritize serving town employees and essential workers.

## ADVOCACY

### Continue to advocate and tell our story

- Invest more time and energy in community education and outreach regarding the need for affordable housing on Nantucket.
- Create a media campaign.
- Agree on and use standardized definitions that fit Nantucket(affordable, attainable, year-round, workforce).
- Make connections for seasonal residents between housing insecurity and quality of life for all (e.g. lack of essential personnel for public safety, lack of workforce in the hospital and schools).
- Tell stories of the impact of affordable housing on the Island that document the need to move projects and programs forward.
- Continue to hold meetings like the Housing Summit, bringing more voices in and possibly using the Community Foundation as a convener.

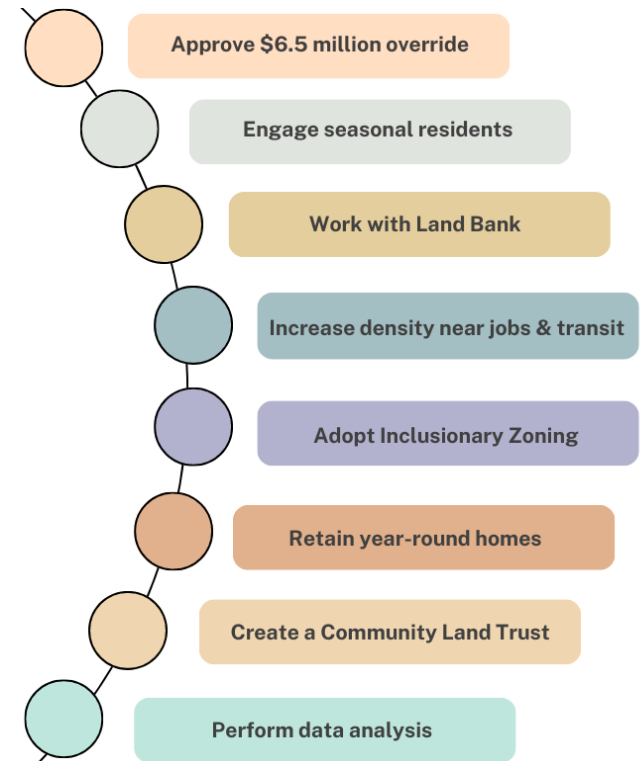


## How Do We Work Together and With What Tools?

To get started, participants identified eight priority areas for action. Leaders volunteered for action groups. Each group will seek additional members, and report-out on progress at the monthly Housing Stakeholders meetings. Each group will also develop its own calendar for action and will report on that as well as any collaboration or expansion into related work.

### What Comes First and Who Will Take The Lead?

1. Pass an Annual Town Meeting vote on May 6th for a \$6.5 million permanent override for affordable housing, and formalize the spending at the ballot on May 23rd.  
**Anne Kuszpa**, Eileen Tavares
2. Engage seasonal residents in an affordable housing awareness campaign.  
**Gennifer Costanzo**, Janice Carreiro, Jack Bulger, Julia Lindner
3. Work together with the Land Bank to attain more land and preserve existing homes.  
**Tom Dixon**, Libby Gibson, Cormac Collier, Scott Douglas, Jesse Bell, Neil Paterson
4. Explore density increases near jobs and transportation.  
**Megan Trudel**, Oliver Carr, Emily Molden
5. Pursue an inclusionary zoning by law that requires that any new development must include affordable housing.  
**Tucker Holland**, Megan Trudel, Emily Molden
6. Focus on keeping year round homes in year round use.  
**Brian Sullivan**, Jamie Feely, Bob Liddle, Julia Lindner
7. Develop a community land trust with ground leases.  
**Tucker Holland**
8. Complete a full scale data analysis of Nantucket County's affordable housing supply (including documentation of private, municipal and "naturally occurring" affordable housing).  
**Brooke Mohr**, Lily Kovacevic



## **Detailing the Roadmap**

### **1. Pass an annual town meeting vote on May 6 for a \$6.5 million permanent override for affordable housing.**

#### ***How will we do this?***

- Reach out to members and constituents to ask for support ahead of time and on the day of the vote.
- Each person will have 5 conversations.
- HNI will prepare materials for people to send out and post on social media.

***What kinds of tools will we use? Advocacy***

### **2. Engage seasonal residents in an affordable housing campaign.**

#### ***How will we do this?***

- Assemble materials and implement an outreach plan through neighborhood associations, using support from local nonprofits.
- Engage seasonal residents in understanding the impact of the housing crisis on their own and other people's quality of life.

***What kinds of tools will we use? Advocacy***

### **3. Work together with the Land Bank to attain more land and preserve existing homes.**

#### ***How will we do this?***

- Develop a fast track permitting process to preserve existing homes that are part of Land Bank purchases.
- Come up with a strategy for storing recycled dwellings, and standards for what houses can be repurposed.
- Explore targeted (Land Bank?) funding for housing repurposes.
- Engage students to help us with the research, and make it possible for housing advocates to become aware when new conservation purposes are being considered.

***What kinds of tools will we use? Land, funding, development, advocacy***



**4. Pursue an inclusionary zoning by law that requires that any new development must include affordable housing.**

***How will we do this?***

- Assemble a Task Force and then develop a proposal for the Town to take on this work.
- Seek Town Counsel input.
- The FinCom will need to examine the fiscal impact, possible opt outs, and how funds would be used.
- Campaign to educate the public regarding the value of implementing inclusionary zoning.
- Choose a lottery agent to administer the allocation of units to the populations we are seeking to serve.

***What kinds of tools will we use?*** *Development incentives, advocacy*

**5. Explore density increases near jobs and transportation.**

***How will we do this?***

- Prepare an article for Town Meeting.
- Propose incentives to allow an increase in height restrictions for buildings in certain zones, to serve year-rounders.
- Tailor these incentives to meet local needs, including serving people up to 240% of Areawide Median Income.

***What kinds of tools will we use?*** *Development incentives plus advocacy*

**6. Focus on keeping year round homes in year round use.**

***How will we do this?***

- Put deed restrictions on properties that will keep them for affordable year round use, meaning for people who are employed on Nantucket year round, or are year round retirees.
- Challenge seasonal residents to match funds contributed by the Town to purchase properties, and ask the Town to set aside funds for this purpose.
- Ask people to help identify year round properties within their neighborhoods to be permanently restricted.
- Explore ways to offer property owners an option to either sell or rent their properties for year round rental, perhaps with an option to purchase.
- Seek legal counsel regarding implementation.
- Put these ideas in front of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor when they come to the Island this summer.

***What kinds of tools will we use?*** *Development incentives, operations, funding and advocacy*



**7. Initiate a Community Land Trust with ground leases.**

***How will we do this?***

- Create a Community Land Trust that would own land and build homes for owners at the 150-240% of AMI level.
- Owners will own their homes, and benefit from restricted sales prices.
- The land trust would receive ground lease fees from the homeowners to support monitoring.

***Who kinds of tools will we use? Land, funding, development incentives, operations***

**8. Complete a full scale data analysis of Nantucket County affordable housing supply (including documentation of private, municipal and “naturally occurring” affordable housing).**

***How will we do this?***

- Establish a model that can be updated over time that meets our goals.
- Decide who owns the model and seek funds for the research.
- Contract with a Boston based or state university or Mass Housing Partnership (MHP) to complete an inventory, possibly as a summer student project.

***What kinds of tools will we use? Operations and advocacy***





# NEAR-TERM ACTION STEPS Proposed Timeline

TASKS	SPRING/SUMMER 2023	FALL 2023	WINTER 2024	SPRING/SUMMER 2024
APPROVE \$6.5M OVERRIDE	Progress bar (purple)			
ENGAGE SEASONAL RESIDENTS	Progress bar (purple)			
WORK WITH LAND BANK	Progress bar (orange)			
INCREASE DENSITY NEAR JOBS & TRANSIT	Progress bar (orange)			
ADOPT INCLUSIONARY ZONING	Progress bar (green)			
RETAIN YEAR-ROUND HOMES	Progress bar (green)			
CREATE A COMMUNITY LAND TRUST	Progress bar (teal)			
PERFORM DATA ANALYSIS	Progress bar (pink)			

## 🏠 🎯 What Comes Next?

**This group will reconvene at the Housing Stakeholders regular November meeting on November 16, 2023.** We encourage interim progress reports, and ask that all group leaders be prepared to report on their group’s progress in November.

**Thank you** to everyone who contributed to the April 28th Summit. Your engaged conversations and commitment to action inspire us.

Doug Abbey	Scott Douglas	Bob Sibley-Liddle
Margareta Andrews	Wilda Falconer	Betsy Sibley-Liddle
Dave Armanetti	Jamie Feely	Julia Lindner
Jesse Bell	Rep. Dylan Fernandes	Matthew MacEachern
Keith Bergman	Kathryn Fossa	Neil Marttila
Erin Brady	Nancy Friend	Beth Ann Meehan
Meg Browsers	Libby Gibson	Charity Grace Mofsen
Jack Bulger	Chris Glowacki	Brooke Mohr
Andrew Burek	David Gray	Emily Molden
Oliver Carr	Beth Hallett	Stacy Montes
Janis Carreiro	Mark Hess	Phil Pastan
Cormac Collier	Tucker Holland	Neil Paterson
Gennifer Constanzo	Steve Hollister	Lisa Sherburne
Michael Cranson	Noah Karberg	Dan Shiff
Sunny Daily	Gerry Keneally	Laura Shufelt
Tom Dixon	Lily Kovacevic	Brian Sullivan
Anne Dougherty		Eillen Taveras
		Megan Trudel

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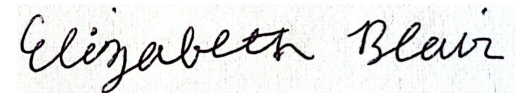
We look forward to continuing this collaborative effort.



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