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By Linda Amerighi at 9:54 am, Dec 07, 2021

MINUTES

Sharon Housing plan steering Committee

12/6/21

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 and held via “zoom” by Planning consultant Jocelyn Ayer. Attending were Selectman Dale Jones, Planning and Zoning member Larry Moskowitz, Sharon Housing Authority treasurer Pat Whalen, and Sharon Social Service agent Melia Hill.

Consultant Ayer shared some state data about Sharon as a means to inform Sharon’s housing plan. Some of the highlights;

- Sharon’s population declined slightly according to the 2020 census. Currently there are about 2700 residents in 1278 households in town.
- Sharon’s population of children is down 24% over the same period (2010-2020). Just 16% of Sharon households have children living in them.
- Sharon has more of its’ housing consisting of detached single-family homes than Litchfield County as a whole. The figure is 90% in Sharon, compared to 73% in Litchfield County.
- About 30% of Sharon homes are considered “vacant” That includes seasonal and second homes.
- Through 2020 (The latest year available) the number of new homes in Sharon built each year remains fairly low, usually between 4 and 9 new homes per year.
- 31% of home owners, and 50% of renters are “housing cost burdened”, meaning they spend over 30% of their income on housing. 465 of Sharon households are earning under 80% of the area median income, a key metric for home affordability.
- Sharon’s household median income totals \$81,919 per year. Available rents found on Zillow cost between \$2,000 and \$8,000 per month. Sharon’s median price for a home in 2021 is \$422,000.
- In Litchfield County, 46% of young adults (19-34) live in their parents’ home.
- Sharon Ridge has a current waiting list of 80 people.

Melia Hill said she is currently working with 4 families on housing assistance. She added that transportation is sometimes an impediment to affording housing. Some of her clients lack a reliable car to get back and forth to work. Hill also said struggling families also are dealing with underemployment.

Members then turned their attention to creating a housing needs survey for Sharon. It was agreed an online survey, using a service like survey monkey would be the most efficient. Jocelyn Ayer suggested using the town email list, and social media pages with a link to the survey to get the most results. She will share with the task force a survey used in Kent, consisting of about 20 pages, taking about 5-6 minutes to complete. The task force aims to approve the survey at their January 3rd meeting, and launch it soon after that.

A motion to adjourn was made by Larry Moskowitz, seconded by Pat Whalen, and the meeting adjourned at 6:32

Submitted, Dale Jones acting Secretary