

Acton 2020

HOUSING IN ACTON: PUBLIC WORKSHOP

LIST OF SAMPLE QUESTIONS FOR RESOURCE PEOPLE

- If we must build more housing, what can we do to make it more compatible with Acton's character? (e.g. Design Guidelines, design review, cluster zoning, planned conservation residential communities)
 - What are possible measures to consider which could encourage or discourage certain housing types or impose higher design review standards?
- What are some good examples from other communities of successfully guiding housing siting and design and by which mechanisms?
- What are some good examples (from other places) of ways of slowing down residential development (and thus preserving open space)?
- How can we ensure that at least some of these housing units will go to Acton residents and/or Town staff and teachers?
- Housing that is affordable versus 'affordable housing'. The state defines 'affordable housing' in one way, and households deciding if they can afford to live in Acton define it a different way.
 - a. How should the town view its various housing obligations: legal ones to the state, moral ones to the people of Acton, and a self-interested view of what mix of housing will create the diversity of residents that would make the town a more workable and interesting and varied place to live?
- How does additional housing development affect real estate values of existing housing (e.g. increase/decrease)?
- What would it take to make existing housing affordable, by the state's definition, rather than building a lot of new housing (legal technicalities as well as in terms of having these homes be in good condition and well located such that the cost to maintain them, pay for utilities, commute to work, etc. is affordable, too)?
 - What techniques if any, have worked in Mass. To provide affordable housing via reuse and deed restrictions rather than new development (or other such ideas that avoid building new housing)?
- What can we do to change economic incentives and regulatory requirements so that developers are motivated to do in-fill development and not sprawl development in Acton (concentrations of people and activity facilitates more human interaction and decreases the use of energy and land and cars. Additionally low density housing takes up more of our open space)?
- Is the Planned Conservation Residential Communities tool the best way for us to protect open space in housing developments?

Acton 2020

- Are there models for funding renovation of older stock to improve its energy efficiency and make it more attractive to low income families that can benefit from the lower utility costs?
- What is the fiscal impact of new housing (market and affordable) on schools, town facilities and services, traffic, and the tax rate? Also, at what point (if any) would the school budget actually decrease?
- What is the impact of new housing on water and wastewater disposal (and how should we plan, e.g. is there a “not to exceed threshold”)?
- Can/should the Town agree on a formal affordable housing plan that would allow us to limit 40B developments to the areas that work best for the town?

Acton 2020