



# AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE

## MEETING MINUTES

**AUGUST 1, 2024**

Members Present: Chairman Elmo Vance, Council Member Demian Dellinger, Ralph Carson, Rev. Jeffery Robinson, Jeffery Swain, Assistant Planning Director Erin Joseph, Assistant Town Manager John Hodges and Town Manager Jodi Miller

Members Absent: Katie de Cardenas, Tina Johnson

Special Guest: Mayor Buddy Gupton

Mayor Buddy Gupton gave opening remarks and thanked the members of the task force and public for their attendance and participation.

Chairman Vance called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Manager Miller opened the floor to the Task Force members to introduce themselves and state their interests in serving on the Affordable Housing Task Force. Members of the public also introduced themselves and expressed their interests in affordable housing in Garner.

Chairman Vance went over the Task Force expectations and ground rules. He explained that the creation of the Task Force was derived from an identified priority of Town Council, as written in a draft memo from Town management dated March 6th. The memo states that the "Town of Garner seeks to create a road map that expands and maintains affordable housing opportunities based upon data analysis, current economic conditions and community feedback." Chairman Vance also stated the ground rules of the meetings are to be mindful and respectful of each other and considerate of each other's time.

Manager Miller referenced a memo from the Town Attorney's office explaining that the Task Force meetings are public meetings and subject to open records law. She directed members to send any inquiries from the media to her and she will respond accordingly.

Manager Miller discussed the background and purpose and how the Town has arrived at creating the Task Force. She stated Town Council has been discussing affordable housing for several years and identified it as a priority at their most recent board planning retreat in February 2024. Priorities that were identified include:

1. supporting housing needs for aging communities,
2. housing needs for the local workforce,
3. preservation of existing housing stock and homeownership support with local partners



4. preserve existing affordable housing
5. ensure long-term affordability
6. leveraging investment
7. recommending policies
8. investigating affordable housing on public property
9. supporting homeownership
10. establishing outcomes and metrics

Council has also worked with UNC School of Government's Development Finance Initiative (DFI) to investigate affordable housing and examine what other communities are doing to address affordable housing. Manager Miller highlighted the Affordable Housing Task Force memo that will help guide the actions of the committee. She noted some of these things we are doing, some we could be doing and some we need to do in the future such as preserving existing affordable multifamily housing with regional partners. She noted of particular importance is to establish outcomes and metrics to help monitor and evaluate the Town's goals. Moreover, the work of the Task Force should be aligned with the 2023 Garner Forward Comprehensive Plan.

Assistant Manager Hodges walked the committee through some of the provided resource materials. Assistant Manager Hodges also presented the Affordable Housing webpage that can be found on the Town's website. He noted the Town has incorporated feedback from housing partners and some of the feedback is still being incorporated into the webpage. He encouraged members to sign up for E-news to receive updated information to look at the website and provide feedback.

Manager Miller led the discussion on framework and goals. She reviewed the Affordable Housing Goals Framework and highlighted the immediate, short-term and long-term goals of the Task Force.

Manager Miller continued reviewing the goals framework and explained what the short term and long-term goals will aim to focus on during the timeframes outlined. Short term goals include recommending affordable housing goals and metrics, role of the Town in housing affordability locally and regionally, recommending polices to inform development and evaluating funding strategies and partnerships. Long term goals include refining and implementing metrics, maintaining and preserving existing affordable housing and implementing funding strategies and partnerships. Manager Miller encouraged members to review and think about the framework and bring any thoughts and ideas for the next meeting. It was also recommended to review neighboring communities and grassroots advocacy groups to see what has been done and to learn what successes have been achieved from those efforts.

Assistant Manager Hodges led the discussion on the meeting schedule. The question of meeting frequency, length and topics of discussion during those meetings was asked of members. Members suggested longer meetings, more meetings and possibly holding virtual meetings for presentation of information and potentially have subcommittees to divide the work. The taskforce members decided that another meeting needed be scheduled for later in August.

Chairman Vance summed up the ideas and questions by taskforce members and suggested taking the information to inform future meeting agendas.

Meeting adjourned at 5:17pm.