

HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

The Housing Partnership was formed in 2005 to advocate for increased housing choice for low and moderate income residents and advise policy decisions for other town committees and boards on housing matters. The members of the committee had varying degrees of experience with housing issues when joining the group, and the first months were spent learning about housing issues and establishing objectives for the Partnership.

SHP activities included meeting with the other groups in Stow who deal with housing, such as the Planning Board, Stow Housing Authority, and Community Preservation Committee, as well as State and local groups to see models of how other towns have increased housing diversity. These efforts and other analysis led us to understand that many if not most of the residents of town could not afford to buy their homes at current market prices and to see our town's situation as part of the larger Regional lack of affordable housing. The lack of housing options affects even moderate income residents in concrete ways: seniors who may wish to move to a smaller home but stay in Stow; young adults who are leaving their parents homes in town but can't afford local homes, and Town employees who must look beyond an hour's drive to find homes in their price range.

The Partnership compiled a report to the Board of Selectmen in October 2006 summarizing the current housing situation and our activities, which can be found on the Town web site: <http://www.stow-ma.gov>.

The SHP is moving forward to recommend better definition of the interactions of the various town groups that deal with housing, to complete an analysis of all municipally-owned property for potential residential development, to develop a vision for creation of affordable housing within "village" setting and to establish guidelines for the most effective use of available funds to increase housing choice in Stow.

Respectfully submitted,

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