

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Doug Storey, Chairman.....	2005
Jim Bilancieri	2005
Christie Mayo.....	2005
Kevin O'Brien.....	2004
Barbara Alberts-Pirelli.....	2005
Gregory Thomas.....	2005
Stan Wysocki.....	2004
Misha Kendall.....	2004
Open.....	2005
Open.....	2005

At the November 2002 town meeting, the Affordable Housing Partnership was charged with the task of developing an Affordable Housing Plan for the town. The Partnership is happy to report that after many months of review, analysis and public meetings an Affordable Housing Plan was submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in November 2003. Subsequently, that plan was approved by DHCD in January 2004. The Partnership is also happy to report that it produced this plan through an all volunteer effort saving the town thousands of dollars. That plan is available for the public at town hall and on the town website at www.townofbolton.com.

The Affordable Housing Plan (the Plan) was drafted with particular sensitivity to the town's call to move forward with affordable housing but only through little or no impact on taxes. The Plan calls for a phased production of affordable housing units over a period of years. It calls for geographically dispersed housing throughout our community, utilizing different housing styles. The Plan recognizes the diverse needs of different groups within our community. These include; senior citizens, 55+ active adults, families, town employees, single persons, and persons with special needs. To that end, the Partnership has been a strong advocate for the town's needs when negotiating (non-binding) with developers who come before us with new housing development proposals. New projects considered in 2003 include; Bolton Manor, Pondsides (Crystal Springs), and Century Mills Estates among others. Most often, we have met with the developers prior to a 40B filing. This allows us the opportunity to clearly express the town's housing needs, and the Plan's requirements and expectations for new neighborhoods in Bolton. The Partnership has been actively negotiating (non-binding) in the town's best interest.

Although the Affordable Housing Plan was the centerpiece of the Partnership's efforts in 2003 it was not our only success. The Partnership successfully authored and obtained recertification for the town under EO-418. By having EO-418 certification the town qualifies for bonus money under certain state funding programs. Also in 2003 the Partnership developed and circulated an informational flyer which focused on the town's affordable housing needs. Our goal was to shed light and break the stereotype of one segment of population who would benefit most by the creation of affordable housing.

In 2004 we will ask the town to authorize the creation of an Affordable Housing Trust Fund. The Trust Fund will be the financial tool the town needs to implement some of the non-development creation of affordable housing with existing units through accessory apartments and buy-downs of housing units. The Partnership continues to communicate and learn from neighboring communities while we study new options to achieve our affordable housing and educational goals.

