

Town of Brunswick, Maine Housing Committee

Mission/Purpose:

The Brunswick Housing Committee aims to support the development of diverse and affordable housing in Brunswick, Maine, by advising on zoning, regulations, and policies. The Committee will examine current housing, recommend policy priorities, and review incentives to improve housing options for all residents. Key focus areas include accessory dwelling units, density standards, public/private partnerships, and the impacts of short-term rentals.

Through collaboration with stakeholders, the Committee seeks to align its recommendations with Brunswick's Comprehensive Plan and ensure a positive impact on the community's housing needs. The Committee will administer the Affordable Housing Support Fund (AHSF) to support the creation and preservation of affordable housing options and enhance access to quality housing for all residents.

The Committee is dedicated to fostering housing solutions that meet the needs of Brunswick's diverse population, with a commitment to transparency, public engagement, and evidence-based decision-making.

Committee Membership:

The Housing Committee consists of seven (7) members:

2 Representatives from the Town Council

1 Representative from the Housing Sector (examples: Real Estate Agent/Developer, Landlord, or Housing Advocacy Organization)

1 Representative who rents their primary residence in Brunswick.

3 Brunswick residence representatives

Members shall serve a term of three (3) years. Terms shall be staggered to the extent practical. A full term is considered to be a term lasting three (3) full years; an appointment to the Committee in mid-year, to fill a vacancy, is not a full term.

The Committee will select a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The chair, with assistance from staff, shall establish the Committee's meeting agendas and be responsible for conducting the meeting. The vice chair shall assume these duties in the absence of the chair.

Committee Meetings:

The Committee will meet monthly on a schedule to be determined by the Committee. At its first meeting of the year, the Committee will set the schedule for the year and provide it to the Town Clerk. Meetings shall be publicly noticed by the posting of agendas and related materials on the Town's website. It is the Town Council's intent that Committee meetings be scheduled so that they can be televised on one of the Town's two cable tv channels and recorded for on-demand streaming from the Town's website.

Committee Responsibilities:

The Committee shall be responsible for:

- Evaluating the diversity and affordability of Brunswick's housing stock and researching strategies to support housing initiatives for all residents.
- Recommending priorities for Brunswick's housing policy needs.
- Managing the Affordable Housing Support Fund (AHSF) by reviewing applications, updating criteria, and identifying ways to sustain the fund.
- Making recommendations to the Town Council on funding proposals for the AHSF.
- Reviewing and advising on housing incentives and zoning requirements.
- Assessing the effects of short-term rentals on long-term housing availability and proposing regulations if needed.
- Reviewing and recommending best practice approaches for landlord-tenant issues.

In its work, the Committee shall define key housing terms (e.g., market rate, affordable, workforce) and assess the financial and infrastructure impacts of its recommendations.

The Committee may seek stakeholder input, consult with relevant town boards and staff, and provide interim recommendations as needed.

Committee Staff:

The Town Manager shall select the staff that will provide administrative and technical support for the Committee. In consultation with the Committee Chair, staff shall be responsible for preparing agendas and minutes, posting public hearings, and maintaining official records.

Reporting:

The Committee shall report on its activities to the Town Council, at least quarterly. The reports shall be prepared in accordance with the requirements for inclusion in Town Council meeting agenda packets.

Proposed to Town Council: July 18, 2022

Adopted by Town Council: July 18, 2022

Amended by Town Council: September 16, 2024_