



Bellamy Mill, Dover

Strategic Alliances

Each community must find its own “housing solution” because circumstances vary from one place to another. But one thing is common to all communities - the need to find strategic partners. Partners might include a private developer, a church, a business, a local hospital, a school, or an environmental organization. Throughout New Hampshire, communities have found that creating effective strategies to address their needs, including the need for affordable housing, requires the engagement and resources of many individuals and interest groups. In some cases these allies may even come from neighboring communities.

Developers

The majority of housing created in New Hampshire is designed and constructed by private developers, both for-profit and non-profit. Involving developers in regulatory discussions can help your community understand what tools it will need to create the range of housing that your citizens need. Identifying areas that can accommodate higher densities, the range of housing that can be allowed by right, and understanding what unnecessary regulatory barriers can be removed will help encourage a healthy range of housing. New

housing will meet market demand and remove some of the price pressures on existing housing, especially rental units.

Employer-assisted Housing

Employer-assisted housing programs provide financial and technical assistance to help employees locate or afford suitable housing. Such programs may take the form of a forgivable, deferred, or repayable second loan; a grant; a matched savings plan; or homebuyer education. An employer may also provide financial assistance to renters by providing or guaranteeing the payment of security deposits and last months’ rents where required.

These programs are growing in popularity in many parts of the country where housing is scarce and prices are high. Communities that wish to use this approach to help address affordable housing needs should promote the benefits of this approach to employers in the community, and invite new employers in the area to collaborate with the community to address workforce housing needs. Beyond assisting their own employees, some employers may even be encouraged to provide

land or other support for the community's housing efforts, if there is a clear vision and identified need the employer can help meet.

Town/Gown Collaborations

Sometimes isolated from their surrounding neighborhoods, and sometimes overpowering them, colleges and universities present wonderful opportunities for collaboration. They are a powerful institutional presence, usually with influential leadership. Often, they are highly visible property owners and developers, and their policies and activities affect surrounding housing markets and land uses. Students living off-campus may exacerbate housing supply problems in many neighborhoods. Academic institutions can also be helpful in researching issues and crafting solutions.

Affordable Housing and Historic Preservation

The historic preservation movement is a strong partner of affordable housing advocates in New Hampshire. Preservation and adaptive reuse interests should be involved in your housing organization or committee, and can provide a valuable perspective as you monitor properties and explore the possibility of creating additional housing. These interests have produced successful collaborations in many communities, and often bring complementary financial tools and resources to the table.

Throughout the state, schools, mills, commercial buildings, churches, and other properties have been transformed into affordable housing. The residential reuse of these vacant or underutilized properties has transformed neighborhoods and spurred redevelopment activity while providing quality affordable housing.

Affordable Housing with Conservation

Forging alliances with conservation groups to create or preserve affordable housing can be a win-win approach. Conservation groups should be represented in housing partnerships or committees. Such collaborations often involve limited development, development with conservation restrictions attached, farm acquisitions in which the buildings are maintained or reused as housing, or the transfer of development rights.



Dartmouth College employee housing, Hanover

Park & Wheelock Rental Housing – Hanover

This residential infill project was developed on an existing site at the corner of South Park and East Wheelock Streets in Hanover. This new development created a more dense and diverse neighborhood by combining 16 existing units and 22 new multi-family units. Developed and owned by Dartmouth College primarily for faculty and staff, this rental housing development includes duplexes, four-plexes, and one eight-unit building.

Located in the downtown area of Hanover, the development provides affordable housing for a segment of the local population that needs it, and is located within walking distance to both downtown and the Dartmouth campus. Its proximity to campus reduces the number of vehicles on local roads because the “commute” is walkable.

Contact Information:

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Hanover, NH 03755
(603) 646-2446
www.dartmouthre.com



Dow Academy, Franconia

Dow Academy — Franconia

When Dow Academy no longer had a use for the structure shown and several associated outbuildings, the buildings' future was uncertain. Located in the heart of Franconia, these structures formed a focal point of the village. Instead of allowing them to fall into disuse, a developer converted them to a mix of commercial and residential uses.

The lower levels were originally planned to be used as office space, but when the owner determined that there was insufficient market demand for this use, the entire project was converted to residential condominiums. This housing, adjacent to a town park and a short walk from the village center, has been a positive addition to the mix of housing in Franconia and has proven to be valuable in increasing activity in the village center. This adaptive reuse also helped preserve these important structures, which are key features of the village.

Contact Information:

Town of Franconia
421 Main Street
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Working together and using limited resources wisely, the groups can forge strategies that increase the supply of affordable housing where it is most suitable while preserving critical natural resources elsewhere in the community. With increased focus on community preservation and smart growth, housing advocates and conservationists in many cities and towns are seeking opportunities where their limited financial resources can go twice as far by preserving both open space and affordable housing.

This may be a hard sell initially. Conservation groups have a specific focus, and this effort will require them to broaden their view to also consider housing needs that are important to the community. By meeting dual community objectives, they may be able to get involved in the protection of key areas on a greater number of parcels. This strategy also provides an opportunity for developers to become engines for conservation.

Regional Approaches

Some New Hampshire communities have begun collaborating with neighboring communities to address regional housing needs. Regional cooperation is essential if problems resulting from fragmented land use planning and local decision making are to be dealt with appropriately. Regional planning commissions can

begin this dialogue. In several communities the impetus for collaboration has come from housing non-profits that identified redundancies or gaps in their delivery systems that could be addressed through regional collaboration. Regional planners have expertise in a range of areas and are available to discuss specific projects or issues with local officials, affordable housing proponents, and the public.

Some of New Hampshire's regional planning commissions have employed outreach and education techniques to begin to foster regional collaboration on the issue of affordable housing. This is an important role, and these activities should continue as an approach to keep the issues of housing availability, affordability, and diversity visible to New Hampshire residents and leaders.

Local and regional groups are working throughout New Hampshire to raise awareness of the need for, to reduce barriers to, and to encourage the production of new housing. These efforts draw on many interests, including businesses, government agencies, the housing industry, non-profits, municipalities, and concerned citizens to promote a responsible increase in regional workforce housing. The New Hampshire Workforce Housing Council coordinates and supports these efforts. See the Appendix for more information. 🏠



Drewsville Manor, Walpole

Drewsville Manor – Walpole

Completed in 1997 by Southwestern Community Services, the Drewsville Manor contains five affordable apartments ranging in size from one to three bedrooms. Located on the common in Walpole's historic Drewsville Village, the manor's new role in the community as a source of affordable housing units also preserved the structure itself. The project was made possible through a combination of equity from the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program and from the Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program.

Community Development Block Grant funds and funding from the Town of Walpole were then used to rehabilitate the carriage house which now houses the town's Head Start program.

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