

The Workforce Housing Coalition of the Greater Seacoast



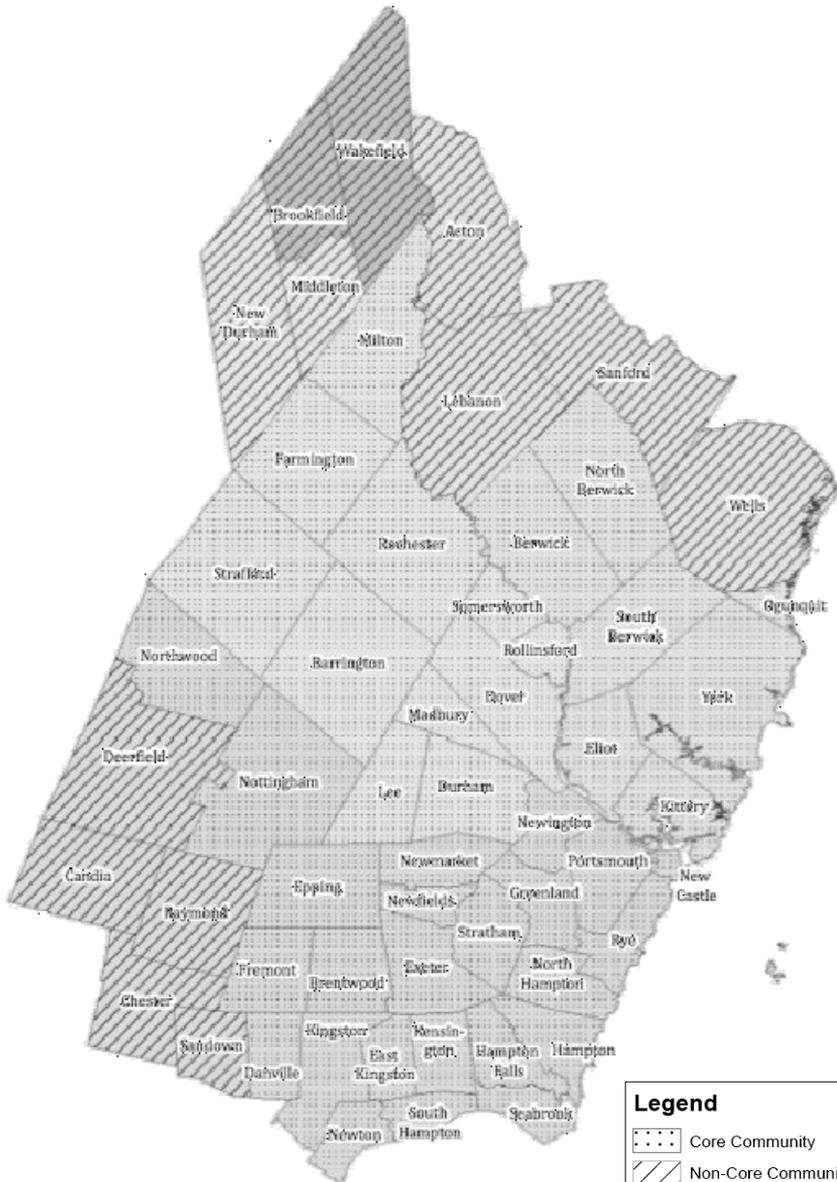
Opening Doors to Vibrant Communities



2012-2013
Annual Report

Core and Non-Core Communities

Workforce Housing Coalition of the Greater Seacoast



Legend

- Core Community
- Non-Core Community

Greater Seacoast Counties

- Carroll County, NH
- Rockingham County, NH
- Strafford County, NH
- York County, ME

Looking Back

Dear Coalition Members and Supporters,

It has been another year of growth and opportunity for the Workforce Housing Coalition, but also one of transition. Our talented and creative Executive Director Lisa Henderson, accepted an important position of Homeownership Director with The Housing Partnership. While Lisa's departure was a loss, through the able and timely help of Interim Director Michele Craig and now our new permanent Director Ashlee Iber, we keep moving and are on track with renewed focus on our core mission.

Since our inception in 2001, 25 Greater Seacoast communities have adopted workforce housing ordinances and over 350 workforce housing units have been built. In the past year, we hosted design Charrettes in Portsmouth and Dover, conducted a survey of Seacoast employers about workforce housing, and developed a Housing Resource Guide to provide information for those seeking housing in the area.

These are worthwhile accomplishments, yet there is more to be done. The slow economy and period of lowered housing prices have created a mistaken impression that the workforce housing problem has gone away. Far from it. Turmoil in the housing market has increased rental sector demand where prices have remained high and are rising. As the owned-home market recovers, so will the Seacoast's historically high housing prices.

We continue to translate our vision of an adequate supply of affordable, desirable housing throughout the region into reality through our work on the ground: conducting a design Charrette in Wells; hosting Business Leaders Breakfasts; advising municipalities and developers about best practices; promoting and protecting laws and policies that create opportunities for workforce housing. This reflects our multi-pronged approach, involving municipalities, major employers, builders, and the public.

As always, our good work and accomplishments would not be possible without our volunteers and funders, including our growing list of individual and corporate members. Thank you!

Gratefully,



Cliff Sinnott, *Board President*



Our Mission is to be a catalyst for the development of a range of housing options for the diverse workforce in the Greater Seacoast



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region of New Hampshire and Maine. We build support for workforce housing by educating municipal officials, employers, developers, and community members. We are *Opening Doors to Vibrant Communities*.

Looking Forward

Dear Friends,

I am excited and eager to bring my experience in community engagement, grassroots advocacy, and fundraising to an organization with such an important objective - to establish a balanced supply of housing for our area's workforce.

My goals for the Workforce Housing Coalition include: increasing the profile of the organization so that more stakeholders understand what workforce housing means and why it is an issue on the Greater Seacoast; increase awareness of how people can make a difference; building new relationships with area housing developers; expand the number of individuals, local and regional businesses, foundations, and organizations that support the Coalition's mission.

I've been lucky to meet and work with many talented and passionate people thus far, including our Board of Directors members, committee members, our Marketing Specialist Trish Prescott, and our summer UNH student intern Caitlyn White, who have all been a part of the first couple of projects since I came on board: the Housing Resource Guide and planning the Design Charrette.

To those I have yet to meet, I look forward to doing so in the near future, and partnering with you to create stronger and more vibrant Seacoast communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashlee Iber".

Ashlee Iber, *Executive Director*



Board of Directors

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Major Funders

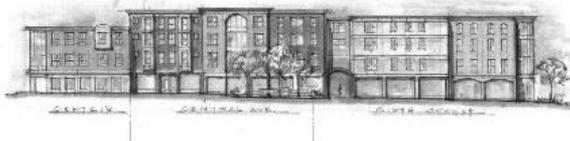
We are extremely grateful to the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority and the United Way of the Greater Seacoast for their enduring belief in our vision of an adequate supply of affordable, desirable housing throughout the Greater Seacoast region that provides opportunities for the workforce to put down roots, and creates a more diverse community that benefits us all. Thank you for supporting our mission.



Workforce Housing Design Charrette

Dover & Portsmouth NH - October 10, 11 & 12, 2012

Through the Charrette process, we brought together several dozen planners, architects, engineers, elected officials, City staff, real estate agents, developers and community members to conceive potential re-uses and adaptations of the Rock Street Garage site in Portsmouth and a downtown block off Central Avenue in Dover, NH.



Viable workforce housing and mixed-use design concepts were documented and shared with the public at a well-attended reveal presentation.

Sponsors



City of Portsmouth
(Portsmouth Charrette)



Stafford County Board of REALTORS®
(Dover Charrette)

Getting it on Film

Mock Planning Board Meeting - Video Training Modules

In 2012, over 50 Planning Board members and other interested individuals attended the videotaped WHC training program entitled "*Getting Ahead of the Curve: Anticipating Workforce Housing Proposals.*" Since then, we have been working with Jay Childs (creator of *Communities and Consequences*) to convert the taping to video training modules.

The training modules project is an opportunity to share how planning boards and developers can work together to achieve increased development of workforce housing, but more can be shared with respect to specific examples of how communities are addressing the NH Workforce Housing law (RSA 647:58-61), including: inclusionary zoning, accessory dwelling units, regulatory flexibility and multi-family housing.

Sponsors



Employer Survey

Housing Impacts Local Businesses

We surveyed organizations in Rockingham and Strafford Counties to determine the impact the availability of affordable workforce housing has on local companies' ability to attract and retain the qualified talent needed to operate and grow their businesses.



The survey results highlighted some important issues. Responses indicated that finding housing remains a challenge to area workers, and businesses fully expect to increase the number of lower-end wage workers over the next year, which, perhaps, will worsen the workforce housing shortage.

Participating companies included: Community Partners, Fosters Daily Democrat, Measured Progress, New Hampshire Public Television, Phillips-Exeter Academy, Portsmouth Gaslight, RiverWoods, Newmarket International, Rockingham County, Seacoast Mental Health Center, Stonewall Kitchen, Webster at Rye, and Wentworth Douglass Hospital.

Housing Resource Guide

Information for Area Workers • Renters and Homebuyers

After a little research, we determined there was no central repository of information to help guide the search for housing. Taking a direct approach, we compiled the best resources available to provide helpful information to our existing and prospective workforce about obtaining housing in the Greater Seacoast Region of New Hampshire and Southern Maine.



We included everything from where to find apartment rental listings and homebuyer education to which agency offers help if a homeowner or renter is having financial difficulty and are in fear of losing their home. The guide is available online and through local employers.

Sponsors



Focusing the Work of the WHC

With professional facilitation support from NH Housing, the Coalition undertook a capacity building and strategic planning effort this year. Its purpose was to strengthen the leadership capacity of our volunteer board and to define the strategic direction of the Workforce Housing Coalition.

As a result of this process, we determined that to achieve the greatest progress in fulfilling our mission, our work should focus on four outcomes: (1) expanded opportunities for workforce housing development in our **municipalities**; (2) greater capacity and interest on the part of **developers** to construct workforce housing; (3) improved **public** recognition of the need for and value of workforce housing; and finally, (4) greater recognition by major **employers** of the need to expand housing opportunities within the region to meet the needs of the local workforce.

Going forward, we will use the result of this effort to focus our work each year on a small number of projects with the greatest potential for positive outcomes.

Moving On

Lisa Henderson, who led the WHC over two different periods totaling eight years, stepped down early in 2013.

Lisa's new chapter, as Homeownership Director with The Housing Partnership, was a natural transition from promoting efforts to increase the supply of housing for Seacoast area workers to helping homeowners keep the homes they have. Lisa was instrumental in creating a strong, dynamic and highly respected organization. She will be greatly missed.



Michele Craig bridged the gap by stepping in as Interim Director. Michele's 13 years work in the Community and Economic Development program area with UNH Cooperative Extension, 4 years as a WHC Board member, passion and talent helped to sustain the WHC during the transition.

We are grateful to Lisa and Michele for their efforts to forward our mission, for their undying passion for the cause and for their friendship.

Community Builders

Early on in 2013, we initiated an exciting new program for corporate donors. We invited local businesses to join a distinguished group of supporters known as 'Community Builders'. The program has served as a means to showcase members of the Seacoast community who make a significant commitment to support and promote the development of a balanced supply of housing for area workers.

For an annual contribution of \$1,000, Community Builders gain access to an array of valuable marketing opportunities, in addition to all the benefits of a WHC corporate membership. And, once a month, we spotlight one of our Community Builders in our email newsletter, social media outlets and on our web site, www.seacoastwhc.org.

In the first year, we welcomed 10 local companies to the Community Builder ranks. We are proud to count these companies as partners:



Our Members*

Major Donors

NH Housing Finance Authority
United Way of the Greater Seacoast

Organizational Donors (\$250-\$2,500)

Bluepay Processing LLC
Geoffrey E. Clark & Martha Fuller-Clark
Fund, NHCF - Piscataqua Region
Donahue, Tucker & Ciandella PLLC
JCM Management Company Inc.
Northland Forest Products Inc.
Portland Builders Inc.

(\$100-\$249)

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York Housing Authority (ME)

(\$50-\$99)

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Individual Donors

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Change Agent (\$75)

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Dick & Sue Ingram
Jonathan & Phyllis Ring
Mary Beth Rudolph
Anne Rugg

Friend (\$35-\$49)

Steve Burns
Chris Muns
Michael G. Schidlovsky

We sincerely apologize if you are not listed or are listed in error. Please notify us by email at info@seacoastwhc.org or by phone at (603) 205-0539. *Gifts recorded July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013.



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