

**SUMMARY OF BROOKLINE HOUSING PRODUCTION PLAN: COMMUNITY
FORUM
January 26, 2022**



**TOWN OF BROOKLINE
Housing Production Plan**

A public forum was held on January 26, 2022. The purpose of the forum, which was held virtually, was to present findings and to summarize public input to date. Participants were then asked five questions and responded both by writing in Zoom's chat function and by raising their hands to speak. Interpretation was provided in Spanish, Russian, Cantonese, and Mandarin. There were one hundred and one (191) participants.

Participants were asked the following questions

1. Do some groups of people in Brookline have a more difficult time than others finding housing that meets their needs, including but not limited to housing affordability?
2. Try to create a picture or an image of Brookline at its very best in terms of accommodating a range of housing needs and hopes. What would the town be like? What would it look like? Please describe.
3. What criteria should be considered in the Housing Plan for locating more affordable housing? Are some types of locations better than others? If so, why?
4. What would you say are the three most important housing issues the Plan should be sure to address?
5. If you could do one thing to improve housing in Brookline, what would it be?



SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

The main themes of the participants' input include the following:

- What seemed to be the **number one priority** on the part of participants was a **concern about the condition of BHA public housing**; ideas include the following:
 - Maintain, repair and upgrade existing units
 - Better integrate public housing with the rest of housing / neighborhood
 - Provide access to childcare, healthcare, fitness
 - Create a tenants association
 - Use ARPA funds to upgrade
 - Sense of urgency
- Significant support was expressed for an Affordable Housing Overlay District
- There was a lot of discussion regarding the need to increase home ownership opportunities, especially for low and moderate income individuals, people of color, single parents, older adults, town staff, people with Limited English Proficiency, and people with disabilities.
- Consensus regarding the need for more multi-family housing, however, no consensus regarding where to locate it. Some felt that multi-family should be allowed throughout the town and that bus routes should be expanded to cover more areas of town, while others felt it should only be encouraged along public transit corridors and in already more dense areas of town.
- A desire that new construction and redevelopment be sustainable was expressed, including through the use of green construction methods and the preservation of open space.

The following are representative ideas expressed by participants

1. **Do some groups of people in Brookline have a more difficult time than others finding housing that meets their needs, including but not limited to housing affordability?**
 - People of color
 - Low and moderate income families
 - People with mobility challenges, including elderly
 - Large families
 - Single people
 - Single parents
 - Young people
 - Town staff
 - Those with Limited English Proficiency
 - Almost anybody without family wealth or extraordinary high income



2. Try to create a picture or an image of Brookline at its very best in terms of accommodating a range of housing needs and hopes. What would the town be like? What would it look like? Please describe.

Opinions varied: Some felt that density should be increased and multi-family allowed throughout the town, with some participants suggesting that public transit be expanded to cover all areas of town. Others supported the idea of increased density only in select locations, mainly along public transit corridors.

- Public transit throughout town
- Safe and well-maintained public housing that is better integrated into the neighborhoods; more wrap around services including access to daycare, healthcare and fitness
- A more diverse, vibrant and interconnected community
- More housing in commercial districts
- Higher density along and near public transit corridors
- More home-ownership opportunities, especially for people of color
- Integration of different types of housing throughout town
- Allow multi-family in single-family neighborhoods
- More middle density and mixed use development
- Simplified ADU permitting
- More and better walking and biking infrastructure throughout town
- Sustainable construction of new housing

3. What criteria should be considered in the Housing Plan for locating more affordable housing? Are some types of locations better than others? If so, why?

- Access to public transit (comments include that it should be available throughout the town, should be free or low cost, provide dedicated bus lanes, expand bus service)
- Directly consult those who are actually seeking affordable housing in Brookline and get their input regarding their needs and preferences.
- North Brookline is already dense, more development should go to South Brookline
- Access to internet
- Walkable and bikeable areas
- Integrate multi-family throughout town
- Mixed use: housing above retail
- Preserve green space
- Washington Square, Brookline Village and Harvard Street are good locations
- Concern regarding displacing small businesses
- Locate in North Brookline which is already “urban” in character

Scale. There was some discussion regarding the role of scale. **Opinions varied** from some people expressing concern and emphasizing the importance of contextual design, that is, fitting into the specific context, some pointing out that it depends on the location (meaning that in some locations larger and taller buildings are not as much of a concern). Some felt that providing affordable housing is what is of utmost importance and that they see the scale and aesthetics as being secondary to achieving this objective.



4. What would you say are the three most important housing issues the Plan should be sure to address?

The number one most frequently mentioned issue that participants felt was most important to address in the Plan was the **repair and renovation of existing public housing and the provision of adequate funding for future maintenance**. Related to this was another frequently mentioned issue, the building of more public housing with access to childcare, healthcare and other wrap around services. Other issues mentioned by many participants include the following:

- Many stated that the town should use all available tools to promote affordable housing especially zoning changes and regulatory relief to encourage the construction of more affordable housing. Also:
 - Rent control
 - Create mechanism for the town to take over maintenance of public housing
 - Create more housing for low and extremely low income families
 - Make it more difficult for developers to make payment in lieu of creating more housing
 - Ensure that Brookline continues to expand SHI even after meeting 10%
 - Create a community land trust
 - Don't allow tear downs
 - Allow multi-family housing by right
 - Upzoning single family zones
 - Removing parking bans or reducing parking minimums
- Increasing home ownership opportunities for people of color (“building wealth as an issue of social justice”)
- Creation of an Affordable Overlay District
- Redevelop existing housing into more units
- Housing with childcare for single mothers
- Plan for the public realm and public spaces and access to nature, have all affordable housing include lawns and trees to reduce heat island effect
- Increase coverage of public transit throughout town; cycle track networks throughout town
- Increase density in commercial areas
- Ensure adequate, equitable and just representation on housing decision-making bodies and outreach to diverse potential residents
- Address needs of additional infrastructure and amenities that additional housing will impact



5. If you could do one thing to improve housing in Brookline, what would it be?

The **number one** most supported issue was with regard to **improving conditions and fully repairing existing public housing units**. Also mentioned was the importance of providing access to wrap around services (mentioned were childcare, healthcare and fitness).

Additionally, many mentioned **generating affordable housing should be an explicit priority for the town** and that it should invest more in such housing, for example by using CDBG funds, ARPA funds, vacant lots and finding available land to develop. *“We need a sense of urgency.”*

Additional participant priorities include:

- Create an Affordable Housing Overlay District
- Have hospitals and non-profit health facilities pay their share (Payment in Lieu of taxes in Community Benefits)
- Streamline the process to create moderately sized multi-family housing by right within ¼ mile of T stops
- Housing and programs for “Grandfamilies” (see Boston model) for grandparents bringing up their grandchildren
- Convert the old Lincoln School to 100% affordable housing
- Create exemptions to zoning if a project meets affordable housing requirements
- Better access to public transportation and affordable childcare. Make public transit free
- Equitable access to affordable housing: no local preference and outreach to POC communities
- Make affordable housing a line item in the budget

Additionally, several **residents currently living in BHA public housing gave testimonials** as to the conditions of these housing units. These included:

- Rodent and roach infestation; mold
- Security problems (sometimes the front doors don’t work or people buss people in without knowing who they are)
- Stairs are broken
- Unsafe laundry room at night
- Poorly maintained and very slow to respond to requests for repairs
- Waiting list for vouchers are multiple years long

“I can think of three places in Brookline that are affordable, but they are not great places to be. Just a roof over your head.”

“We need to be heard”

Suggested improvements to make:

- One-on-one support guiding individuals through home buying
- Better coordination and communication across Town departments
- A Grandparents townhouse with housing units designed for grandparents bringing up their grandchildren as well as a supportive program for this demographic (see Boston model)



- Provide incentives to landlords to keep rents low
- Reuse existing buildings
- Build sustainable affordable housing
- More deeply affordable housing for families

DETAILED DOCUMENTATION OF PARTICIPANT RESPONSES

1. Do some groups of people in Brookline have a more difficult time than others finding housing that meets their needs, including but not limited to housing affordability?

的某些人群是否比其他人群更难找到满足他们需求的住房，包括但不限于住房负担能力？

HAY GRUPOS DE PERSONAS EN BROOKLINE QUE TIENEN MAS DIFICULTADES QUE OTRAS PARA ENCONTRAR VIVIENDA QUE AYUDE A SUS NECESIDADES, ADEMAS DEL CODSTO DE VIVIENDA?

Думаете ли вы, что некоторым группам людей в Бруклайне более сложно, чем другим, найти жильё, которое отвечает их потребностям, включая, помимо прочего, финансовую доступность жилья?

- *non white and immigrant communities*
- *low-income/working class families and BIPOC community members*
- *low-income communities*
- *people with disabilities*
- *renters*
- *non-white, extremely low-income and very low income families with children and elderly women*
- *Those that don't have the personal networks to units for rent or sale off-market*
- *low-income families; families in general (lots of renter discrimination related to older buildings with lead paint)*
- *I'm concerned that Black individuals and families seem to have lost most ground.*
- *People with mobility challenges, elderly, and disabled.*
- *people of all races who are spending too much on housing*
- *Young families with children*
- *Large families*
- *Everyone but the wealthy, unless they already own property in Brookline*
- *people with disabilities, people with LEP*
- *Anyone with an income less than \$100,000. Low income might not capture what "low" means.*
- *Single people - most of the new housing is large units*



- *people who need small units such as older and younger singles and young couples without large incomes*
- *middle class families who are not rich...folks are shut out. Brookline teachers are a perfect example*
- *It certainly looks, from the data, that income is a major issue but the racial results are disappointing but not surprising*
- *People of color and families with low income and even moderate income*
- *Notwithstanding that a fair number of 40Bs have been senior housing, there is still large unmet demand for affordable housing for seniors given the huge income gap.*
- *I'd like to broaden the question—people outside of Brookline who might want to live here can't get in and this disproportionately impacts people of color with low incomes who are not in Brookline*
- *paraprofessionals in Brookline schools for example should be able to afford to live in Town*
- *If seniors can't downsize, their too-large houses will not become available.*
- *minimum wage workers*
- *I also know that families with resources that are not stratospheric are now being priced out.*
- *single women*
- *Brookline is a small geographic area; it does not appear to be realistic for everybody who wants to live in Brookline to do so. And there are financial considerations - we just went through a crisis related to how we are going to educate the number of students living here without sacrificing standards; this is both a space concern and a financial concern. I am concerned as to how we balance the affordable housing crisis and our desire to be good citizens with the given realities. I found the info on what Brookline has done on housing fascinating and impressive, more than I realized. I hope more residents become aware of this information. Thank you!*
- *We could also allow "their [senior] too large houses" to be broken up into smaller units*
- *People who work in schools, fire, police, etc.*
- *For purchasing, almost anybody without either family wealth or extraordinarily high income*
- *Teachers, especially teachers of color*
- *people displaced when redevelopment happens and older buildings are torn down to build large luxury units*
- *people who make \$40 K a year or less*
- *families that make 150K or less.*
- *Website is not great way to increase visibility. Need to bring to where people congregate -- PTO's, senior facilities, etc.*
- *People searching for daycare options below 3K per month*
- *low income renters who need affordable homeownership options and want to stay here but can't afford to buy anything*
- *Seniors at col Floyd who are being moved to allow more housing do not have places in Brookline to live nor in the greater Boston area despite possible sec 8 vouchers*



- *Seems pretty clear from the data Judi presented that low income families / individuals, especially those who aren't strong English speakers as there isn't translation help*
- *Young families who are low income and POC. Disability is an issue.*
- *I agree, housing and zoning in Brookline has a lot of racist history -- I think Brookline had the first redlining-related deed or something of the sort? and it's still very hard for BIPOC families*
- *young people with kids*
- *Limited English Speakers definitely have a more difficult time. It's a tough process already but a language barrier makes it worse. I know a young LEP woman with a family who works in Brookline as a low wage worker. I've brought several opportunities to her that she was unaware of*
- *I believe single parents, recent immigrants, and non-native English speakers, BIPOC families. I feel like families with children have a really tough time.*
- *I suppose I'm not surprised at the long waiting periods for elderly housing but it is indeed disheartening*
- *lack of accessible housing - housing stock is old*

2. Try to create a picture or an image of Brookline at its very best in terms of accommodating a range of housing needs and hopes. What would the town be like? What would it look like? Please describe.

TRATE DE CREAR UNA IMAGEN DE LO MEJOR DE BROOKLINE EN TERMINOS DE ACOMODANDO NECESIDADES Y DESEOS DE VIVIENDA. COMO VE USTED A BROOKLINE QUE SERIA? POR FAVOR EXPLIQUELO.

在滿足各種住房需求和期待方面，您想象中的 Brookline 最佳的樣子是怎麼樣的。Brookline 應該是什麼樣子？Brookline 未來是什麼樣子？請描述。

Постарайтесь создать картину или образ Бруклайна в наилучшем виде с точки зрения удовлетворения целого ряда жилищных потребностей и надежд. Каким был бы город? Как бы это выглядело? Пожалуйста, опишите.

- *lack of public transit in SoBro constrains low income dev't across the town*
- *More safe and well-maintained public housing- specifically for families. Housing cooperatives and mutual housing associations. Rent control, good cause eviction, tenant bill of rights. A more diverse, vibrant, and interconnected community.*
- *The name Affordable is definitely the wrong name or low income.*
- *Good social, economic, ethnic mix*
- *Can't think about just housing, have to plan for neighborhoods, including access to nature, shops, services etc.*
- *family housing with green space and playgrounds*
- *All Town of Brookline employees who want to are able to live in Brookline.*
- *The town would have fewer single family homes*
- *Also more density. Lots of it*



- *housing in commercial districts*
- *I would like to see many more opportunities for low income people of color to own their homes rather than rent.*
- *Town would have more street life and other public activities*
- *More integration of different levels of housing across neighborhoods.*
- *Safe, affordable housing for lowest income residents that is decent and safe and not run down and dilapidated.*
- *more or less flat distribution of numbers of people at each income level*
- *More diverse housing stocks in different neighborhoods.*
- *Community spaces where all feel comfortable to gather*
- *More buildings zoned for first floor business + ~4-5 levels of housing on top*
- *Greater subsidy for low-income families so that they can have the decent, safe housing they need, green housing!*
- *More services available in public housing including DAYCARE!*
- *Much, much more density. Demolition of insufficiently dense commercial and residential plots and replacement with high-density buildings*
- *more density - but with livability not profit as the design motive.*
- *And health care!*
- *Close proximity to food stores, public transport, greener streets, denser units*
- *need to provide quality and safe BHA housing*
- *density along and near public transit corridors*
- *public transportation and safe pedestrian and biking opportunities*
- *Alteration of zoning to allow more multifamily housing in single family neighborhoods.*
- *Transit oriented development*
- *I'm new to Brookline, but South Brookline appears to be quite distinct from North. How much appetite there is to add density in the South?*
- *The town will work to increase density in transport corridors and where services are available. This will include low and moderate-income housing and expansion of housing accessible by those living in public housing. Zoning will relieve some economic constraints that artificially raise the cost of all housing*
- *Transportation is critical for safety and jobs in areas outside Coolidge Corner*
- *moderately sized, multi-family affordable homeownership opportunities for low-income residents and people from outside of town*
- *Dense housing accessible to public transportation*
- *An affordable housing overlay is a great way to change zoning for affordable housing!*
- *Better integration of public housing into surrounding neighborhoods, e.g., through parks, shared green spaces, etc.; increase density by combining housing and retail*
- *more ADUs!*
- *: more density because more dense housing not only means that there is less scarcity, but it's better for the environment since more people can then use public transport, and a whole lot of other reasons!*
- *there are some areas that PROHIBIT multifamily housing . this must end*
- *Multifamily housing is a great way to live and create community*
- *But the multifamily housing that is being built is all luxury*



- *Adaptive reuse of existing buildings, more accessory dwelling units, development of more units that are affordable, as opposed to new high-cost "luxury" units, new units that enhance neighborhoods, additions to open space in tandem with expansion of the housing stock.*
- *Public housing that's nice...we have a long way to go.*
- *Changing existing single families to 2F cuts carbon footprint as well.*
- *Density should be better distributed throughout the Town's neighborhoods.*
- *It should be not-for-profit and community centric, we need to focus on meeting housing needs not on the terms the market prefers*
- *allow multi family housing in single family areas. Plus, rehab/redevelop very large buildings into smaller units. More retail/housing combos.*
- *Renovate public housing!!*
- *An affordable housing overlay is a great way to change zoning to get more affordable housing, without making it all luxury condos!*
- *More or less the built environment we have now but incrementally larger - 3 families by right everywhere near transit; doesn't fundamentally change the look and feel but adds significantly to housing supply. And in our multi-family districts they should grow more; overall increases to supply without massive towers. Smaller minimum lots in South Brookline and legalizing townhomes*
- *Need more middle density / mixed use development*
- *upzone parts of single and two family zones within 3 tenths of a mile from the T to M-1.0.*
- *Smaller, lower units with multi-families.*
- *make it simple for mother-in-law suites, use of garage space.*
- *More biking trails within the town to enable easier access to public areas from all neighborhoods.*
- *more density along our commercial spines—we should not have so many single story commercial buildings that are literally next to the train and bus—there should be 3 or 4 stories of housing above*
- *not the luxury million-dollar plus condos that seem to be all that the developers are making these days.*
- *In the existing single family neighborhoods have small houses on the large lots and also have small stores to allow for walking and biking to get milk. This would lessen driving.*
- *Expand 4- story residences into single-family districts.*
- *To clarify, I don't think that _everything_ should be torn down, but there are plenty of underutilized, often dilapidated plots/buildings that should be replaced with mixed-use buildings. And I don't think that we should be afraid of building buildings greater than 4 stories tall.*
- *developer requirements when they convert 2 families and 3 families to fancy, expensive 4 and 5 units should be eliminated. Help to develop more affordable housing?*
- *Single family is subtle discrimination*
- *The goal would be to keep Brookline's residential character while providing more affordable housing.*
- *Health and fitness included for low income who cannot afford the fitness centers in the market*



- are there opportunities to reduce regulations to make building new housing cheaper?
- Can we protect older but affordable housing?
- more underground parking would allow expansion of ground space for housing
- Agree high rises are OK
- More development in partnership with non-profit developers. And costs are so high that for-profit developers want a return on their investment when they pay for that land.
- We see tons of tear-downs of single and two families already; but they're only allowed to be replaced with other 1 and 2 unit buildings; allowing 4-6 units there instead wouldn't change the scope of the building in many instances
- Changing single family zoning to multi family, but not changing the FAR would help build more housing without changing the town landscape.
- Existing housing stock should be preserved as a response to climate change. Now, we have a policy to tear down historic building to build new buildings, thinking incorrectly that the new buildings are more sustainable.

3. What criteria should be considered in the Housing Plan for locating more affordable housing? Are some types of locations better than others? If so, why?

CUAL SERIA EL CRITERIO A SER CONSIDERADO EN EL PLAN DE VIVIENDA PARA INCLUIR MAS VIVIENDAS ACCESIBLE? HAY AREAS MEJOR QUE OTRAS? SI ES ASI, POR QUE?

住房計劃中應考慮哪些標準來尋找更多可負擔房屋？某些類型的房屋和地理位置是否比其他類型的好？如果是這樣，為什麼呢？

Какие критерии следует учитывать в Жилищном Плане для поиска (и нахождения) более доступного жилья? Являются ли некоторые типы локаций/месторасположений лучше, чем другие? Если да, то почему?

- We need to think more broadly about transportation, as well. We shouldn't simply rely on public transportation for locales of more dense properties. We might require developers to include shuttles, for example.
- Close to public transportation is better.
- Spread out across town, not relegated to the outskirts/specific locations, including close to public transit, public schools, community spaces (teen center, mental health center, etc.). I would directly consult those who are actually seeking affordable housing in Brookline- and get their input on what their needs/preferences for location are.
- NoBro is already very dense—one of the densest parts of MA. It would be good to see more development in SoBro which has many more single family houses and lots of acreage.
- along transportation corridors so that people could get to jobs and other things without needing and incurring the cost of a car
- also making sure that all new affordable housing units have proper access to the internet



- *Locations close to T better. But we need to expand T service. Walkable makes such a difference.*
- *Higher-rise non-expensive housing ☐*
- *AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING OVERLAY!!!*
- *Adding gentle density where we can, but don't encourage tear down, embodied carbon matters and green space matters. My precinct is too dense already. Encourage adaptive reuse not demolition.*
- *but we need to improve public transportation in SoBro. And I also think that Washington Square is a great area for some larger buildings and retail operations.*
- *Need access for public transit. Encourage walking, biking. Larger issue of MBTA having better/more effective bus routes.*
- *having it spread out over town is really important, it should be integrated into all parts of the community, and not just shoved into a few little sections*
- *More multifamily housing in Transit Oriented areas with zoning that allows mixed use - groceries, etc. More density without completely ignoring setbacks*
- *More housing near T stops, especially underutilized land use around D line and our bus routes. Much of Brookline has large minimum lots (1/2 acre or larger) that could easily house lots of people as townhomes and duplexes. We should also not be afraid of height in our commercial corridors - 10-12 stories at Coolidge Corner / Washington Square / Brookline Village*
- *We should look at the historic model of having a storefront with apartments above. We need closer destinations rather than always having to get into a car.*
- *Accessible to public transportation, more inclusive of lower AIM groups*
- *We should be very reluctant to tear down older multifamily rental buildings to build new high cost buildings (often condos). The older buildings tend to have larger units (family friendly) and less expensive to rent.*
- *Expanding public transit is extraordinarily hard to accomplish in the United States at this time, unfortunately*
- *any opportunities to use federal infrastructure money for public transit expansion in South Brookline?*
- *We need wide cycle track networks throughout Brookline and not always rely on public transportation.*
- *I would love to see much more public transportation throughout Brookline, and that it all be free!*
- *I think more bus service would be very helpful.*
- *More buses. More T stations is a very long term and difficult issue.*
- *For a friendly 40B once we're past the 10%, maybe part of the negotiation with the developer is providing transportation options if in a part of town that is not walkable to the T*
- *Absolutely expanding public transit, likely buses with dedicated bus lanes.*
- *I'm not sure we can rely on the T to expand, so we must take matters into our own hands vis a vis transportation to allow more density.*
- *Medical and pharmaceutical professionals represent a lot of Brookline already.*
- *I live in Coolidge Corner, which is already dense and I would love it to be denser. I live here because it is urban in feel. It's convenience and transit rich, there should be more units*



- *Adding more public transit is not something that Brookline alone can guarantee. Until that happens, we need to plan around the existing public transportation.*
- *Close to public transit / bike access and close to retail. Washington square and Brookline village are ripe for development. Expanding bike accessibility will help people get to work even if not immediately close to transit / have no car*
- *both more housing near public transit, and bring more transit to dense neighborhoods*
- *FAR's should be reassessed and more carefully administered to preserve both green space and efficiency of the use of space within livable structures.*
- *The areas that are accessible to all amenities are what the rich pay for*
- *expanding transit to service some of the less developed areas would be helpful; access to grocery stores is also important and may require incentives/zoning changes?*
- *Safer bike paths needed*
- *We also have the academic institutions with populations who want to walk or bike. The academics want to live in Brookline.*
- *It's likely worth considering that housing + transit seem like a "if you build it, they will come" situation in both directions*
- *There is lots of opportunity to build more housing in 6 to 8 story buildings along Harvard St.*
- *more buses, dedicated bus lanes, more buses on Route 9 to help with being able to put affordable housing all over town*
- *many hospital workers lower income*
- *There needs to be more public transit in South Brookline which would enable more multi-family housing there.*
- *How much do middle income people use buses? I do not have a car and take buses and I feel like not many people in town do so.*
- *Affordable Housing Overlay would be fantastic.*
- *There's likely enough pent up demand for "luxury units" in the area that you'd either need to build A LOT of new housing or build SOME new housing + require 40B, otherwise you just keep tapping into the luxury market*
- *Affordable housing overlay sounds like a very good idea.*
- *Others have also said, that we need to think more broadly about transportation and access. In the next decade different technologies will create more options other than single-owner automobiles.*
- *It's not appropriate to just plan for housing without also planning for the complementary facilities land uses and services to maintain livability. We need to be concerned about displacing our small businesses if we try to build up above businesses. Otherwise they will be lost and they are a vital part of our community.*
- *Small businesses need customers. Customers frequent a small business when they live near them. Density is good for small businesses*
- *We may want to consider mixed income buildings if that's necessary to make it financially feasible. Would love the HPP to be able to define parameters for an affordable housing overlay that would mean housing actually gets built.*
- *Even 40B's definition of "affordable" isn't creating a lot of economic diversity, is it?*
- *Have there been discussions with folks in BHA housing re what they need, deferred maintenance, etc.?*



- *Here is a link about Cambridge's affordable housing overlay for those curious: <https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Housing/affordablehousingoverlay>*
- *Hospitals also employ a great many low and moderate income staff who would love to have the benefits of a neighborhood like Brookline. With the difficulty of recruiting health care staff at all levels, many local hospitals may be very supportive of affordable housing for their employees in Brookline.*
- *I think Cambridge did mixed income for theirs, an AHO can be tailored to the needs of the community I think*
- *Likely need ARPA funds to fix conditions folks live in/with*
- *Agree with Deborah about urgency. There doesn't seem to be much of that in Brookline*
- *We should reconsider (reduce or eliminate) the cash out option of our inclusionary zoning bylaw. If we want affordable units built, we should require developers to build them.*
- *Very much agree with the need to address improvement needs at state-funded public housing. Needs go beyond maintenance*
- *Rats, roaches, security problems, no one wants to live with this. We need to do better here.*
- *Public housing has been suffering from lack of resources for years/decades. We need to find ways to support the maintenance of current public housing while finding ways to expand both public housing and "market" affordable housing.*
- *Is there a tenant organization?*
- *It is shocking to have these kinds of safety and health hazards in our public housing!*
- *think the Town needs to develop a closer relationship with public housing. Because family properties are primarily state funded, repairs are delayed due to lack of funds. I think we need to take responsibility as a town for the maintenance of these properties.*
- *we need to spend public, municipal dollars on repairing and refurbishing public housing in Town*
- *Not all Federally-funded housing has adequate resources for maintenance*
- *There are a number of people on this call that have raised the same issue as Kym, but as has been pointed out, there is no sense of urgency about this.*
- *We need to give state public housing as much ARPA money as needed to fix these conditions*
- *There is no tenant org. as of now*
- *Kym was talking about conditions in a Federally-funded housing site.*
- *Its is urgent that we prioritize repair and renovation as described. Tenants need a voice and resources. If tenants have voice and are heard and responded to, repairs and renovations will be tailored to tenants needs and our affordable housing will be improved.*
- *These conditions exist right now and the ARPA funds should go to that and those needs should go into the HPP*
- *Don't forget about state funded public housing as well. Many more \$\$ are needed from both*
- *Need to motivate HUD to increase capital funding thru our local reps*



- *There seems to be agreement about the urgency of fixing public housing-- immediately and also on a longer term basis. ARPA immediately, but sustainable \$\$ over time as well.*
- *The town should have funds to build and maintain affordable housing - that are really great places to live.*
- *Decent housing especially essential to children.*
- *There is also an urgent need to support the development of an active tenants union*
- *Whatever else is recommended and done, fixing and preserving the existing Brookline public housing must be a top priority.*
- *I think there should be community funds available to help BIPOC residents purchase their own homes.*
- *Need more affordable homeownership options for low income residents to help close the racial wealth gap. refer to the federal reserve study from a few years ago. Average wealth of white households in boston area: Over \$200,000. Average wealth of black households in Boston area: \$8*
- *Brookline doesn't have affordable extra curricular activities in the market, so much expensive, so low income kids stay home after they come from school, ...*
- *Assist the BHA in getting them the funds needed to provide healthy homes for its residents*
- *BIC, Brookline's community development corporation, will submit an ARPA application for a first time homebuyers program. The application will include a tenant's advocacy mission as well.*
- *Homeownership is important. Many of us who live here in homes bought 20+years ago could no longer afford to live here but are able due to homeownership. Ownership as described is a way to secure housing.*

Some of you mentioned scale as being of importance, what does it mean when people say a building is too big or too tall?

- *No high rises*
- *some people have concern about scale...not everyone. this is important*
- *The multi family housing should not be tall apartment buildings amidst historic housing.*
- *I think most people would say that it depends on the definition and scale of "multi-family"*
- *Not much land to do low density*
- *I agree with alicia, the very real effect on people as it comes to such a basic thing like housing will always be more important to me than aesthetics*
- *3,4 stories*
- *I feel like people having a place to live is more important than it looking nice*
- *depends on location. Along Beacon St. corridor, high rises are appropriate. In other locations, perhaps max should be 3 or 4 floors..*
- *Just wanted to make sure it's clear that many, many of us here disagree with the "too high" critique. High helps support affordability.*
- *No such thing as too tall/big ;-)*
- *Depends where it is*
- *I think that high rises look alienating*



- *Tall buildings in Jamaica Plan are disorienting. Tall buildings are out of character with the street with smaller homes. We should consider those buildings are an intrusion on that street.*
- *Too tall is higher than 3 or 4 stories. The scale should not dominate the street for the shadows, the lack of privacy, etc.*
- *high rises are fine along Beacon St or Rt. 9*
- *I think when you ask what kind of multi-family is too big or too small, it's important to look at the existing neighborhood and the type of housing that is there and the look and feel of the neighborhood.*
- *No more than 3 or 4 stories, in part so that elevators are not needed.*
- *It all depends on the location, must fit the setting. Agree we need human scale. Also matters the width of the roads, don't want canyons.*
- *Balance/Scale - we need to be mindful of the impact on limited resources - parks, schools, transit, streetscapes, etc.*
- *Too big or too tall I think has to relate to the scope of the neighboring buildings. For instance, Brookline Village has a lot of buildings from the 19th Century that would be dwarfed by tall buildings and I would not want to lose this history and the scale of the neighborhood.*
- *There are very few >10 story towers in Brookline anyway*
- *Along the transit corridors, 5 or 6 stories should be the minimum.*
- *Yes to more high rises*
- *Agree high rises are OK*
- *High rises are okay. I grew up in a 2-family house on mason terrace with a view of a high rise and it was fine!*

4. What would you say are the three most important housing issues the Plan should be sure to address?

CUALES CREE USTED SON LOS TRES SUJETOS DE VIVIENDA MAS IMPORTANTES QUE EL PLAN DEBIERA CONSIDERAR?

您认为该计划应该确保解决的三个最重要的住房问题是什么？

Какие бы вы назвали три наиболее важных жилищных вопроса, которые План должен обязательно адресовать?

- *Equity*
- *#1 Invest in & repair & renovate our current public housing units;*
- *#2 Build more public housing for families;*
- *#3 Ensure adequate, equitable & just representation on all housing-decision-making bodies in town (including: BIPOC, renters, women, working-class, unhoused, seniors, students, etc.)*
- *-Upzoning*
- *-Removing or reducing parking bans*
- *-Increased public transit coverage*
- *Bring state and federal public housing up to snuff*



- *Bring back Rent Control || Establish a Community Land Trust || Repair and build more Public Housing*
- *Transportation*
- *Increased density in the commercial areas*
- *Fixing mistakes from previous :)*
- *-Upzoning*
- *-Removing or reducing parking minimums*
- *-Increased public transit coverage*
- *town using all fiscal and other tools to promote affordable housing*
- *Safe existing housing, diversity of income, child care and funding*
- *Providing homeownership, family housing so POC can have access to schools, providing homebuying classes and funding.*
- *Fixing the public housing we have now*
- *Repair and build more public housing, linked to child care, healthcare, and after-school programs.*
- *Put in cycle track networks so everyone could bicycle and not have to have a car or rely on mass transit. In that housing, include bike parking inside the housing and not in communal rooms. Include climate change in all planning so new buildings are not the only option.*
- *Not demolishing perfectly good housing for profit.*
- *Outreach to ensure diversity*
- *1) Public housing support and improvement 2) zoning and regulatory relief allowing more affordable market housing 3) support for climate-forward and equitable community development*
- *Financing mechanisms for maintenance, climate mitigation, and making lower-wealth or middle wealth housing equally profitable as high wealth housing.*
- *1. create more affordable housing for very low and extremely low income families. 2. Repair and update state public housing 3. increase affordable homeownership opportunities to decrease racial wealth gap and provide access to Brookline schools and amenities*
- *1. Housing with childcare for single mothers 2. Opportunities for minority folks to own their home 3. Create a mechanism for the town to take over the maintenance of family public housing units.*
- *Affordable, walkable, diverse.*
- *funding and action to improve existing public housing*
- *zoning and incentives to increase density, services, and mobility in less-dense areas*
- *Zoning changes needed — both density in terms of the number of units on a site and moving from Floor Area Ratio as a criterion to form-based zoning; a way to deal with high land costs when it comes to building affordable housing,*
- *(1) Increasing multi-family housing supply by-right instead of the months/years of hearings and permits they require; (2) a workable Affordable Housing Overlay for Brookline (maybe 70% Affordable? 85%?) - a plan is only good if it actually results in more housing units; (3) spreading out of where housing supply can increase - South Brookline, along the D line, Boylston Street*
- *Harmful chemicals free, childcare included, / funding , inclusive -, opportunities to live in the US or town.*



- *Increase density (in single family zones), create truly livable conditions in BHA units, make sure units are actually built under inclusionary zoning and find a way to make it more difficult or more expensive for developers to give money to the affordable housing trust in lieu of creating more housing*
- *Planning for the public realm and public spaces, green space and healthy recreation and access to nature, including green infrastructure*
- *1. Invest in Brookline public housing to fix the existing housing stock and ensure that adequate funding is available into the future to preserve it.*
- *2. Ensure that Brookline continues to expand subsidized housing inventory even if and after we achieve the 10% level.*
- *3. Improve the environment for investment in public and affordable housing, e.g. changes in zoning*
- *create affordable homeownership options, remove barriers to increasing multifamily housing (allow it by-right with higher densities), preserve/ maintain existing inventory of public and private affordable housing options.*
- *Mixed use housing, allow very few teardown, re-use/redevelop existing housing into more units*
- *The housing plan needs to (1) put the priority on generating affordable housing, not market-rate housing; (2) provide incentives for preservation and reuse of existing buildings; and (3) address the need to increase open space and other forms of infrastructure and amenities that Brookline will need as the housing stock grows and the population increases.*
- *Accept that significant subsidies will be necessary to support units that are affordable whether they are rental or homeownership*
- *Up zone single family/two family/three family zones within 3 tenths of a mile from a T station to M 1.0*
- *For climate change, have all affordable housing include lawns and trees to lessen heat island effect and reduce the amount of air conditioning needed.*
- *shift priorities so housing that has been for moderate income families for 100 years or more are not shifted to exceedingly luxurious housing*
- *1) livable/safe conditions for residents*
- *1. systemic racism as it relates to housing and affordable housing, as well as for low-income people, disabled people, women, etc. etc. 2. making sure current public housing is actually humane and nice*
- *3. changing zoning laws and introducing an AHO are great starts to getting *actually affordable* housing in Brookline!*
- *Some “step-up” program for new low-income homeowners; build wealth for POC as a issue of justice*
- *Consider redeveloping what was returning WWII housing and is now affordable housing.*

5. If you could do one thing to improve housing in Brookline, what would it be?

SI USTED PUDIERA HACER UNA COSA PARA MEJORAR LA VIVIENDA EN BROOKLINE, CUAL SERIA?

如果你可以做一件事来改善布鲁克林的住房，那会是什么？



Если бы вы могли сделать что-то одно, чтобы улучшить жилищные условия в Бруклайне, что бы это было?

- *More more more [affordable housing]*
- *1. Town should find ways to (financially) support affordable housing.*
- *An affordable housing overlay!*
- *There are quite a few services to provide free or very low price transportation (especially for seniors) -- how easy are they for people to access? Increase capacity and knowledge.*
- *ONE thing Brookline can do - streamline the process to create moderate sized (6 – 10ish units) of multi-family housing by-right in transit accessible areas (within ¼ mile of a T stop)*
- *Decent, wrap-around public housing.*
- *Fully invest in repairing, renovating & continuing to maintain all of our current public housing units in Brookline.*
- *housing for lower income residents that is safe and actually livable, and doing this through implementing an AHO*
- *“Put the priority on generating affordable housing, not market-rate housing.” You don’t get diversity when selling only to millionaires.*
- *Equitable state funding. There has to be equity between municipalities with funding directed to communities that are being asked to provide housing. For example, because of commercial development, Boston and Cambridge have been able to realize hundreds of millions of dollars of increased commercial property taxes over the past several years (over \$1 BILLION in Boston's case). Boston and Cambridge have had no overrides in at least 30 years. They have linkage fees that only cover about 4% or 5% of the needed housing subsidies (by their own studies), with most new employees living in other communities. Those other communities do not share in the increased commercial taxes, but have to pay for schools and municipal services. The State is not even fully funding programs, such as Chapter 40S, designed to pay for some school costs in limited circumstances. There is a state funding issue.*
- *Broader access to public transport, better access to affordable services like childcare and stricter regulation of developers building affordable units to achieve more variety in scale of units and design of housing in the community.*
- *1. Making affordable housing opportunities equitable - no residency preference, outreach to immigrants and LEP folks, outreach to POC communities/media outlets. 2. Short of rent control, incentives to get landlords to keep rents low. Can we adjust tax rates so that market rate landlords pay a lot more and landlords willing to keep rents under a certain amount lower rate? 3. Agree with need to maintain all public housing in Brookline in a safe & sanity condition*
- *Develop a broadly shared vision for Brookline that inspires us to work together and realize it.*
- *create more deeply affordable units for families*
- *Create affordable housing so the typology is also reflective of Brookline in sustainability, appearance, transportation (bike and have EV recharging in the parking lots), and height. Do not built width expanses of hardscape but instead of have lawn and trees, again similar to the rest of the Olmsted Brookline.*



- *Make affordable housing a line item in the budget.*
- *#1 thing to improve housing in Brookline - convert the old Lincoln School to 100% affordable housing; or demolish it and replace it with 100% affordable multifamily housing. The old Lincoln School is only occasionally utilized as swing space and with new schools already being built the need for school swing space will diminish even further.*
- *I love the idea. I want part of it to be a community center as well.*
- *Fix and preserve existing public housing. This is a long-term financing challenge in addition to immediate investment.*
- *Organize to create the political will to create the sense of urgency*
- *An Affordable Housing Overlay District! A direct way to address the housing crisis is to create exemptions for zoning laws if the building meets certain affordable housing requirements. Also full repairs and services to public housing!*
- *Do the hospitals/non-profit health facilities building more and more in Brookline pay their share? This would help!*
- *LMA is expanding into Brookline aggressively—and no, they don't pay their share.*
- *I think I heard Brookline might not be receiving a commensurate amount of Payment In Lieu of Taxes*
- *An Affordable Housing Overlay District should be the entire Town.*
- *Provide incentives for preservation and reuse of existing buildings.*
- *Grandfamilies! It's been done before!*
- *Do whatever it takes to develop more residential density in areas like Washington Sq. and other similar places - a major transit area with 1-story buildings on every corner. What's wrong with this picture??*
- *Maybe not the one thing, but a "thing": BHA senior housing is supported (in general) by the federal govt and the support is significantly higher than what the state does for family housing. Push the legislature to fix that.*
- *Sounds like "grandfamilies" housing — there are examples in Boston*
- *rent control.*
- *As to payments-in-lieu of taxes, Boston has published its data for FY20-- For example, Boston asked for \$25 million (only about 1/4 or 1/3 of what would be paid if the institutions were not tax-exempt) from the 5 Mass General Brigham hospitals (Mass General; Brigham, Faulkner, MEEI, Spaulding). Boston got \$5.7 M in cash, \$5.7M deferred, and \$11.4M in "community benefits" (which the hospitals are required to provide under IRS regs).*
- *Love the idea of creating affordable grand-family housing. both biological and invented.*
- *The one thing that would improve housing in Brookline would be to invest a lot more money in affordable housing (building new units and maintaining existing units), but that's easier said than done. Given that funds are always insufficient, my second choice for the one thing would be to revise and improve the inclusionary zoning bylaw to provide more incentives for affordable housing.*
- *I think it's alienating to deny people the fundamental right to housing*

Some people mentioned removing single family zoning districts thus allowing multi-family throughout the town. Does anyone disagree with this?



- *Yes, probably the people living there who aren't here.*
- *There are lots of people who think that; they just may not be here.*
- *only if zoning favors affordable housing, not if it leads to more luxury housing*
- *I think ending single-family zoning is really important*
- *single family zoning districts restricts any significant effort of affordability*
- *We should abolish single family zoning* □

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS MADE BY PARTICIPANTS

There is an egregious lack of accessible (to those using wheelchairs) and adaptable (without structural barriers to making the units and building accessible) housing, both affordable and market-rate. I hope we can explore ways to encourage both even where not required by state or federal law, through applying principles of universal design. Since many seniors also have mobility disabilities, this would serve their interests as well. Given our proximity to the Longwood medical area, we're in the perfect location to make a dent in the need.

Brookline does have an affordability benefit in the potential for significant cost savings because of our Transit accessibility. So the Housing + Transportation costs may be less than more suburban lower housing cost communities.

2 hour parking limit for elderly people living in senior residence without cars park free parking

need free passes for visitors

- *turning some of the larger houses into 2-3 family building could create housing for those who are price out more quickly than larger projects*

QUESTIONS POSED BY PARTICIPANTS

Does "equitable" include disability?

Should the Needs Assessment include the broader region, rather than just current Brookline residents?

For reference: what is AMI for Brookline and it's area?

How many ADU's have been approved/permitted?

Since 2016, how many permits have been issued through 40A?

What elements are included in the local capacity assessment and how is capacity defined or measured?



Of the affordable units referenced, how many include family housing as compared to senior housing?

What is Affordable housing Overlay?

How does the mis-match between supply and demand compare with the other urban communities (Boston, Cambridge, Somerville)?

Does the Town need to add housing staff to facilitate development?

How do advocate for better public transit in parts of brookline that has less density in order to increase density and housing stock in many parts of Brookline?

Is Brookline looking at climate change and working to keep the existing building stock - the existing house is the most green?

How is multi-family defined?

How much of Brookline is zoned for single family?

Do we have underutilized office space in Brookline as a result of the pandemic? Many office workers are not coming back. Can we convert that to housing?

Is there a way to integrate BHA housing with the rest of Brookline?

Should there be a density limit overall on streets instead of plot by plot?

Why hasn't the recent bylaw that allows accessory dwelling units (ADUs) generated more ADUs? That bylaw reflected years of effort. Maybe it's too soon to tell if it will be effective, but if it's not working we should try to find out why and, if possible, improve it.

Could you explain what an Affordable Housing Overlay District is?

How have 2 Lives and Community Of Brookline been able to get the funds to do affordable housing in Brookline?

