



BOROUGH OF FENWICK

2022 AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN

ADOPTED MARCH 9, 2022

Legal Requirements:

Section 8-30j of the Connecticut General Statutes requires each municipality in Connecticut to prepare or amend and adopt an affordable housing plan and to review such plan every five years. The purpose of the plan is to indicate how the municipality intends to increase the number of affordable housing developments in the municipality.

Background:

Fenwick is essentially fully developed. Within its 235 acres are approximately 85 residential lots, municipal and recreational uses, open space, and a non-denominational church.

Bounded by Long Island Sound, the Connecticut River and South Cove, and positioned where the River empties into the Sound, the Borough of Fenwick includes beaches, dunes, tidal and inland wetlands, and maritime shrub land and forest. The combination of statutory and regulatory requirements, as well as open space and conservation ownerships and easements to protect these resources, restricts development of much of the land.

The largest single use is the municipal golf course, which is protected from any different type of development by conservation easements.

The special historic character of the Borough of Fenwick has been recognized through its inclusion on the National and State Registers of Historic Places and the formation of a Local Historic District. The Historic District Commission is charged with the preservation and protection of the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places within Fenwick.

Fenwick Zoning Regulations currently permit residential development and provide for a relatively small minimum lot size consistent with affordable housing practices, but there is no possibility to create additional lots and the existing lots are too small to be further divided or to accommodate additional dwelling units under the Connecticut Health Code.

Given the desirability of its prime coastal location and the small number of available residential lots, the typical home value in the Borough of Fenwick is over three million dollars, well beyond the range of viability for any developer of housing that would be deemed affordable under state law.

Conclusion:

Affordable housing is generally defined as housing that is available to households making less than the area median income and costing less than 30% of a household's annual income. Although the Borough of Fenwick recognizes the need for affordable housing, the elements of affordability, along with Fenwick's current housing stock, demographics, and land characteristics, demonstrate that Fenwick has virtually no ability within its boundaries to add significantly to the state's affordable housing stock.

However, the Borough of Fenwick is located wholly within the Town of Old Saybrook and is a functional part of that town. Although the Borough of Fenwick regulates land use independently from the Town, Borough land uses are complementary to those in the Town. The Borough of Fenwick Plan of Conservation and Development acknowledges the important function that Old Saybrook land use plays for the residents of the Borough of Fenwick, particularly in providing additional housing opportunities. The Borough also provides approximately ten per cent of the Old Saybrook tax base making it a substantial contributor to affordable housing initiatives funded by the town of Old Saybrook. Accordingly, the Borough of Fenwick, as a part of the Town of Old Saybrook, fully supports the goals outlined in the Town of Old Saybrook Affordable Housing Plan.