



# Lowell City Council

## *Zoning/Housing SC Meeting*

Michael Q. Geary  
City Clerk

**Date:** May 25, 2021  
**Time:** 5:30 PM  
**Location:** Council Chamber/Zoom/Remote Participation

### **PRESENT:**

Present on Roll Call were Chairman Elliott, C. Chau and C. Nuon (Zoning SC). Chairman Drinkwater, C. Mercier and C. Elliott (Housing SC). Also present was Eric Slagle (Inspectional Services), C. Rourke and C. Conway,

### **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:**

Chairman Elliott called the meeting to order noting the joint session with C. Drinkwater as the Chair of the Housing SC and outlined the purpose of the meeting.

### **ORDER OF BUSINESS:**

C. Drinkwater called upon Mr. Slagle to make presentation regarding review of recent Housing Choice Legislation. Mr. Slagle noted it was a follow up meeting regarding issue and outlined three items which legislation would have a possible effect: (1) Chapter 40 changes – local boards would need simple majority not a two thirds vote on most applications; (2) there must be certain defined districts within an area of an MBTA station if area is served by public transportation; and (3) appeals by abutters may be required to post a \$50,000 bond. Mr. Slagle commented on current definition of accessory dwelling units in comparison on how they are defined under new legislation which would allow greater restrictions beyond statute. C. Drinkwater questioned current zoning regulations regarding accessory use dwellings in the City. Mr. Slagle noted that such units are not allowed in single family districts. C. Elliott pose problems regarding oversight as well as ability for granting of special permits. Mr. Slagle noted that there can be no in-law apartments in City; there must be an unobstructed flow throughout the dwelling. C. Elliott questioned application of 40R sites. Mr. Slagle commented on process of City obtaining bonus payments when certain permit processes are streamlined. C. Elliott noted need to change current zoning to adopt new legislation. C. Drinkwater opened meeting up to public; Deb Forgione, Cathy Mercado; Bill Lipshitz; and Carl Howell addressed the body. C. Drinkwater noted there is more information to explore and there should be a goal to open more units in the City with limitations and affordability. C. Elliott commented on the



affordability options in the City. C. Elliott noted there are housing needs and that some incremental changes would be beneficial but there are many challenges for City to increase density. C. Rourke noted need for further discussion and must develop smart growth to keep people in the City as well as maintaining neighborhoods. C. Elliott noted City will address needs when they are present. C. Drinkwater noted the complex issue in need of further review and meeting will be continued. **Motion** by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Elliott to request reports regarding current zoning regulations. So voted.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**Motion** to adjourn/continue by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Elliott. So Voted.

Meeting adjourned at 5:26 PM

Michael Geary, City Clerk