



REGULAR MEETING – AD HOC HOUSING COMMITTEE AGENDA

FEBRUARY 19, 2026, 6:30 PM
BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING

To allow public access, anyone may access a meeting by telephone and/or Zoom, or a recording in the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. Specific instructions and links can be found at norwalkct.gov/meetings.



Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide "live comments" may also use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the "raise your hand indicator" and you will be called by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda, and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually-explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be included into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Michelle Andrzejewski at mandrzejewski@norwalkct.gov with the subject line "Public Comment" to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

- I. **CALL TO ORDER**
- II. **ROLL CALL**
- III. **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**
 - A. **Regular Meeting: November 20th, 2025**
- IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**
- V. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. **Affordable Housing Account Ordinance discussion continued.**
- VI. **NEW BUSINESS**
- VII. **DISCUSSION**

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**CITY OF NORWALK
AD HOC AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - NOVEMBER 20, 2025
VIA ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

ATTENDEES: Nora Niedzielski-Eichner (Chair), Nicole Eaddy, Jalin Sead, Darlene Young.

STAFF: Michelle Andrzejewski.

OTHERS: Michele Conderino (CEO, Open Doors) Kirill Elin (Senior Director of Operations, Open Doors).

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner noted that only Ms. Eaddy and Mr. Sead were present and that quorum was not yet achieved. Additional members joined later in the meeting.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: October 23rd, 2025

This item was deferred at the beginning of the meeting due to lack of quorum. It was taken up at the conclusion of the meeting after quorum was achieved.

****MS. YOUNG MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 23, 2025 REGULAR MEETING AS SUBMITTED.
**MR. SEAD SECONDED THE MOTION.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Cece addressed the Committee regarding an ongoing technical issue with Zoom access to city meetings, noting that the public feed often begins after the meeting has already started. Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner thanked Ms. Cece for the feedback and stated that staff would follow up on the matter. No other members of the public requested to speak.

V. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Presentation and discussion with Open Doors – Michele Conderino & Kirill Elin

Ms. Conderino, CEO of Open Doors, and Mr. Elin, Senior Director of Operations, provided a detailed presentation on Open Doors' experience as an affordable housing developer in Norwalk, with particular focus on their current project at 24 Berkeley Street (five 3-bedroom townhouse-style units with garages, deeply affordable). Ms. Conderino reviewed the organization's history of acquiring and operating affordable housing since 1996, their current portfolio of 55 units, the challenges of acquiring property in a competitive market, the lengthy state financing and permitting process, value engineering requirements, and the recent October 2024 closing on state financing. She noted that the project had previously received local approvals and a foundation permit, but the permit had lapsed and required re-permitting.

Ms. Conderino and Mr. Elin discussed local and state barriers to producing more affordable housing, including high construction costs, lengthy permitting timelines, restrictive state accessibility and design standards, difficulty competing with market-rate developers for land or buildings, and the need for greater city coordination to alert nonprofit developers to properties coming available. They suggested the city consider mechanisms to notify mission-driven developers of opportunities, streamline permitting, revisit restrictions on boarding houses/rooming houses and unrelated occupants, allow more multifamily housing and ownership opportunities (condominiums) in suburban zones, and encourage adaptive reuse of commercial buildings.

Ms. Eaddy asked about tenant selection criteria for the Berkeley Street project. Ms. Conderino explained that applications would be posted publicly near certificate of occupancy, prioritized by income and family composition, with preference considered for those living or working in Norwalk if permitted, and that credit checks would not be used while certain serious criminal backgrounds would disqualify applicants. Ms. Young expressed strong appreciation for the work of Open Doors and emphasized the need to continue expanding diverse housing types throughout all areas of the city. Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner thanked the presenters for their expertise and creative ideas and indicated several items would be followed up on, including potential Redevelopment Agency notification procedures, condominium barriers, boarding house regulations, and ongoing permitting improvements.

VII. DISCUSSION

All discussion occurred under Item VI.A above. No separate discussion item was taken up.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:02 p.m. following approval of the October 23, 2025 minutes. Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner noted that the committee would attempt to schedule a December meeting if possible and wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Respectfully Submitted,
Courtney Baldwin
Recording Secretary



**125 East Avenue
Norwalk, Connecticut 06851**

MEMORANDUM

January 6, 2024

TO: Ad Hoc Affordable Housing Committee; Nora Eichner-Niedzielski, Chairman

FROM: Steve Kleppin, Planning & Zoning Director

SUBJECT: Affordable Housing Trust Fund/Application Criteria

Chapter 10A of the City Code, requires the preparation of an application to access funds within the Affordable Housing Account. Prior to preparing an actual application draft, I am seeking guidance on how to proceed in finalizing some of the criteria and variables outlined below.

Qualified Expenditures

“Funds used for the physical act of construction, rehabilitation, improvement, maintenance, or repair of an Affordable Housing building or structure. These include, but are not limited to, labor and materials.”

It should be clearly stated that projects that are just meeting the minimum requirements of Article 6.12 (Workforce Housing) of the Zoning Regulations are not eligible to seek funds from this account.

Eligibility for Submittal

- Determination of any preclusions or conflicts of interest
- Verification of project type (qualified expenditure)
- Any other considerations?

Distribution Amount

Minimum or maximum requested amount? (Fairfield has a range \$10-\$100k)

- ~ \$2.1 million available in the fund. This could easily be used on a single project. Some of the smaller providers, Pacific House, for example, may need to access many sources of funding to bridge gaps in funding.
- Should we reconsider/target smaller projects, focusing on missing middle housing and increasing home ownership? *Note: units would be deed restricted in perpetuity, making resale of purchase units not as attractive.*
- Perhaps have tiered order of priority: 1) for sale units, 2) projects with highest % affordability, 3) Local non-profit affordable housing developers, 4) for-profit housing developers. We can also consider prioritizing 2-bedroom and family-size units or rehabilitation of existing structures verse new construction.

How Distributed

Loan or Grant? Staff opinion is that it should be via a grant. A down payment loan program should be separate from this process.

- For what types of projects/entities?
- Construction Costs only per Ordinance (new construction or rehabilitation, maintenance or repair of existing “affordable” units)
- Bridge or matching costs to leverage for grants or tax credits

For example, if it was the Norwalk Housing Authority or other local housing provider, you would likely not have any trepidation about advancing funds for them to complete a funding gap. However, the familiarity or level of assurance might not be there with a private developer, so tying funds to obtaining an approval or reimbursing after the units obtained their Certificate of Occupancy is a consideration.

Requirements for Submittal

- Minimum number of units within a development? Recommendation is no, since that could preclude duplexes-fourplexes and make home ownership less attainable
- For multi-family developments, there should be a minimum percentage of “affordable” units, in addition to the percentage of units required by the Work Force Housing (WFH) program (min. 10%). For example:
 - Min. 10% of units between 80-90% SMI (in addition to the 10% WFH)
 - Min. 10% of the units less than 70% SMI (potentially in addition to the 10% WFH and/or the 10% units at 80-90% SMI)

Some examples of other potential submittal requirements:

1. Compliance with 6.12 of the Zoning Regulations
2. Detailed narrative on how funds will be used
3. Unit distribution and makeup consistent with 6.12 of the Zoning Regulations (WFH)
4. Breakdown of how funds will be utilized and indicating compliance with eligible expense categories
5. Disclosure of all other funding sources and **financial analysis** of how funding will be achieved
6. Project timeline

Scoring Submittals

Point system based on differing categories, ie: 0-10 points - % of home ownership units.

Stamford's categories:

- Project readiness: completion timeline, control of land, status of plans, and other financing sources
- Affordability
- New construction or rehabilitation
- Amenities/services provided
- Unit size and/or type (ex: studio, one bedroom)
- Neighborhood and proximity to transit
- Other financing sources
- Home ownership or rental
- Target population
- Expertise

Other possible categories to consider:

- Projects leveraging public-private partnerships
- Projects consistency with the goals and recommendations of the Affordable Housing Plan
- Projects consistency with the Citywide Plan.
- Applicant's track record and experience on related projects

Posting/Advertising Fund

- Stamford requires posting (advertising/publicizing) when amount exceeds \$2 million
- How do people know about the fund? Could run legal notices, advertise on the Workforce Housing Page