

**CITY OF NORWALK
AD HOC HOUSING COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES - FEBRUARY 19, 2026
ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING**

ATTENDEES: Nicole Eaddy (Chair), Jan Degenshein, Jalen Sead, Colin Hosten, Darlene Young.

STAFF: Michelle Andrzejewski.

OTHERS: Steve Kleppin, Sterling Young.

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Ad Hoc Housing Committee was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Ms. Eaddy.

II. ROLL CALL

Ms. Eaddy conducted roll call and a quorum was present.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: November 20th, 2025

Ms. Eaddy presented the minutes of the regular meeting held on November 20, 2025.

**** MR. SEAD MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF NOVEMBER 20, 2025.**

****THE MOTION PASSED WITH ONE ABSTENTION – MR. DEGENSHEIN**

There were no omissions, deletions, or corrections.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No public participation.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Affordable Housing Account Ordinance discussion continued

Ms. Eaddy introduced the continued discussion of the Affordable Housing Account Ordinance. She invited Mr. Kleppin and Ms. Andrzejewski to provide an overview, particularly for newer members.

Mr. Kleppin provided background on the ordinance and the Affordable Housing Account. He explained that the account receives funds from fees on multifamily developments (workforce

housing requirements) and, more recently, certain commercial projects. The funds, approaching approximately \$2.5 million, must be used per state statute for the rehabilitation or new construction of affordable housing, generally targeting households at or below 60% of state median income. He noted that the ordinance requires the committee to establish criteria and a mechanism for disbursing these funds.

Mr. Kleppin described prior committee work on developing a matrix of criteria to evaluate funding requests, including considerations such as project scale, maximum funding caps per project, focus on smaller-scale or missing-middle housing, and other eligibility factors. He emphasized the need to carefully allocate the limited funds, as a single large project could exhaust a significant portion. He apologized for an agenda error regarding attached documentation and indicated he would review the draft criteria but did not expect final decisions at this meeting. He suggested scheduling a future meeting to continue the discussion and move toward a more formal document, with subsequent review by Corporation Counsel and the full City Council.

Mr. Kleppin also addressed committee membership requirements under the ordinance, noting that outreach has been conducted to identify resident members (including those living in income-assisted housing), with approximately eight potential respondents identified previously. Final appointments would involve vetting through the Mayor's office and City Council.

Ms. Young asked about the balance in the fund (approximately \$2 to \$2.5 million) and how frequently it is replenished. Mr. Kleppin explained that funds are collected at permitting, with larger projects contributing significantly more (e.g., one recent project contributed over \$1 million) and smaller projects contributing less (e.g., \$10,000). The fund is replenished with each qualifying project of three or more units or certain commercial projects, though large contributions are infrequent.

Ms. Young inquired about the timeframe represented by the current balance and its relation to specific developments. Mr. Kleppin estimated about five years of collections, noting the program initially applied only to South Norwalk before becoming citywide.

Mr. Degenshein asked for confirmation that commercial projects are now included in the fee requirement. Mr. Kleppin confirmed this change occurred within the last 18 months and applies to new construction only.

Ms. Eaddy asked about the Wegmans project and the effective date of the commercial fee requirement. Mr. Kleppin and Ms. Andrzejewski confirmed the requirement became effective on or about February 19, 2024, and Wegmans predated that date. Ms. Eaddy noted that newer commercial developments (post-February 2024) would contribute to the fund.

Ms. Eaddy reviewed the ordinance's required committee composition: two City Council members, one Planning and Zoning representative (director or designee), one Chief of Community Services or designee, and three residents (one owner, one renter, and one either owner or renter).

Discussion turned to the process for appointing resident members. Ms. Eaddy confirmed the Mayor appoints, with vetting support from the Mayor's office and Council. Ms. Andrzejewski asked whether political party balance or minority representation requirements apply; no such requirement was identified in the ordinance for this committee.

Ms. Eaddy proposed exploring a pilot program to incentivize Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as a way to create affordable units, given limited city-owned land. She suggested offering tax incentives for property owners to construct deed-restricted ADUs (attached or detached) for affordable rental, potentially as a starter home or for small households.

Mr. Kleppin noted that Planning and Zoning regulations would not be a barrier to ADUs, but any tax incentive program would require City Council action. He stated that deed restrictions would apply only to the ADU portion, not the entire property. He cautioned about enforcement challenges (tracking compliance across many individual properties), potential clawback provisions if tax benefits are not maintained, and the high construction cost of new detached ADUs, which may result in higher rents unless built for family members.

Ms. Young expressed interest in the concept but noted size limitations as a challenge. Ms. Eaddy referenced ongoing discussions about increasing size limits (particularly for detached units).

Mr. Degenshein emphasized that deed restrictions on ADUs would encumber the property and could affect resale value or buyer interest if future owners prefer no ADU. She suggested reviewing average ADU rents in Norwalk to determine if many are already serving as de facto affordable units.

Mr. Sead raised concerns that deed restrictions on an ADU could reduce the property's market value or resale appeal, particularly if buyers seek unrestricted properties, and could hinder homeowners from realizing full equity gains.

Mr. Kleppin reiterated that restrictions limited to the ADU should preserve the main home's market value, but acknowledged enforcement and long-term compliance issues. Ms. Eaddy suggested possible buyout options or penalties for removing the affordable use after receiving benefits.

The committee discussed the concept further but reached no formal decisions or motions on the ADU proposal or the funding criteria matrix.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

VII. DISCUSSION

No additional discussion occurred beyond the items addressed under Old Business.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. YOUNG MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.
THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:35 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Baldwin