

Press Release
For Immediate Release

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The Brookline Board of Selectmen and Planning Board are pleased to announce that they have established a Steering Committee to discuss and explore the future of affordable housing in the Town. An initial meeting of the Steering Committee will be held at the Brookline Town Office on Friday November 7th at 6:30 PM. This meeting is open to all residents and is part of the Town's effort to have an open discussion about this important issue in Brookline.

According to *Michele Hakala*, Co-Chair of the Brookline Planning Board, "The average house price jumped from \$213,870 in 2000 to \$359,453 in 2005. We are concerned that there may be residents or relatives of residents who cannot afford to live where they grew up or where they may want to work."

The Town has recognized this issue over the last several years and is now considering a new tool to encourage more affordable housing through changes to the zoning ordinance. A new state law, effective July 1, 2009, requires that municipalities through their zoning ordinance, provide realistic opportunities for affordable housing. The Town has received a grant from New Hampshire Housing to prepare an inclusionary housing zoning amendment for March Town Meeting. The purpose of the Affordable Housing Steering Committee will be to inform the citizens on the need and to work with a consultant in crafting an acceptable zoning amendment. The initial Steering Committee meeting is the start of the process to prepare this amendment by asking residents to become involved by sharing their ideas and concerns about solutions to encourage more affordable housing. Interested persons are welcome to attend the initial Steering Committee meeting on November 7th, 2008.

In addition, the Committee is working on a public workshop scheduled for Friday December 5th at the Richard Maghakian Memorial School gym starting at 6:30 PM. At the December workshop, *Judy Vincent* from the Greater Nashua Workforce Housing Coalition and *Gerald Coogan*, Chief Planner / Vice President of TFM Planning will make a short presentation and then have break out discussions about affordable housing in Brookline.

Come share your thoughts. Refreshments and child care will be provided.