



**The Nelson A. Rockefeller Center at Dartmouth College**

*The Center for Public Policy and the Social Sciences*

## **The Class of 1964 Policy Research Shop**

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### **2018 UPPER VALLEY HOUSING COMMUNITY DISCUSSION**

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#### *Proceedings*

**Presented to Vital Communities and Discussion Participants**

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Prepared By:

Nathan Camilo '21

Russell Crossing '20

Ashley DuPuis '19

James Fair '18

Michael Parsons '20

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Contact:

Nelson A. Rockefeller Center, 6082 Rockefeller Hall, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH 03755

<http://rockefeller.dartmouth.edu/shop/> • Email: [Ronald.G.Shaiko@Dartmouth.edu](mailto:Ronald.G.Shaiko@Dartmouth.edu)



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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

On May 26, 2018 more than fifty Upper Valley residents gathered at the Nelson A. Rockefeller Center for Public Policy and the Social Sciences at Dartmouth College for a community discussion on affordable housing in the Upper Valley. The event, co-sponsored by the Rockefeller Center and Vital Communities, began with an opening session for all participants at 9:30am. Professor Ron Shaiko, Associate Director of the Rockefeller Center, welcomed the participants and discussed the format for the community discussions. The format included a series of six discussion sessions offered simultaneously in the morning and the afternoon. Participants selected one morning session and one afternoon session to attend. The six sessions focused on the following topics: 1) Educating/Messaging about Upper Valley Housing; 2) Low Income Housing Needs; 3) Stakeholders/Partners/Resources in the Upper Valley; 4) Obstacles to New Housing Development; 5) Public Private Partnerships; and 6) Accessory Housing Units/Shared Housing/Cohousing. These sessions were facilitated by Jonathan Edwards, Andrew Winter, Tom Roberts, Bill Fischel, Renata Watts, and Jeff Lubell, respectively,

Following the presentation of the format, Shaiko introduced three presentations that provided participants with some relevant information regarding public opinion on affordable housing in the Upper Valley, the current need for housing in the Upper Valley, and the progress to date in resolving the current housing shortage. Dartmouth students, Julia Decerega '18 and Ray Lu '18, presented the results of the 2018 State of the Upper Valley Affordable Housing Poll conducted during the first two weeks in May. (The students presented the poll results from 337 respondents received up until four days prior to this event; the final poll results that are published as a companion document include 403 respondents). Almost two-thirds of the respondents believe that affordable housing is a very serious problem in the Upper Valley; regarding possible solutions, the majority of respondents support the creation of new housing units in the Upper Valley. Tom Roberts, Executive Director of Vital Communities, then presented the results of the 2017 Workforce Housing Needs Assessment. The Assessment identified the current need at between 4,500 and 8,000 units in the Upper Valley. Andrew Winter, Executive Director of the Twin Pines Housing Trust, provided participants with an update on the progress on the Upper Valley affordable housing situation. Since 2013, Twin Pines has completed 205 units, has 653 units approved or underway, and currently has an additional 325 units currently under review,

Following the opening session, participants took part in the six morning discussions. The morning sessions ended at 11:45am and were followed by lunch. The six sessions were offered again in the afternoon; the day concluded with a closing session at which time Dartmouth students Ashley Dupuis, Ray Lu, Michael Parsons, Caroline Cook, Jimmy Fair, and Blake Crossing reported synopses of the six morning and afternoon sessions. The session concluded with comments and suggestions from participants regarding next steps in the housing discussion in the Upper Valley.

### **1. OPENING SESSION**

On May 26, 2018, over 50 Upper Valley residents and housing stakeholders convened at the Nelson A. Rockefeller Center at Dartmouth College to participate in the Upper Valley Housing Community Discussion. The day began with an opening session on information regarding the current state of housing in the area. Dartmouth students Julia Decerega '18 and Ray Lu '18 presented findings from a recent Upper Valley Housing Survey conducted by the Rockefeller Center. The sample size comprised 337 respondents from 59 of the 69 towns that constitute the Upper Valley limits. The survey found that over 30 percent of people in the Upper Valley pay more than 30 percent of their



Opening Session, Upper Valley Housing Community Discussion at the Nelson A. Rockefeller Center

household. monthly post-tax income is spent on housing. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines “affordable housing” as that which is no more than 30 percent of monthly household income. In addition, the survey found that over 80 percent of respondents felt that affordable housing in the Upper Valley is a serious issue, while less than 10 percent felt it was not very serious. An overwhelming majority of people surveyed said that they would support the creation of additional affordable housing in the Upper Valley.

Vital Communities Executive Director Tom Roberts presented findings from its Workforce Housing Needs Assessment conducted in 2017. Over 25 stakeholder interviews were conducted in the Upper Valley and across the states of New Hampshire and Vermont. Those interviewed included former staff, board members, and supporters of the Upper Valley Housing Coalition, Vital Communities board members, various employers of all sizes, local planning and zoning board members, as well as housing advocacy, policy, and funding organizations. The assessment found that all stakeholders believe that affordable housing is a compelling need. The assessment also found that in order to meet the affordable housing need, it will require the construction of 4,500 to 8,000 additional units, with a one-to-eight percent increase in housing stock demand annually. In order to complete this difficult task, Roberts outlined the expectations stakeholders have in order to mobilize support for these efforts. There is a need for both an action plan that will lead to actual change and a management team to get the job done. Roberts concluded his presentation with the final recommendations of the assessment report which include:

- Corporate Council prioritizes housing issues in 2018
- Need for Vital Communities to hosts three town-based community conversations in 2018
- Vital Communities continue to host business leaders housing breakfasts
- Vital Communities be poised to offer focused workforce housing support in 2019



Andrew Winter, Executive Director,  
Twin Pines Housing Trust



Tom Roberts, Executive Director,  
Vital Communities



Dartmouth Students Ray Lu '18 and  
Julia Decerega '18

Following the presentation by Tom Roberts of Vital Communities, Andrew Winter, Executive Director of the Twin Pines Housing Trust, gave a presentation regarding affordable housing and their current development projects. The Twin Pines Housing Trust, established in 1990, is the Upper Valley leader in developing and constructing affordable housing. Since its formation, Twin Pines has provided housing units over 1,000 people in the Upper Valley region.

Winter established a definition for affordable housing for the impending discussions. Affordable housing was defined as a place of residence that costs less than 30 percent of monthly household income. The deficit of 5,000 housing units in the Upper Valley was also highlighted, emphasizing the need for significant action within the Upper Valley. Winter also made clear that this does not mean 5,000 units today in one or two towns, but rather a comprehensive plan for the development and construction of affordable housing units across the Upper Valley in the next several years.

His presentation concluded with the presentation of current projects in development/construction phases by Twin Pines in the Upper Valley. They are as follows:

- The construction of a three-story residential building in White River Junction, Vermont. This includes 15 one-bedroom apartments and 15 two-bedroom apartments.
- The renovation of a three-story apartment building in Lebanon, New Hampshire. This includes 18 one-bedroom apartments for the chronically homeless and extremely low income.
- The construction of a three-story, net-zero residential building in West Lebanon, New Hampshire. This includes 29 one-bedroom and two-bedroom units for all ages and incomes.
- Housing for community members ages 62 and older or disabled in Hanover, New Hampshire. This includes 24 modern, energy-efficient, elevator-equipped apartments.

## 2. MORNING AND AFTERNOON SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION SESSIONS

At the conclusion of the opening ceremony, the participants broke out into six small discussion groups. These breakout sessions focused on six key issues surrounding affordable housing in general and in the Upper Valley including: Educating and Messaging, Low Income Housing Needs, Stakeholders, Partners, and Resources in the Upper Valley, Obstacles to New Development, Public and Private Partnerships, and Accessory Dwelling Units/Sharing/ Cohousing. The following sections highlight the discussion points and key takeaways from each breakout group.



### 3. EDUCATION AND MESSAGING ABOUT UPPER VALLEY AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Education and Messaging session was facilitated by Jonathan Edwards. Edwards brings with him an extensive background in housing and development both within and outside of the Upper Valley. Most recently, he served as Planning and Zoning Director for the Town of Hanover. The education and messaging session convened in the afternoon breakout meeting and began by identifying the problems inherent in addressing affordable housing issues. As discussed in the opening ceremony, participants noted the negative connotations attached to the variety of labels used for the topic. These phrases include “affordable housing,” “workforce housing,” and even the word “housing.” All terms invoke stereotypes and preconceptions that can cast a negative and counterproductive light to addressing and acting on the issue. For the purposes of this review and for the sake of consistency, this section will use the phrasing “affordable housing,” while recognizing the continued debate over appropriate nomenclature.

In discussing why these negative connotations exist and what continues to fuel them, the thoughts and views of participants similarly mirrored the findings of a 2016 joint study by non-profit organizations FrameWorks Institute and Enterprise Community Partners. This study identified six negative responses to affordable housing discussions and projects. Both the study and participants emphasized the role of the NIMBYism (“Not in My Backyard”). Attendees agreed that this phenomenon can result in verbal support for affordable housing, but a lack of tangible action in addressing the issue. They also noted that an unwillingness to admit to NIMBYism can result in using other justifications to block the creation of affordable housing, including, but not limited to, an increase in traffic, environmental concerns, and impacts on public resources such as roads, schools, and utilities. It is important to note that all of these reasons hold legitimate concerns and must be handled appropriately and with careful consideration when considering or building additional housing. Both participants and the study also identified an emphasis on personal responsibility and lack of communal identification and connection as a problem. There can be misinformation in thinking that affordable housing is only for individuals who will not help themselves, which while erroneous, is also highly problematic to any potential campaign for solutions. (Additional responses that the study raised can be seen in Figure 3.1.)

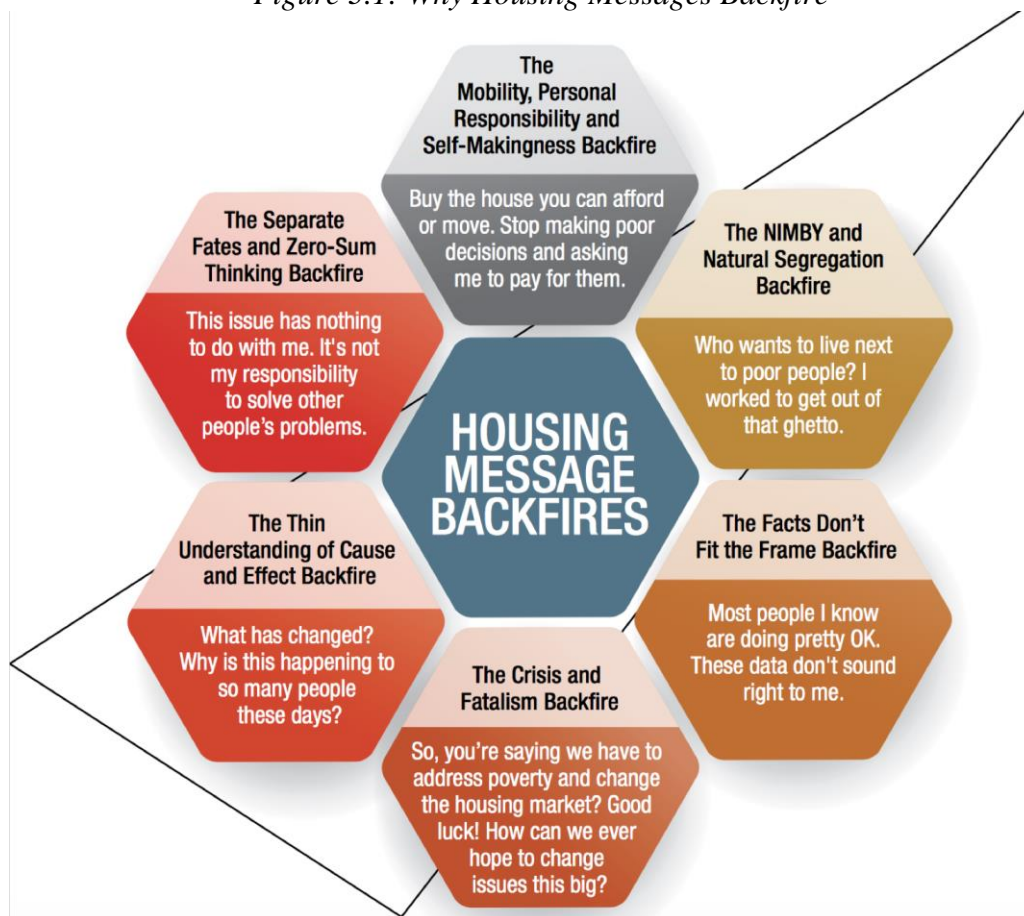
Participants agreed that there are a number of tangible steps to be taken moving forward. Participants mentioned that future efforts should place an emphasis on the importance of housing diversity, not just single-family housing. They also suggested that the promotion of a local and successful affordable housing model would be useful to assuage the potential fears of local government officials and community members. In addition, attendees agreed that trust and credibility from the outset must



Jonathan Edwards facilitates Educating and Messaging Session.

be established as future projects are undertaken. A participant suggested that trust and credibility can be facilitated by developers bringing together current residents to discuss the various plans and goals of stakeholders, as well as to give voice to the concerns of citizens.

*Figure 3.1: Why Housing Messages Backfire<sup>1</sup>*



When looking at how to message these strategies and tactics, the aforementioned study by FrameWorks and Enterprise Community Partners outlined ten recommendations to produce an impactful and successful messaging about affordable housing.<sup>2</sup> These recommendations are closely tied to greater education and dispelling myths about affordable housing. They are as follows:

1. Create narratives that balance people, places, systems perspectives (do *not* rely on creating a “human face” for the issue, also acknowledge the larger forces)
2. Explain how systems shape outcomes for people and the communities in which they live
3. Tell a “Story of Us” rather than a “Story of Them”
4. Address the connection between housing and other issues like education, health, employment, and public safety
5. Connect the causes and effects of housing insecurity (show *why* there are issues and *how* the problem would be impacted by different policies)
6. Indicate how where you live affects you
7. Acknowledge past challenges, but focus on the future
8. Use examples of how new housing solutions were successful

9. Avoid over-relying on the terms “housing” or “affordable housing” (use “homes,” “neighborhood,” and “community”)
10. Expand the public’s scope of visible stakeholders

As the Upper Valley looks to the future of this topic, there remain four key questions to consider:

- If external marketing strategies are to be taken into consideration, which macro- and micro-level approaches are most applicable and practical for the Upper Valley?
- How will differences—particularly with regard to policy—between New Hampshire and Vermont be factored into messaging and education?
- To what extent will various Upper Valley organizations collaborate on the marketing of affordable housing issues? Will future efforts display a unified campaign or a disparate campaign?
- What lessons can we learn from prior Upper Valley affordable housing marketing and education efforts?



Andrew Winter facilitates Low Income Housing Needs Session.

#### **4. LOW INCOME HOUSING NEEDS — FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL RESOURCES**

The Low Income Housing Needs sessions were facilitated by Andrew Winter. Winter is an experienced real estate professional with a varied background in the affordable housing industry as a developer, lender, and investor and attorney. Both breakout sessions began by characterizing the housing crisis in the Upper Valley as a major problem. Winter referred to the Upper Valley as being the “Tale of Two Cities,” because there are high paying jobs at Dartmouth College and Dartmouth Hitchcock, yet there are many low paying jobs elsewhere in the Upper Valley. Those who make minimum wage cannot afford housing because the cost is simply too high.

The first break out session highlighted the fact that the number of low wage jobs are growing while the number of people commuting long distances for work is growing as well. Moreover, Winter reported that a person must work 88 hours a week or have 2.2 full time jobs at minimum wage to afford a two-bedroom unit in Vermont. The break out session then concentrated its focus on the 5,000 housing unit proposal for the Upper Valley. The number 5,000 came from a survey analysis fielded by the Sunapee regional planning board. It was derived from the unemployment rate, housing demand



and vacancy rate. The conversation shifted to a discussion of the high rental housing cost in the upper valley.

The discussion then shifted to a conversation about various solutions to the affordable housing crisis. The current housing tax credit only allows for New Hampshire and Vermont to complete four-to-seven affordable housing projects per year. Winter explained how rental development work can be formed through block grants. Vermont had a state bond to help fund its affordable housing projects along with federal funding.

One of the major takeaways from this break out session was the importance of collaboration and partnerships in order to solve the affordable housing crisis and in order to construct affordable housing. For example, Twin Pines, the leading developer and provider of affordable housing for people with low to moderate incomes in the Upper Valley, set up single purpose limited partnerships and passive limited partnerships with banks, for example, to help kick start affordable housing projects.

The afternoon session continued with discussion of the issues resulting from the low vacancy rates in the Upper Valley. Landlords decide to not fix apartments because of the high demand for housing. Moreover, this session touched on the tax credit, which created \$650,000 worth of funding per year for affordable housing projects. Another aspect of this conversation was the possibility of renovating old houses to be used as affordable housing projects. Although this sounds like a viable option, the cost may be too high to make these old homes environmentally sustainable. Another solution to the affordable housing crisis is the creation of mixed income residential buildings that would house those with a variety of housing needs, ranging from those with very low incomes to those who just meet the criteria.

## **5. STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS, AND RESOURCES IN THE UPPER VALLEY**



Tom Roberts facilitates Stakeholders, Partners, and Resources Session.

The Stakeholders, Partners, and Resources in the Upper Valley session was facilitated by Tom Roberts. Roberts has been the Executive Director of Vital Communities since 2015 and has more than a decade of successful leadership experience in Upper Valley nonprofits. Vital Communities as

an organization takes on issues where regional coordination and leadership can achieve results and facilitate collaborative solutions. The stakeholders, partners, and resources session convened twice, once in the morning and again in the afternoon. Both discussions were largely centered on the activity of identifying possible stakeholders in the local, regional, and statewide settings.

While this was the broad prompt for the discussion, other questions and prompts were additionally raised. The challenges were to identify the necessary stakeholders that had to be involved with a housing project in the Upper Valley, looking at the resource distribution in the Upper Valley and identifying stakeholders that could easily bring resources to the table, and looking for potential stakeholders that are often overlooked in processes like this. Many of the answers were generic industry types but when a specific stakeholder was identified it is noted. Both meetings discussed and discovered a broad set of stakeholders involved in a complex system. The stakeholders identified are listed below.

### *5.1 Stakeholders, Partners, and Resources in the Upper Valley Chart*

The following entities and institutions were brought up as intrinsic stakeholders because of the direct effects they feel when there is a lack of housing:

- Employers
  - Dartmouth College and Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center
- Towns
  - Regulatory positions in town are also stakeholders
    - Zoning Board
    - Select Board

These are other stakeholders that have a need or incentive to be involved with this process:

- Planners and Handlers
  - Landowners
  - Developers
  - Construction Firms
    - Twin Pines
  - Architects
  - Regional Planning Commission
- Funders
  - Federal, State, Local Grants
    - Tax credits; Section 8
  - Investors
    - Impact investing: investing for a cause not a return
  - Banks
    - Mascoma
- Supportive Housing
  - Social Service Providers
  - Advocacy Groups
    - NAMI
  - Mental Health Services and Disability Centers
  - Public Health Council
- Infrastructure
  - Transportation
    - Advanced Transit
  - Good Public Infrastructure

- Police Departments and other emergency services
  - Utility services
  - Schools
- The Public
  - Town Members
  - People who need housing
- Other Stakeholders
  - B-Corp Businesses
    - Mascoma
    - King Arthur Flour
  - Private Landlords
  - Places of Worship
  - Clean Energy

The first group largely represented the towns of Lebanon/Hanover and were mostly living in single-family homes, while the second group had a more diverse group of towns and had a more diverse range of living situations (apartments, cohousing, and condominiums). After identifying stakeholders, the group started looking for tangible next steps that the community could take. The groups thought it was best to convene key stakeholders. This step could foster discussion and cooperation, a necessary step in this project. Next, the pressure must be focused on essential stakeholders. As is clear with the number of stakeholders identified above, resources would be spread too thin if attention was focused on all. This attention would focus on building bridges and small coalitions between groups of stakeholders, while building a network of allies. This would need to be paired with the research into the total and full cost of affordable housing on a location.

Outside of the tangible next steps that are outlined above, the group finished with identifying some key takeaways. The first finding, which was a point of consensus, was that there needs to be a new era of zoning that would need to involve creative solutions on cost and on design. This new zoning could help move the culture of independent single-family homes to a culture of communal housing through the matching of need. Additionally, the group decided that as a region, we need to tap into the culture of action and face this problem head on. Finally, a question was raised, that needs to be discussed, was the idea that, with the current cost to construct housing, have we outpaced our ability to develop housing affordable for the middle class? This prompted the group to raise the idea that we need to start looking for new models to satisfy housing needs.

## **6. OBSTACLES TO NEW DEVELOPMENT — LAND USE, ZONING, REGULATION, NIMBYISM**

The Obstacles to New Development session was led by William Fischel. Fischel is a professor of economics at Dartmouth College, where he has taught since 1973. His research includes a focus on zoning and land use regulation.

### ***6.1 NIMBYism***

This discussion tackled each issue in its title separately, discussing each and formulating possible solutions for these obstacles in the Upper Valley. The first of these issues discussed was the community phenomenon of NIMBYism that is slowing the development of affordable housing in the region. The negative outlook on new development in the Upper Valley stems from the fear of a devaluation of property. Because of this fear, residences are clinging to any reason not to build

affordable housing in their communities. As long as homes continue to be treated as investments, there will be resistance to any change that could possibly compromise their assets.



Bill Fischel facilitates Obstacles to New Development Session.

It was agreed in the discussion that to tackle NIMBYism at a policy level, developers and planners should include the community in the formulation of development plans, instead of creating a plan and forcing it upon the community. By promoting public dialogue within the community from the very beginning, policy makers and the community can work cooperatively to solve the issue of inadequate affordable housing in the Upper Valley.

Those who are members of the NIMBY group are associated themselves with environmental groups that also resist development in the Upper Valley. By tailoring development plans to the conditions of environmental groups, developers could consequentially quell the NIMBY resistance in the Upper Valley. One example discussed in the session regarding the preferences of environmental groups pertained to the density of housing units in potential developments. These groups prefer higher density communities, allowing residences to walk to most places in the community and ultimately reduce pollution.

## *6.2 Public Involvement*

After the discussion of NIMBY groups, the focus was shifted to the lack of public involvement in the Upper Valley development discussions. The necessity for planning boards to reach out to the community can be illustrated by a Lebanon online survey pertaining to rezoning in the area. The poor response ( $N = 100$ ) equates to about a three percent involvement by the community in the public planning discussion. The same small number of residents in the Upper Valley area is, de facto, representing the entire region; the disconnect preventing the majority of residents from being involved must be addressed.

A significant deterrent to community involvement in public development is dialogue pertaining to zoning. The sessions indicated that the language in zoning documents excludes those community members that believe they will not comprehend the jargon, leaving them inferior to those with more expertise. Transparency in the discussion of zoning must be established in order to bolster community involvement. Explanations of documents and laws must be made ready to the public to solve this issue of community involvement.



### *6.3 Land Use*

The land use issue centered on increasing price in land, calling for development strategies that could create housing units while utilizing a reduced amount of space. The concept of Tiny Houses entered the discussion when the focus of the session shifted to land use in the Upper Valley. Tiny Houses are dwellings that are 400 square feet or less in floor area, excluding lofts. When land costs more than 15 percent of the budget for projects like Tiny House construction, the cost of the project begins to outweigh the benefits of development. Registering these projects as trailer parks may be a solution to rising land costs in the Upper Valley.

Mixed-Use development also entered the conversation as a potential option for future implementation. Mixed-Use residential units are buildings that combine two or more residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, and/or industrial uses. While choosing to increase the number of mixed-use developments would allow for more environmentally friendly development (these developments are very pedestrian friendly), a solid public transportation system would need to be established beforehand.

Group members finally identified a few key questions to consider when moving forward in the development of the Upper Valley. They are as follows:

- What is the core infrastructure that is preventing development; not just for affordable housing, but for housing in general?
- How can we create unified statewide direction of actions, especially in New Hampshire (Most of the decision-making is left to the local governments)?
- How can we bridge the cultural gap between New Hampshire and Vermont in terms of the way their governments feel they should (or should not) be involved in development?
- What actions can be taken to increase involvement in the discussion of housing in the Upper Valley? An increased use in communications technology and message framing techniques should be utilized to make members of the community feel part of the dialogue.

## **7. PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS: SCALING THE PROBLEM AND THE SOLUTION**

The Public/Private Partnerships sessions were facilitated by Renata Watts. A graduate of the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth College, Watts is the Director of Operations at Pat Deegan, PhD & Associates, LLC where she is responsible for its business development and daily operations. Both breakout sessions began by characterizing the housing shortfall in the Upper Valley as harmful to both low and middle-income residents. One attendee likened the gap in affordable housing for residents without housing subsidies to the Medicaid “donut.” The discussion groups defined PPPs as the joint effort of government and private enterprise to marshal resources to address the housing crisis.

Participants cited several barriers to affordable housing, namely regulations, protracted legal battles, and strict zoning codes. Heavily burdened town sewer and water infrastructure adds yet another complicating factor because many dated systems must be improved to meet the demand of new construction before it can even begin. In addition, the full cost of environmental and community impact studies falls on the developers, cutting into their bottom line and dampening incentives to build in the first place.



Renata Watts facilitates Public/Private Partnerships Session.

Partnerships between various levels of government and the private sector—both the business sector and non-profit housing providers—can help communities and towns develop affordable housing by pulling additional resources and skills into the process. Incorporating private sector entities that have the operating experience and resources to accomplish what the government cannot is all the more important as the shortage in affordable housing continues to grow. Across the country, some of the most creative and effective affordable housing solutions come from partnerships between government agencies, nonprofits, and private business. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recognized six factors that emerged as indicators of success from the partnership building experience.<sup>3</sup>

1. Identifiable need
2. Strong leaders
3. Diverse boards and involvement
4. Access to funding
5. Realistic programs
6. Effective resource utilization

Both breakout sessions suggested concrete steps that towns and developers in the Upper Valley should keep in mind when initiating a PPP. “Example projects” in towns without zoning codes such as Canaan and Orford can familiarize communities with projects and remove fear of unknown developments. These local case studies will be particularly helpful in communities with more stringent zoning rules and high rates of NIMBYism. Pre-development work saves costly delays once construction begins and sets expectations for concerned neighbors. Finally, third-party facilitators build trust between developers and local residents. Session participants agreed that it will take determination and persistence to show that these projects can will work and be successful.

Specific solutions involving PPPs include municipal bond-backed (tax-exempt capital) construction for middle-income housing. Attendees also mentioned specific projects that larger players in the Upper Valley should step up to build, such as the Rivercrest development and further development on the Dartmouth College golf course. Nearly every participant agreed that major employers should include affordable or “company” housing as one of their social missions. Particular attention was

paid to Dartmouth College as a major employer. Participants questioned why the College had not taken a bigger role in addressing housing for their employees and overwhelmingly agreed that it needs to take a bigger role in this topic in the future.

Looking to the future, session attendees expressed concern over where leadership would come from to create the needed coalition for tangible action on housing development. Those who participated in the morning session agreed that Vital Communities is not the sustained leadership in this issue, but can be the catalyst. When a coalition with the appropriate leadership is formed, it was recommended that a clear list of expectations and goals be developed. These expectations and goals will help attract and retain investors, and ensure a reporting rubric in which to assess progress and outcomes.

## **8. ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS, SHARED HOUSING, COHOUSING**

The Accessory Dwelling Unit and Co-housing discussion was facilitated by Jeff Lubell. Lubell is currently the director of Housing and Community Initiatives at Abt Associates, assisting policymakers in solving the federal and intergovernmental problems in the areas of affordable housing and community development. Prior to joining Abt, Lubell was the executive director of the nonprofit Center for Housing Policy and earlier served as director of the Policy Development Division in the Office of Policy Development and Research at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.



Jeff Lubell facilitates Accessory Dwelling Units, Shared Housing, Cohousing Session.

Before the ADU discussion began, the term “ADU” was defined. An Accessory Dwelling Unit is a residential living unit that is within or attached to a single-family dwelling, and that provides independent living facilities for one or more persons, including provisions for sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation on the same parcel of land as the principal dwelling unit it accompanies. After this definition, the breakout sessions were shifted to a focus on the obstacles that prevented successful implementation of ADUs in Upper Valley homes. Members of the discussion agreed that many of the difficulties of incorporating ADUs in their homes stemmed from an informational insufficiency on the subject. From an adequate understanding of the zoning laws in the Upper Valley to a need for architectural consultation in order to successfully meet the criteria for an ADU on the property, there is a significant information gap that needs to be filled in order for residences in the Upper Valley to construct an impactful number of ADUs.

The members of the discussions agreed that the formation of a third party that could help manage the responsibilities involved in implementing ADUs in a community would be a step in the right

direction. The members of the sessions suggested these responsibilities to be given to the organization:

1. Assisting in the Maneuvering of Upper Valley Zoning Laws
2. Screening for Tenants to live in the new housing Unit
3. Financial Consolutions (ADU implementation costs, amount of income produce, etc.)
4. Architectural Consultation (What modifications to units are needed to meet regulations)
5. Management of Renting Procedures

While the information barrier was the major subset of obstacles for ADU implementation, there was the mention of the inability of some regions in the Upper Valley to sustain additional housing units. The addition of ADU's can put a strain on the infrastructural capacity in some areas; the most noteworthy strain being on the septic capacity in a certain area. Some regions would need to be expanded as housing units are added to these areas.

As with the ADU section, the co-housing section began with a discussion of the barriers to creating successful co-housing communities in the Upper Valley. Unlike the ADU section, the barriers to building cohousing communities were more varied. They were as follows:

1. Significant Stress on Infrastructure (Septic Capacity, Water, Sanitation, etc.)
2. Affordability Issue (Cost of living in units)
3. Community Resistance to Irregular housing concept

After these barriers were addressed, solutions were discussed that may help the Upper Valley deal with these issues. Here were the solutions to the respective obstacles above.

1. Expansion of Infrastructure in Regions that Co-housing Communities will reside
2. Use of Modular housing to reduce the cost of construction
3. Illustrate the effectiveness of Co-housing communities by using a successful model cohousing community as proof of potential implementation.

While there are issues with the supply of affordable housing in the Upper Valley, the current housing stock could allow for additional housing units. This could be done through the implementation of ADUs, Shared-Housing programs, and intentional communities. Successful implementation would ultimately increase Upper Valley housing stock and lower overall housing costs in the Upper Valley.

## **9. CLOSING SESSION**

After the afternoon breakout sessions, attendees reconvened as a group to close out the day. There was, as an attendee remarked, an unusual, but welcome sense of optimism in the room. The student note-takers at each session shared key findings and takeaways to the entire group. Ashley DuPuis presented the Education and Messaging about Upper Valley Affordable Housing group findings. Ray Lu presented the Low Income Housing Needs group findings. Michael Parsons presented Stakeholders, Partners, and Resources in the Upper Valley group findings. Caroline Cook presented the Obstacles to New Development—Land Use, Zoning, Regulation, and NIMBYism group findings. James Fair presented the Public/Private Partnerships: Scaling the Problem and the Solution group findings. Blake Crossing presents the ADUs/Shared Housing and Co-Housing and Intentional Communities. After Ronald Shaiko delivered the closing remarks, he asked for any final input from the attendees. The sense of optimism was reinforced by the sentiment that the Upper Valley is one of the few places in the country with the resources and ability to tackle this challenge head on—a robust economy and comparatively low land prices. Additionally, while there was not consensus on the



exact design of housing needed for the Upper Valley, there was consensus that this process would need to take a focused approach through organization(s), not merely volunteers to achieve its goal.



Ashley DuPuis '19



Ray Lu '18



Michael Parsons '20



Caroline Cook '21



Jimmy Fair '18



Blake Crossing '20

## REFERENCES

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<sup>1</sup> FrameWorks Institute and Enterprise Community Partners, Inc. (2016) ““You Don’t Have to Live Here.” Why Housing Messages Are Backfiring and 10 Things We Can Do About It.” Retrieved from <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/download?fid=7073&nid=4409>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (1996) “Building Public-private Partnerships to Develop Affordable Housing.” Retrieved from [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/affordablehousing/library/modelguides/1996/1583](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/affordablehousing/library/modelguides/1996/1583)



**The Nelson A. Rockefeller Center at Dartmouth College**  
*The Center for Public Policy and the Social Sciences*

## **UPPER VALLEY HOUSING COMMUNITY DISCUSSION**

**Co-sponsored by The Nelson A. Rockefeller Center at Dartmouth College and  
Vital Communities**

**May 26, 2018, 9:00am-3:00pm, The Nelson A. Rockefeller Center**

- 9:00am:** Gather in Hinman Forum on first floor of the Rockefeller Center;  
enjoy a light breakfast, pick up your name tag, sign-up for discussion  
sessions, meet and mingle.
- 9:30am:** Opening Session: Convene in Rocky 002 (downstairs).
- 1. Welcome and Opening Remarks:** Ron Shaiko, Associate Director, Nelson A. Rockefeller Center
  - 2. Presentation of 2018 Upper Valley Housing Survey Results:** Julia Decerega '18 and Ray Lu'18, Dartmouth College
  - 3. Presentation of Findings from 2017 Workforce Housing Needs Assessment:** Tom Roberts, Executive Director, Vital Communities
  - 4. Presentation of Progress to Date in the Upper Valley:** Andrew Winter, Executive Director, Twin Pines Housing Trust
  - 5. Introduction of Discussion Topics and Facilitators:** Ron Shaiko
- 10:20am:** End of Opening Session; break; move to Small Group Discussion Sessions.
- 10:30am:** Morning Small Group Discussions with facilitators—
- 1. Silsby 213 (second floor):** Jonathan Edwards  
Topic: Educating/Messaging about UV Housing (Creating Community Consensus)
  - 2. Rockefeller 209 (second floor):** Andrew Winter  
Topic: Low Income Housing Needs (Fed/State/Local Resources)
  - 3. Rockefeller 208 (second floor):** Tom Roberts  
Topic: Stakeholders/Partners/Resources in the Upper Valley
  - 4. Class of 1930 Room (first floor):** Bill Fischel  
Topic: Obstacles to New Development—Land Use/Zoning/Regulation/NIMBYism
  - 5. Morrison Commons (first floor):** Renata Watts  
Topic: Public/Private Partnerships (Scaling the Problem/Scaling the Solution)
  - 6. Silsby 215 (second floor):** Jeff Lubell  
Topic: Accessory Dwelling Units/Shared Housing/Cohousing (Targeted Housing Needs: Aging/Disabilities)

- 11:45am: Small Group Discussions Wrap-Up (Note-takers and Facilitators convene for brief meeting on reporting)**
- 12:00noon: Lunch will be served in Hinman Forum**
- 12:45pm: Afternoon Small Group Discussions with facilitators— Discussion Topics and Facilitators remain in place; participants shift to new groups.**
- 1. Silsby 213 (second floor): Jonathan Edwards**  
**Topic: Educating/Messaging about UV Housing (Creating Community Consensus)**
  - 2. Rockefeller 209 (second floor): Andrew Winter**  
**Topic: Low Income Housing Needs (Fed/State/Local Resources)**
  - 3. Rockefeller 208 (second floor): Tom Roberts**  
**Topic: Stakeholders/Partners/Resources in the Upper Valley**
  - 4. Class of 1930 Room (first floor): Bill Fischel**  
**Topic: Obstacles to New Development—Land Use/Zoning/Regulation/NIMBYism**
  - 5. Morrison Commons (first floor): Renata Watts**  
**Topic: Public/Private Partnerships (Scaling the Problem/Scaling the Solution)**
  - 6. Silsby 215 (second floor): Jeff Lubell**  
**Topic: Accessory Dwelling Units/Shared Housing/Cohousing (Targeted Housing Needs: Aging/Disabilities)**
- 2:00 pm: Small Group Discussions Wrap-Up (Note-takers and Facilitators convene for brief meeting on reporting)**
- 2:10 pm Reconvene in Rocky 002 for Closing Session. Facilitators and Note-takers report findings from morning and afternoon sessions. Action items conveyed from each group topic. Next steps discussed.**
- 3:00pm Upper Valley Housing Community Discussion concludes.**



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