

**CENTER CITY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
January 23, 2001**

Present: Marshall Field, Janet Leggat, Bill Lipchitz, Joe Lipchitz, Robert Flynn, Carolyn Hubers, Mark Goldman, Jim Canavan, Peter Lovis, and Chris DeFeo

Today's meeting was held at the LSBAC.

Due to some misconceptions by the media about the terms affordable housing and subsidized housing, Bob Flynn explained the difference. Many communities are experiencing a shortage of housing for individuals and families across a broad range of incomes. To address this shortage, the Governor has issued Executive Order 418, which is aimed at encouraging cities and towns to create new housing opportunities. Executive Order 418 defines affordable housing in Massachusetts as anything up to 150% of the area median income. For the Lowell area, this would mean an affordable rent would be \$1,600/month and affordable purchase price up to \$294,000. Through its Comprehensive Permit Law (Chapter 40B), it allows developers to seek relief from regulatory barriers to create affordable housing. It does not solve the subsidized housing shortage.

Bob explained that "subsidized" generally refers to units where people with incomes up to 80% of median can get federal or state help (Section 8) to pay the rent. There is no law that mandates a city or town must have 10% low or moderate income housing. Chapter 40B says that if a developer wants to build subsidized housing in a community, one of the ways for a community to stop it is to show they already have 10% of the total units subsidized. Since communities generally do not want large clusters of subsidized housing, one way to solve the shortage is if the government mandates inclusionary zoning, where every development has a component of low-income housing. The confusion exists between the terms "subsidized" and "affordable" because many people think they are equivalent when they are not.

Focusing on downtown Lowell, the Committee reiterated its policy of urging the creation of more market rate housing, which will in turn bring in people with disposable income. This would not prevent building subsidized housing in the other parts of the City or in the towns. However, the downtown already has about 90% of its housing subsidized.

Bill discussed plans for the CCC Annual Meeting, which will be held February 6th (8:30am) in the Mayor's Reception Room at City Hall. Tom Galligani has agreed to give a presentation on the Downtown Plan, as well as Business Improvement Districts (BID's) and how one might work in Lowell. Also, last year the CCC began the tradition of presenting awards to those who

have furthered the progress in downtown Lowell. This year's award will be presented to Janet Pitzer for her service to downtown. Janet will be stepping down as President of the DLBA. It was suggested that new business be invited to the meeting so they could be recognized for contributing to the downtown. Also, a light breakfast will be served, so please RSVP to Chris DeFeo at (459-0551 ext. 253) by February 1st.

Announcements:

* Lowell WinterFest 01 will be held February 2-3, 2001. Activities will take place throughout the City. More information is available at www.lowellcentercity.org

* LOCA will hold a cultural community focus session on February 2nd. For more information, please call 251-8525 or 452-1779.

* Lowell Women's Week (March 4-10, 2001) will recognize women who have exhibited extraordinary leadership, commitment and courage; and have significantly changed the lives of others through kindness, generosity, and compassion. Nominations are sought from the Greater Lowell community. For more information, please contact Audrey Ambrosino at (978) 275-1705. Nomination forms are available on the website at www.lowellwomensweek.org

The following is a story that appeared in the Haverhill Edition of the Eagle Tribune on January 23, 2001. The story is related to today's discussion about housing developments in cities and towns.

City Council may OK 100 new homes

By Hilary Roxe

Eagle-Tribune Writer
January 23, 2001

HAVERHILL -- If City Council decides a Lowell developer has a solid court case against the city, 100 more homes may be built off Newton Road.

After council rejected a 115-home plan from developer K. William Krikorian last winter, he filed a suit against Haverhill in land court. In September, while the case was working through the legal system, Mr. Krikorian filed a new plan -- a proposal for 100 homes including 10 affordable units, two of which are handicapped accessible. Councilors decided that plan was too similar to the previous one to warrant reconsideration.

Council will review a proposal to accept the 100-home plan tonight at 7 in

City Hall Room 202.

Mr. Krikorian's original plan -- a luxury development for people over 55 -- was proposed off Newton Road, near Amesbury Road, Lovers Lane and Lois Street. The homes would have had an average price of \$289,000 and be located on about 45 acres surrounded by about 50 acres of open land donated to the city.

After council rejected that plan, Mr. Krikorian came back with a proposal that addressed some councilors' requests, including the affordable and handicapped-accessible units.

Councilor James J. Fiorentini, who voted against reconsidering Mr. Krikorian's plans in September, said he will wait to hear whether the developer has a strong case before deciding whether to agree to the legal settlement.

"I want to talk to our solicitor," Mr. Fiorentini said. "To me the issue has always been that something will go in. There's no question about that. I want to preserve open space, but realistically you can't stop" construction, he said.

View a discussion of various issues on the [Issues Page](#) and see what's new on the [News Page](#).

THE NEXT MEETING OF THE CCC WILL BE
TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2001 (8:30am)
LOWELL SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER
169 Merrimack St., Lowell

Thursday, March 15, 2001

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