



Weston Housing

Community Advocacy

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From the [Housing Production Plan pg. 15](#)

CAPACITY, EDUCATION, AND COORDINATION

The following strategies are recommendations for expanding the Town's capacity to implement housing initiatives, promote education, and to coordinate housing initiatives with other local or regional entities:

14. Support the creation of a community organization focused on housing in Weston

15. Increase the RHSO Housing Coordinator position to provide expanded services

16. Increase revenue for the Weston Affordable Housing Trust

17. Continue membership in the RHSO

14. Support the creation of a community organization focused on housing in Weston

- Establish a community organization based on the [CHAPA Municipal Engagement Initiative](#). This organization could be called "Housing Weston" and could collaborate with similar organizations in nearby communities.
- This organization would be a separate independent community advocacy organization and would not be a town committee.
- The primary intention of such a community group is to expand community education and outreach as well as for local housing advocacy.

Advocacy efforts to date

- *What Can Weston Do?* (racial justice advocacy group)
 - Held small group educational forum with representatives from the Affordable Housing Trust
 - Hosted book discussion on *The Color of Law* with participation from school employees, METCO community and Weston residents
- First Parish Social Justice Task Force
 - Held congregation-wide educational forums with representatives from RHSO, Merriam Village, Habitat for Humanity
 - Encouraged congregation-wide Town Meeting participation to vote on housing-related Warrant articles through church newsletter

Housing Advocacy is a Challenge

- [Research out of Boston University](#) shows the majority of comments made at public development meetings are in opposition to new housing, but these comments don't actually represent the diversity of viewpoints in the community.
 - The **concentrated costs** of development projects create strong incentives for neighborhood groups that are highly affected to mobilize against development.
 - In contrast, the **diffuse benefits** of an increased housing supply are less likely to motivate participation from the broader population that might benefit from more housing
- A community-led Housing Advocacy organization can give voice to the diversity of viewpoints in the community to and highlight the diffuse benefits of increased housing supply

Housing Advocacy – What can we do?

- Support and complement activities of existing housing-related boards and committee
- Turn out supporters at Town Meeting
- Create warrant guides to help voters understand the issues
- Organize forums on particular housing topics
- Provide tabling at community events to build support and hear community concerns
- Use social media, email marketing to share interesting article or share facts
- Create material to distribute that educate the community

Citizen Housing Advocacy – Next Steps

- Engage with [CHAPA's Municipal Engagement Initiative](#) program
 - [Currently seeking new communities](#)
- Form a core group of 4+ that meet regularly to plan and organize activities
- Utilize modern organizing tools: Slack, EveryAction, Constant Contact, Zoom, social media
- Indicate your interest: <https://bit.ly/westonhousingadvocacy>