

SALISBURY AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING

MARCH 4, 2026 – 4:00PM (REMOTE)

Subcommittee: Legislative Opportunities and Funding & Affordability

Present: Mary Close Oppenheimer, Jon Higgins, Vivian Garfein, Richard Tennyson and Lee Sullivan.

The members discussed and identified several topics and issues for this Subcommittee to focus on.

1. Legislative actions, mostly State and Town, need to be tracked. Developments pertaining to the CT Homestead Act are part of this topic, which includes affordability. J. Higgins commented that one challenge is the source of funds, which can impact the tenant selection process; using only local funds could be an option. L. Sullivan commented that some local families don't qualify for AH, by definition; having Town-funded housing could help by having more flexible guidelines. M. Close Oppenheimer mentioned that if Town funds are used for renovations that help local people, such as Bostwick Street, the SAHC could help communicate those kinds of opportunities. L. Sullivan talked about the Homestead Act, suggesting that this Subcommittee research it and write up a draft Ordinance; they could meet with the BOS and ask how to approach it. L. Sullivan will take the lead on this point and share information with V. Garfein.
2. Watch developments during the current Legislative session and keep in touch with Maria Horn, if needed. V. Garfein will be the lead on this point.
3. Additional Town funds for the AH Fund. Ideas to explore include: transfer fees; an increased line item in the budget; requesting a small mill rate increase dedicated to AH; possible Town purchase of homes for transfer to the Housing Trust, perhaps with a line of credit. J. Higgins will take the lead on these conversations with Town Hall.
4. Bank Regulations and Mortgage qualifications. Some banks may have different policies and qualifications for mortgages for AH applicants. Both John Harney and Kevin Cantele will be contacted. Richard Tennyson will be the lead on this topic.
5. Educational Opportunities. This could involve creating educational seminars on credit, articles in the newsletter and links to other available resources. M. Close Oppenheimer will take the lead on this topic.