

Housing

State Goal: To encourage and promote affordable, decent housing opportunities for all Maine citizens.

Conditions and Trends

Housing issues and needs are very closely tied to the population and demographics of an area. It is also tied to the economy and issues of neighborhood and community character. Planning for housing, whether the questions are related to where new housing should be located or who is that housing being designed for, has a large and lasting impact on the Town. Unlike programs or services that may come and go, the built environment we create today will last for generations into the future.

Local and Regional Affordable Housing Coalitions



The Westbrook Housing Authority (WHA) is the entity that manages the State's subsidized Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8 housing) for Windham. WHA also manages the properties developed by development partner, the Westbrook Development Corporation (WDC). WHA does not manage any properties in Windham, but the WDC has the ability to undertake projects in Windham. These projects could be new residential construction projects, rehabilitating existing housing, housing for seniors or those with disabilities.



Avesta Housing is a non-profit developer of affordable housing for southern Maine and New Hampshire, and is one of the largest affordable housing developers in New England. Avesta has built several projects in Windham over the years.

Affordable Housing Developments in Windham

- New Marblehead Manor (1979 & 1989). 60 units (efficiencies, 1- and 2-bedrooms), elderly and disabled residents. Located at 21 Oak Lane and 32 Sandbar Road. Avesta Housing.
- Marcus Woods (1994). 20 units (1-bedroom), elderly or disabled residents. Located at 250 Tandberg Trail. Coastal Affordable Housing.
- Unity Gardens/Edgecomb Woods (2005). 48 units (1-bedrooms), elderly housing. Located at 124 Tandberg Trail. Avesta Housing.
- Little Falls Landing (2006). 24 units (1-bedrooms), elderly residents. Located at 3 Depot Street. Avesta Housing.

Local Regulations – Affordable Family & Senior Housing

Within the Commercial 1 (C-1) zoning district, “Housing for Older Persons” is allowed, provided that the dwelling units are not on the basement or 1st floor levels of the building, unless it is a project that receives federal housing subsidies. The C-1 district is the commercially zoned area in North Windham.

Multifamily Dwellings, as defined by the Windham Land Use Ordinance, are buildings with three or more dwelling units. New Multifamily housing is allowed in the Medium Residential (RM), the Commercial 1 (C-2) and Village Commercial (VC) zoning districts.

In 20XX the Town created a Retirement Community & Care Facility Overlay Zone (RCCF zone). The RCCF zone allows for

History of Housing Development in Windham

For much of Windham’s early history, as noted in the Historic & Archeological Resources Chapter, homes were located in areas of industry on the Presumpscot and Pleasant Rivers, like South Windham, Great Falls, Newhall and Popeville. These areas along with the historic Windham Hill/Windham Center area were developed as villages, with jobs and housing in close proximity. Farmhouses were scattered across the rural landscape.

A large amount of new housing was built in conjunction with the population growth that began in the 1970s. Even through there have been many significant ups and downs in the housing market that has corresponded with the national economy, Windham still finds itself in a period of relatively strong housing growth.

Insert figure for age of housing stock....

What’s Been Built

Like most communities in the area, single family homes represent the vast majority of housing units in Windham. As noted previously, Windham’s population grew very rapidly starting in the 1970s. Using data from the Code Enforcement Department, Going back to the 1980s,

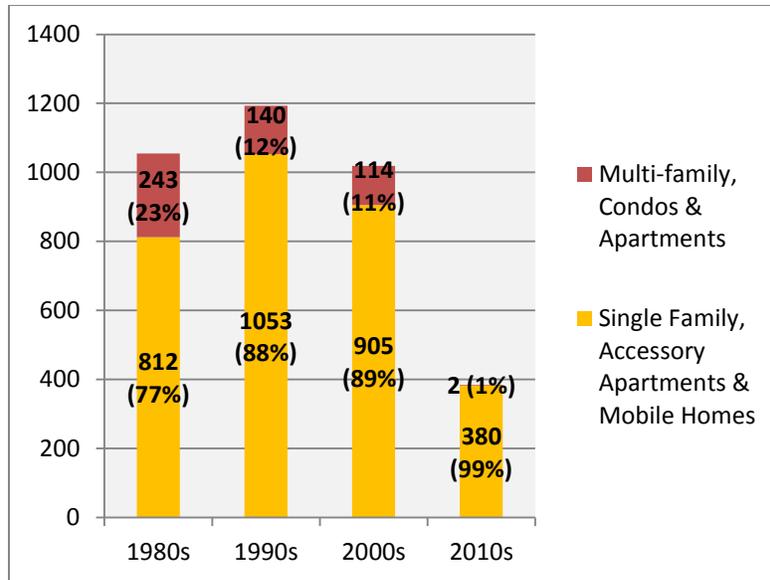


Figure 1 - Housing Types by Decade, through 9/2015

Where Has Housing Been Built

Analysis

Projected Housing Needs

Based on the analysis in the Population & Demographics chapter, the Town of Windham may add between 9-14% of its year 2010 population each decade for the next two decades (*pending updated estimates from the state and census bureau*). Based on a 9% growth rate, this could mean that Windham will need to add around 579 between 2010 and 2020, and potentially another 654 between 2020 and 2030. This is considered a conservative estimate, because if the population change each decade is more than 9%, or if the average household size continues to shrink as it has since at least 1980, then the need for additional housing units will be higher than estimated here.

Housing Affordability

Everyone who lives in Windham or has visited or traveled through Windham over the years knows that the Town has experienced steady and rapid residential growth since the 1970s. This information is presented in the Population & Demographics Chapter. Housing and population changes go hand in hand.

Looking at the affordability of housing in Windham compared to the Greater Portland region is one way to view the affordability of housing in Windham. It is likely that a good portion of Windham's population growth since the 1970's is attributable to the growth of the overall Greater Portland area as an economic engine for the state. A large share of the new housing associated with the growth of the Greater Portland area has been located in Windham based on the relative affordability and availability

of developable land. As a result, Windham has grown at one of the fastest rates of any community in the region over the last two decades.

Another way to look at the affordability of housing in Windham is whether or not the people who work in Windham can afford to live in Windham.

Seasonal Home Conversion

This is happening, though for the most part it seems as though this phenomenon is mostly over – it was more of an issue in the time periods before the last Plan’s time period (2003).

Need for Low and Moderate Income Family, Senior and Assisted Living Housing

There is a strong need for senior housing, based on info from the survey, and from Westbrook housing. Still need to quantify the amount of affordable Family Housing Vouchers (formerly known as Section 8). I expect the need for affordable housing in Windham to be most of the discussion at our meeting on 10/1.

Other Housing Issues in Windham

Age of housing?

Multi-family housing issues (thinking of safety issues for these properties in particular)?

Local Regulations & Affordable or Workforce Housing

None that I know of. Some communities require new subdivisions to build 10% of the homes to be affordable to families making 80% of the Town’s median household income.