



OBSERVER REPORT

FAIR HOUSING COMMITTEE (FHC) – February 27, 2023 (Hybrid Meeting)
LWVM Observer – Bonnie Grenier

Members Present -Thatcher Kezer, Becky Cutting, Erin Noonan, Debra Larkin, Mimi Hollister, Teri McDonough, Deacon John Whipple, Katie Farrell: Dirk Isbrandsten

Discussion of 2023 Committee priorities:

1.Update Website:

- Review the mission statement
- Update with 2020 census information
- Include guiding principles (Dirk Isbrandtsen suggested a list of guiding principles which will be discussed at a future meeting)
- Post housing lotteries for affordable housing opportunities. Marblehead is part of the 23 member North Shore Home Consortium and could post lotteries for all 23 communities.
- Highlight the availability of assistance with housing matters at the Council on Aging to include how to conduct a housing search, help filling out applications, and rental and homeowner assistance.
- It was suggested that board members research what other towns have included on their Fair Housing Committee websites and report back at the next meeting with examples and ideas. Perhaps a sub-committee will be formed at a later date to formally oversee the website.

2. **Coffin School** - Make sure things are moving along with the development of the property as an affordable housing option

3. **Outreach to inform citizens about efforts to promote affordable housing in Marblehead:** Connect with MHTV and other local media to get the word out; create a pamphlet for Town Meeting to explain the warrant article relating to Accessory Dwelling Units.

Update on local affordable housing projects:

- Three buildings of rental units will be built at Vinnin Square at site of the former General Glover House Restaurant. Two buildings will be in Swampscott and one in Marblehead. The Marblehead building will have 44 rental units, 11 of which will be affordable (80% of AMI). This is a 40R development. (Chapter 40R seeks to substantially increase the supply of housing and decrease its cost, by increasing the amount of land zoned for dense housing.)
- Sailmaker Place – A 48 condominium, 40B development by Ted Moore that includes 12 affordable units for sale.

Move forward with MBTA Smart Growth Zoning: New state zoning regulations would allow multi-family houses “by right” in the identified Smart Growth Overlay District. Before this legislation was enacted a special permit would have been required to construct a multi-family unit. It was emphasized that in Marblehead this must be done responsibly so as not to change the character of the town. This is a complicated issue and the town has hired a consultant to study the matter and guide the town through the process. Eventually there will be outreach via public forums, joint meetings, and other avenues to inform the public on this.

It was proposed that a regular meeting time of the 4th Monday of each month at 1:00 be established. This will be reconsidered at the next meeting on March 27th at 1:00.