



Tom Emerson

# **AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN KITTERY**

# Affordable Housing Myths

- “You’re talking about those people.”
- “I’m all for affordable housing, but can’t they just build it over there?”
- “If only developers weren’t so greedy, we’d have plenty of affordable housing!”

# Why is Housing So Expensive?

## *The Bigger Picture..*

- Not enough housing - of all types.
- Land is expensive.
- Construction is expensive.
- Housing is expensive...yes, the problem is part of the reason for the problem!
- Federal Government Policy

# Why is Housing So Expensive?

## *Locally...*

- Local Land Use Regulation:
  - No residential allowed in Commercial Zones
  - Density - limited number of units per acre
  - Set backs, lot coverage & street width limit usable land
  - Building height limits reduce density
  - Parking minimums reduce build able land
  - Onerous permitting & review process
  - Development fees are high
- Ultimately, less expensive housing is not in the best *financial* interests of most involved. We need a paradigm shift.

# The Housing Toolkit

*from the White House Council of Economic Advisors*

- Tax vacant land or donate it to non-profit developers.
- Streamline or shorten permitting processes and timelines.
- Eliminate off-street parking requirements.
- Allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) & *Missing Middle Housing*.\*
- Establish density bonuses.
- Enact high-density and multifamily zoning.
- Employ inclusionary zoning.
- Establish development tax or value capture incentives. *Not applicable to Kittery*.\*
- Use property tax abatements.
- \* *Editorial Comments*

# Two Development Models:#1

*We need to be doing both.*

- Top Down, developer driven model:
  - Utilizes Low Income Housing Tax Credits & other state/national programs.
  - Bigger buildings, more density...more housing.
  - Longer timeframe to implement.
  - Appropriate for the commercial areas at the ByPass, 236 Interchange & the Outlet Malls Kittery's current Commercial Zones



This slide identifies several issues with the Malls & our current zoning:

- Lots of asphalt - runoff into the creek.
- Inefficient land use - one story buildings
- Uncertain future for bricks & mortar retail

An aerial photograph of a large, mostly empty parking lot. The lot is rectangular and occupies the upper half of the image. In the center of the lot, there is a cluster of several city blocks, including residential buildings, a school-like building with a playground, and some trees. The text 'WHEN A PARKING LOT IS SO BIG THAT WE CAN FIT SIX CITY BLOCKS IN IT ...' is overlaid in white with a black outline on the top part of the parking lot. The bottom part of the image shows more of the surrounding area, including roads and other buildings.

**WHEN A PARKING LOT IS  
SO BIG THAT WE CAN FIT  
SIX CITY BLOCKS IN IT ...**

**MAYBE WE SHOULD.**

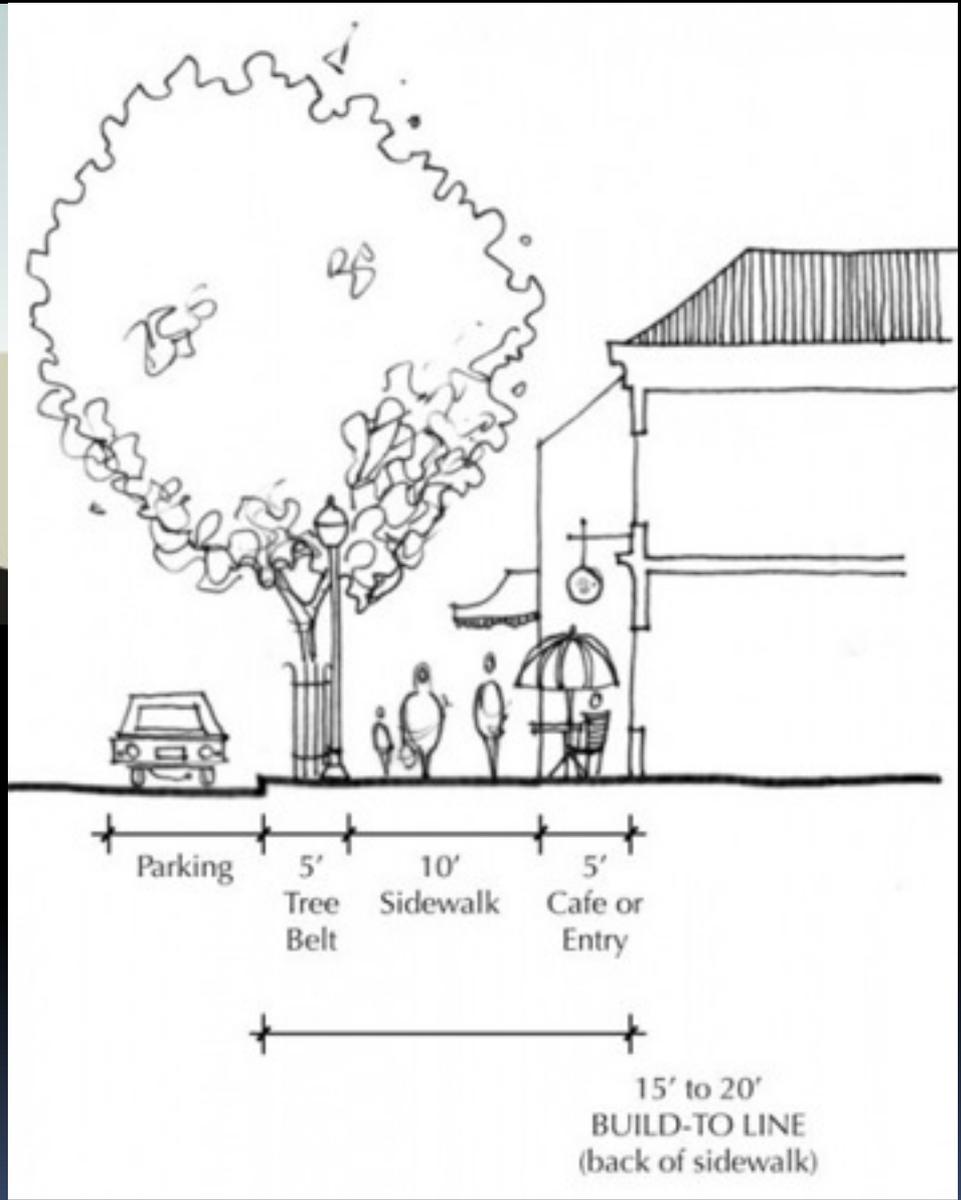
# Town Center Development

*Mashpee Commons - a potential model*





This is happening elsewhere in New England, but isn't allowed here.



Insisting on good Urban Design will be key to making the community livable.

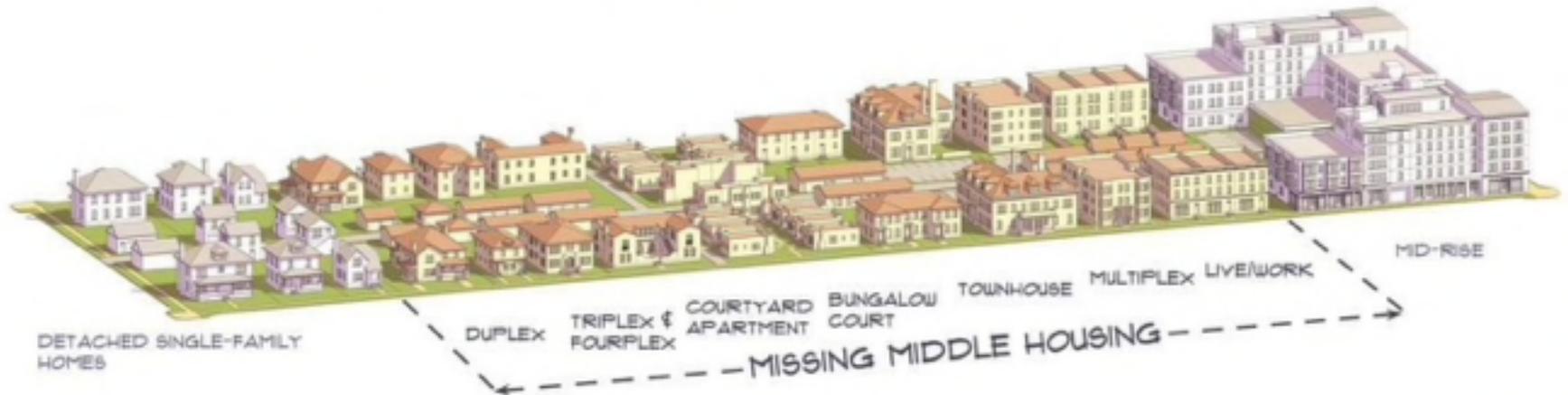
# Two Development Models:#2

*We need to be doing both.*

- Ground Up, citizen driven model:
  - Lowest barriers to entry.
    - Current land owners, less construction & more straightforward financing.
  - Quickest way to provide housing.
  - Extra income for homeowner & more likely to be lower than market rate.
  - Significant zoning constraints.
  - This is the way we used to live.
  - Appropriate for the already established neighborhoods; Gourmet Alley, Post Office Square, Traffic Circle & Foreside.

# "The Missing Middle"

*What we're missing in Kittery too.*



MissingMiddleHousing.com is powered by Opticos Design.  
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# Accessory Dwelling Units



# Kittery's ADU Code:

*An obvious negative bias.*

## Article XXV. Accessory Dwelling Units

### *16.8.25.1 Purpose.*

It is the intent of this Article to *impose* standards that enable homeowners to create accessory dwelling units that are compatible with this Code and do not *negatively* impact the character of the existing neighborhood or *overburden* the existing infrastructure.

### *16.8.25.2 Applicability.*

An Accessory Dwelling unit is allowed in all zoning districts where the use is permitted in Chapter 16.3. The *unit must be located in an existing structure* with a certificate of occupancy issued more than *5 years* prior to the date of the ADU application, on the property where the owner of the property occupies one of the units. The accessory dwelling unit may be attached to, or detached from, the primary dwelling unit. *No expansion of a building's footprint is allowed to accommodate an accessory dwelling unit.*

When they are done well, ADUs can become a significant part of the local culture.



The best reason for promoting ADUs:



The Fonz...

lived in an Accessory Dwelling Unit above the Cunningham's garage...  
Cool!

# Duplexes: *Neighborhood scale at twice the density*



# Fourplex: *Dignified apartments at neighborhood scale & quadruple the density*



# Live/Work Multiplex: *Commercial at Neighborhood Scale*





Kittery already has higher density housing:

*Kittery has had higher density (14 - 16 units per acre) residential development for some time now. Longer, in fact, than we have had zoning! Does this look and feel like Kittery? At worst it may be innocuous, but there is a better way to achieve the same density.*



Does this feel more like Kittery?

These houses are located a block from each of the developments shown in the previous slide.



Examples of Cottage Housing in Pocket Neighborhoods, some of which are even located elsewhere in New England. This is the same density as the apartment buildings but is not legally allowed in Kittery.

# The Takaways:

To promote development of affordable housing, Kittery...

- ...should allow residential uses in the commercial zones to attract development of a size & density to support mixed income housing. *Quality Urban Design will be a key component in making the redevelopment appropriate for the community.*
- ...should increase density in its walkable neighborhoods by allowing “missing middle” housing. *These Accessory Dwelling Units, duplexes, fourplexes, cottage courts & live/work multiplexes must be designed at a neighborhood scale to be appropriate for the community.*