



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

Barney Heath,  
Director, Planning &  
Development

Malcolm Lucas  
Housing Planner

**Members**

Esther Schlorholtz, Chair  
Donna Rigg, Vice Chair  
Beatrice Flores  
Judy Korzenowski  
Josephine McNeil  
Tatjana Meschede  
Steve West

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# CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## Fair Housing Committee

### AGENDA

**Meeting Date:** April 2, 2025  
**Location:** Zoom  
**Time:** 8:30 a.m.

This meeting will be a virtual meeting that will take place via Zoom. To view and participate <https://newtonma.gov.zoom.us/j/84559750867> or dial 1-646-931-3860

To view meeting documents, click here.

1. Approval of March 2025 minutes
2. FHC Future
3. Fair Housing Training
4. Subcommittee Updates
  - Membership & Nominating Sub-Committee
  - Fair Housing Award Sub-Committee
5. FHC Priorities

#### FH Protected Groups

- Promote housing choice for diverse populations to advance Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH), with focus on race/ethnicity, public subsidy, family status, and disability
- Promote Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in Newton
- Promote effective processes/practices for new affordable homeownership and resales
- Promote improved practices for real estate professionals to achieve more housing choice for diverse populations
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#### Learning/Teaching

- Enhance FH literature and website information and access for the public
- Promote FH training for real estate professionals, landlords, tenants, the public and committee members

#### Data and Analysis

- Promote data collection on multi-family rental and new homeownership occupancy
- Enhance Project Review of Housing Developments to advance AFFH
- Support AI/Consortium Fair Housing Testing and FH testing in Newton

#### Collaboration

- Collaborate with Related Newton Commissions and Committees to increase affordable housing for households of various sizes and lower incomes; such efforts to include supporting efforts to broaden the range of available housing types in Newton

- Collaborate with related Newton commissions, committees, and officials to promote affordable housing production and to encourage increased funding for affordable housing
- Promote affordable housing production in coordination with other City commissions and committees
- Support federal, state and city initiatives that promote AFFH
- Collaborate with Human Rights Commission on Fair Housing Complaint Process
- Contribute to Newton's FH-related plans
- Address committee membership appointments with representation from Human Rights Commission and legal counsel with FH specialty

## 6. Adjournment

The location of this meeting is wheelchair accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities requiring assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the city of Newton's ADA/Sec.504 Coordinator, Jini Fairley, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: [jfairley@newtonma.gov](mailto:jfairley@newtonma.gov) or (617) 796-1253. For Telecommunications Relay Service, please dial 711 or call City Hall's TTY/TDD line at 617-796-1089.



# CITY OF NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## Fair Housing Committee

### MINUTES

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**Meeting Date:** March 5, 2025  
**Location:** Zoom  
**Time:** 8:30 a.m.

**Members Present:** Esther Schlorholtz, Chair  
Beatrice Flores  
Judy Korzenowski  
Tatjana Meschede  
Steve West

**Members Absent:** Josephine McNeil  
Donna Rigg, Vice Chair

**Staff Present:** Malcolm Lucas, Housing Planner  
Lara Kritzer, Director of Housing and Community Development  
Barney Heath, Director of Planning and Development  
Jini Fairley, ADA/Sec. 504 Coordinator

**Public Present:** Julia Malakie, Council  
Sharyn Roberts, League of Women Voters Newton

Malcolm Lucas, Housing Planner served as recorder, Esther Schlorholtz, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

To view meeting documents, [click here](#).

#### 1. Approval of February 2025 minutes

- Upon a motion by TM, JK seconded the motion. The February 2025 minutes were approved 5-0-2. DR and JM were absent.

#### 2. FHC Future

- ES Introduced BH and he stated that he introduced the concept to the committee at the last meeting for merging the Fair Housing Committee with the Newton Housing Partnership. BH stated that since the last time they met, things have advanced, and he stated that he put a presentation together that he wanted to share with the committee.
- BH stated that both committees have tenant focus and advocacy. BH stated that the NHP is focused more on creating affordable housing opportunities and the FHC is about making sure that those opportunities are available for people of all backgrounds. He said there is some duplication between the committees. BH stated that he understands that for the next four years it will be challenging at every level, and he thinks that having a larger group could be really important and having the bigger group could strengthen Newton's response and invigorate both groups on the issue of fair housing.

BH stated that this is a great time too because the NHP is revisiting their bylaws at this time.

- BH then gave examples of overlapping work; housing priorities, inclusionary zoning, resident services, Village Center Overlay District and the ADU, MBTA Communities Act, and IZ ordinance. BH stated that both committees request new developers on new projects to meet with them, which makes it challenging for communication between other committees and developers to present to multiple groups. Planning presents the Consolidated Plan for both groups that focuses on the city's use of the federal funds.
- BH then discussed the benefits. He feels that this move will put fair housing up front and merging will put a lens that will benefit the larger group. Everyone will be updated of local, state and federal matters that change daily. BH then stated that they will be back in front of the NHP in March and the intention is to get a vote if they are comfortable with the proposal. BH then concluded the discussion and opened it up for questions. ES stated that there were some other points that BH didn't review, and then asked for information on what will happen on the membership side, how many members it had and in terms of its mission and purpose. BH stated that their mission will be worked in to their bylaws and they have already begun incorporating the language from the fair housing committee. BH stated that immediately two members will fill the slots on the NHP and then everyone else will be alternates. BH stated that the Planning and Development Board has five alternate members, so this is not uncommon. Everyone could stay involved and be a part of meeting discussions. ES clarified if the ultimate number will be four members. BH stated that there will be four slots for members with fair housing expertise. ES then asked about the name of the merged group and said that she has spoken with members and their request to keep fair housing in the title and mission.
- BH stated that they looked at other communities to see if this has been done elsewhere, and they came across the Town of Amherst, Massachusetts and they hyphenated the name. TM asked how many slots the new group has. TM also stated that the merger makes sense based on the presentation, but her concern is that she does not want fair housing to get lost by another committee. BH stated that there are currently nine slots and there will be three-year term limits on each slot. BH stated that he and ES have had conversations about having training very early in the process to bring anybody up to speed. BH stated that the members of the NHP have a pretty strong fair housing background and stated that a member is the spouse of Henry Korman, who is an expert on Fair Housing, and provided training on Fair Housing for Newton's policy leaders in June 2024. Lastly, he stated that there will be two fair housing experts with five alternates as a part of the group. SW agreed with the concerns as well, but he is okay with the merger as long as the mission does not get lost. BF stated that her concern is the number of members seems disproportionate but is happy about the training that will happen, she also asked the meeting time. BH stated that the group will meet once a month on the fourth Tuesday at 5pm and the meetings are for two hours. The meetings are also virtual.
- JF stated that she agrees with the concern of fair housing being forgotten and appreciates the training that will be given to NHP members. JF stated that she thinks that people do not realize that accessibility and the ADA law governs fair housing for all new construction and for reasonable accommodation and modification. JF stated that she will still consult with the new group. ES stated that JF definitely is needed and appreciated, and her presence is valuable to ensure a continued focus on addressing fair housing for people with disabilities. ES stated that she agrees with the consolidation and thinks that it allows the staff to engage with and coordinate better. She agrees that it will reduce duplication of reporting. ES stated that planning should think about how the Newton Housing Authority has a role as a part of this group as well. ES stated that testing, training and focusing on lottery and lease ups remain very important.
- ES also stated that she would like to strengthen the complaint process through the Human Rights Commission and Health and Human Services. ES also asked that this new group focus on the resident service experience, she stated that it is all about fair opportunity, choice, inclusion and

belonging. Lastly, when she spoke about the metric former member Phill Herr created that puts a lens on project developments, on housing projects, she would like the fair housing principles in it to be included in the new group's reviews. ES stated that she appreciates people's comments and thanks planning staff and the committee for their thoughtful approach in this transition. ES asked if there were any comments, there were no other comments. ES asked for a vote on a motion to support the merger of the Fair Housing Committee with the Newton Housing Partnership. Upon a motion TM and JK seconded. 5-0-2. The committee agreed to support the merger. All in favor, two members are absent. ES stated that she will follow up with the absentees. BH stated that members are invited to attend the next meeting of the NHP on March 25 and that he can come back in April with the draft of the new partnership bylaws that will include the fair housing language and discuss membership. ES asked BH when the change will happen, BH stated that April may be perfect, since it is Fair Housing Month. ES stated that it may be a match up because the Fair Housing Award will be given on April 15<sup>th</sup> and thanked everyone for their participation in working on this.

### **3. Discrimination Study Review**

- ES stated that the committee was very grateful to Newton and the WestMetro HOME Consortium for initiating this study by collaborating with Suffolk Law to test these 13 communities including Newton. ES stated that she attended the public forum on the results. ES summarized the report by saying that each community had 10 to 11 matched-pair testing. ES stated that the results showed evidence (35% of the communities tested showed source of income discrimination and 22% was by race). ES stated that there was a study done in 2005 by the Greater Boston Fair Housing Center and the Disability Law Center that rates were at 50% or more, which is greater than it is today. ES stated that she appreciates the enforcement efforts that are taking place. Suffolk Law identified the companies and real estate companies who were identified as discrimination issues and are following up with law enforcement actions. ES emphasized the importance of this data and the two-year effort that was accomplished is really important to be able to understand how to change what is happening and to improve the circumstances. ES then opened the discussion to the committee.
- TM stated that she missed the study report sessions, but she reviewed the report and stated that it is good news that the discrimination is decreasing based on the data ES spoke about that happened in 2005, although there is still plenty of evidence that it is happening. TM stated that this is the trend that is going in the right direction and that is why the City/Committee should stay on course with the training and provide an opportunity to make complaints if they experience discrimination. TM stated that this is really important that this continues as the committee continues to work through the merger. ES agreed and stated that the discussion was good and stated that she is grateful that JK will be helping to coordinate the training on March 19<sup>th</sup> and hopes people will join. She stated that JK is also working with Suffolk Law to make their training programs count as a part of the realtor's certification process as a part of their continuing education.

### **4. Fair Housing Training**

- ES stated that given the political transition and funding issues, she does not know how the committee will continue with future training. ES stated that she has had discussions with BH and that she hopes that they will be able to work with Henry Korman to do training and for others there will need to be discussions on how to implement future ones.

### **5. Subcommittee Updates**

- **Lottery Results & Lease-ups Sub-Committee**
  - TM stated that this group was dissolved and that the topic and discussion of this will be a part of the full committee, so there are not any more meetings. ES stated that this can be deleted from the agenda.
- **Membership & Nominating Sub-Committee**

- There are not any updates on this topic. DR is absent. ES stated there has been challenges on recruitment.
- **Fair Housing Award Sub-Committee**
  - April 15<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm the Award will go to Mayor Fuller. ES reminded people to put on their calendars, it will be a hybrid meeting at the War Memorials at City Hall. ES thanked BH and asked if there were any more comments and there were none. ES then ended the meeting.

## 6. FHC Priorities

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