

Winchendon Master Plan Update Housing Element Draft Inventory/Analysis

A Presentation for the Town of Winchendon,
Massachusetts

September 15, 2014

Presented by the Montachusett Regional
Planning Commission (MRPC)
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Funded under DLT A – District Local Technical Assistance Program

**MRPC's DLT A Program provides
technical assistance at no cost to
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**funded through the Massachusetts
Department of Housing and
Community Development (DHCD)**

What are the steps in preparing a Master Plan chapter?

Preparing a Master Plan chapter generally consists of three steps:

- Step One: data collection and analysis (where are you at, how did you get there, and where are the trends pointing?)
- Step Two: goal setting (knowing the above, where do you want to be in the future – what is your vision for the community?)
- Step Three: develop recommendations and policies that will achieve your vision.

Depending on the subject matter, chapters can take anywhere from three to five meetings to complete (the Town Government and Land Use chapters take the most time).

1. Housing Data Collection and Analysis

Population:

- The 2010 US Census counted 10,300 residents in Winchendon, an increase of 6.7% from the 2000 Census count of 9,611 residents.
- Winchendon's growth rate over the decade was higher than that of the Montachusett Planning Region (growth rate of 3.6%) and more than twice the State of Massachusetts as a whole (3.0%).
*housing prices -
quality of life*
- Winchendon and its small town neighbors had a higher rate of population growth than the neighboring City of Gardner during the last 30 years.

Housing Growth

- From 1990 to 2000 housing unit growth (8.5%) just barely outpaced the growth in population (8.4%). However, from 2000 to 2010 housing unit growth (12.8%) significantly outpaced population growth (6.7%).
- More growth seems to have taken place from the years 2000 up until 2007 when the national recession began and the Town's Building Permit data reflects this to some degree.
- Drop off in building permits 2007 onward seems to have been more substantial in other communities.

Housing Unit Inventory

- Single family homes make up the vast majority (73.5%) of the Town's housing stock.
- In terms of multi-family units (defined as housing containing three or more units), the Town has 685 such units.
- Winchendon has by far the most multi-family units when compared to Hubbardston (145 multi-family units), Phillipston (11 units), Roylston (3) and Templeton (183 units) but significantly less than Gardner (3,106).

Housing Unit Inventory Cont'd and Occupancy/Vacancy Rates

- Approximately 31% of Winchendon's housing stock was built before World War II and about 45.1% of the housing stock (1,953 units) is over 50 years old.
- Many units may be in need of rehabilitation. The Town has been successful over the years acquiring housing rehabilitation funds from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.
- Approximately 72.7% of Winchendon's housing stock is owner-occupied, which is lower than the figures for its rural neighbors and much higher than the abutting city.
- A comparison of the 2000 and 2010 vacancy rates indicates that the vacancy rate has increased across most of the Region from 2000 to 2010 and Winchendon's vacancy rate jumped from 5.8% to 9.3%.

Seasonal (?)

Types of Households

- Almost 70% of Winchendon's households consist of family-oriented households representing a decrease in the percentage of family-oriented households over the last ten years following a national trend.
- However, the number of female-headed households has also declined during the last twelve years: there were 386 such households in 2000 and 312 in the year 2012.
- The population of residents 65 years and over increased by 32.8% since 2000. But for the population between 55 to 64 years of age increased by more than 50% (In 2000 this age group had only 774 persons, which increased to 1,163 in 2010).
- The 2010 Census shows that under 5 years of age population has decreased significantly (-18.7%).

Median Age/Income

- The nation's elderly population is expanding. The Census data demonstrates that this national trend is taking place in Winchendon.
- The Town's Median Age increased from 35 in the year 2000 to 38.7 in 2010. The Town of Winchendon's population is a bit younger when compared to the State's median age (39.1 years) and Montachusett Region median age of 41.4.
- The median annual household income in Winchendon is \$61,937. Hubbardston, Phillipston, and Templeton had higher median household incomes, while Gardner and Royalston had a lower median household income.

Compare w/ 2000

US census

HUD FIGURES

Affordable Housing

Compare to
Atrol -

- The State statute concerning affordable housing development (MGL Chapter 40B) cites that affordably - produced and priced homes must be available to households where their incomes do not exceed 80% of the median household income for the region in which the community is located.

Insert
FIGURE

- For municipalities that do not meet the 10% threshold, the practical consequences are as follows: any developer proposing low and/or moderate-income housing can have the project exempted from local zoning and subdivision requirements through what is known as the Comprehensive Permit process.

- Winchendon has a larger number of affordable housing units (8.4%) than its neighbors with the exception of Gardner, but still falls a little short of meeting the 10% threshold specified in 40B.

(Housing Production Plan - goals for 40B)

Home Values

- From 2000 to 2005, the average sales price rose 86%.
- However, the housing market crash, which began in 2007, has returned the average sales price closer to the early 2000 levels.

Next Steps

- **Goals, Objectives, and Recommendations based on Inventory and Analysis and Public Input**