TOWN OF MOUNT PLEASANT

Mount Pleasant has not adopted the model affordable housing zoning ordinance. It has also made no progress in meeting its affordable housing obligation under the Settlement; none of the almost 1,000 FAH units allocated to the Town in the County's unadopted 2005 plan have been built. Affordable housing is not mandated. Density bonuses are provided for applicants developing affordable housing in certain zoning districts, though *affordable housing* is not clearly defined. Multifamily housing is allowed as-of-right in parts of the Town, but these areas are largely built out; the County has been able to identify locations for only five new housing units in these districts. Accessory apartments are prohibited. Additional actions will be needed for the Town to make meaningful progress towards meeting its affordable housing obligation under the Settlement. These might include, in some combination, adopting the County's model affordable housing ordinance, mapping additional areas for multifamily housing, providing mandates and broader incentives for affordable housing, permitting accessory housing units, and providing opportunities for additional types of low-density development (such as cottage-style housing or quadraplexes). Even with additional Town actions, FAH housing will remain problematic without assistance from the County, in the form of financial subsidies and marketing assistance (such as the maintenance of a Countywide registry of FAH units).

Model Zoning and County Benchmark

- The Town has not adopted the model affordable housing zoning ordinance.
- The unadopted Affordable Housing Allocation Plan produced in 2005 by the County's planning department called for 975 affordable housing units in Mount Pleasant, none of which have been built in the interim.

Zoning Ordinance

- Multifamily housing is permitted as-of-right in 9 of the Town's 13 residential districts and 10 of its 20 other districts. Multifamily housing is permitted by special permit in two additional zoning districts.
- Mixed-use development (i.e., residences above stores) is permitted as-of-right in 14 zoning districts.
- Two-family dwellings are permitted as-of-right in 17 of the 19 zoning districts that allow multifamily housing, plus in one additional district.
- Accessory apartments are not permitted anywhere in the Town.
- In the R-3AU district, a school building converted to dwelling units may provide apartments for seniors over 62 or families less than 29 years of age, so long as the entire development averages 750 square feet per dwelling unit. (That is not a minimum or a maximum square footage, but the prescribed average.) Those units shall be set aside for residents or parents or children of residents on the basis of "economic or social need" (the criteria for which are to be set by the Town Board). These apartments will cost 75 percent of fair market value or 50 percent of the average sales price of other units in the building, whichever is higher.

Restrictive Practices

- Accessory apartments are not permitted anywhere in the Town.
- Transitional districts (of which there are 12, 9 of which permit multifamily housing) restrict the number of bedrooms per unit in a development to an average of two, with no more than three and no less than one bedroom.

Incentives and Mandates

- Except for the maximum costs established for certain units in a single specified project, the residential conversion of a former school, the Town has established no mandate for affordable housing. Even in the case of the school conversion project, there is not actually a mandate for a set number or ratio of affordable units; the zoning ordinance states that units in the building may be set aside for seniors or those under 29 years of age who are either Town residents or their parents or children and that any such units must be sold at specified below-market prices.
- The only incentive for affordable housing applies to the six Planned Residential Development - Transitional (PRD-T) districts, five of which allow multifamily housing. The PRD-T districts permit a density bonus of up to one-third beyond the basic permitted density if the applicant provides affordable housing. There is no guidance regarding whether all or some percentage of the units must be affordable for the development to qualify for the bonus, nor are there any provisions regarding the location or quality of the affordable units. The definition of *affordable housing* does not relate to income, price or rent restrictions, but is as follows: "a dwelling unit containing no more than 800 square feet of floor area."

Zoning Map, Development Pattern and Development Potential

- There are 37 areas zoned for as-of-right multifamily development, containing 7 percent of the Town's area. These areas are heavily built out, however, with available lots averaging one-hundredth of an acre (less than 500 square feet) in size.
- The only available development sites in these areas that meet minimum lot size requirements could accommodate a total of five housing units.
- Only 0.4 percent of the Town's total area is occupied by multifamily housing. An additional 0.4 percent is occupied by two- and three-family housing.

Master Plan

- The most recent comprehensive plan dates to 1970, completed by Frederick P. Clark Associates. The plan calls for development of apartments in the C-GC and C-NR districts, with several restrictions: No more than 250 apartments may be built in any one hamlet; no more than 100 apartments may be built in any one development; the maximum density permitted is 50 apartments per acre; and apartments are limited to efficiency, one and two-bedroom units.

Implications

- The unadopted Affordable Housing Allocation Plan produced in 2005 by the County's planning department called for nearly 1,000 affordable housing units in Mount Pleasant, none of which have been built in the interim.

MOUNT PLEASANT FACT SHEET

a. Total acreage of the Town	15,392 acres	100%
b. Total acreage in zoning districts where multifamily housing is permitted as-of-right	1,014.8 acres	6.6%
c. Undeveloped area in these zoning districts	8.4 acres	0.1%
d. Undeveloped area not subject to wetlands, floodplain and steep slopes R-3A 0.59 acres C-GC 0.37 acres C-NR 5.53 acres PRDT-8 0.04 acres	6.5 acres	0.04%
e. Order of magnitude area available for development* R-3A 0.47 acres C-GC 0.30 acres C-NR 4.43 acres PRDT-8 0.03 acres	5.2 acres	0.03%
f. Number of sites available for development	48 sites	
g. Average size of sites	0.01 acres	
h. Theoretical number of multifamily units that can be developed as-of-right R-3A 5 units C-GC 0 units C-NR 0 units PRDT-8 0 units	5 units	
i. Average selling price for multifamily (condo) units	$385,000**	
j. Order of magnitude value for land, per condo unit	$ 95,000	
k. Order of magnitude total cost of development, per condo unit	$375,000	
l. Percent minority population (5.1% Black, 14% Hispanic)	19%	
m. Percent minority population in the zoning districts permitting multifamily housing as-of-right and containing available development sites R-3A (0% Black, 11.9% Hispanic)	12%	
n. Number of units needed to meet the 2000-2015 Allocation Plan benchmark 2015 Allocation 975 units Number of units created since 2000 0 units	975 units	

- The Town does not mandate that any portion of residential development consist of affordable housing. Zoning incentives are provided for affordable housing development, but only in a handful of districts that do not appear to contain available development sites, and *affordable housing* is not clearly defined.
- According to the County's analysis, the portions of the Town zoned for multifamily housing contain available sites that could accommodate only five new housing units. Even if all were affordable, that would satisfy less than one percent of the Town's benchmark obligation.
- The average selling price for multifamily (condo) units in the Town is $385,000, which is only slightly higher than the $375,000 average development cost for a condo unit in Westchester. Zoning bonuses would not be sufficient; subsidies, such as those available under the Settlement, would be required even for affordable units in mixed-income developments.
- Additional actions will be needed for the Town to make meaningful progress towards meeting its affordable housing obligation under the Settlement. These might include, in some combination, adopting the County's model affordable housing ordinance, mapping additional areas for multifamily housing, providing mandates and broader incentives for affordable housing, permitting accessory housing units, and providing opportunities for additional types of low-density development (such as cottage-style housing or quadraplexes).
- Even with additional Town actions, FAH housing will remain problematic without assistance from the County, in the form of financial subsidies and marketing assistance (such as the maintenance of a Countywide registry of FAH units).

* After applying a factor of 80 percent to account for irregular site configuration, setbacks, building form restrictions, and the like.

** Regional value employed where data was not provided for the municipality, employing the County's definition of North, Central and South for what is meant as region. Weighted averages were calculated using available data for each region.