

**TOWN OF SAN ANSELMO  
PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

**For the meeting of October 1, 2012  
Agenda Item D-4**

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**Location**

Townwide

**Recommendation**

That the Planning Commission hold a public hearing and recommend to the Town Council adoption of the Negative Declaration and Draft Housing Element.

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**BACKGROUND**

State law requires each city and county to adopt a General Plan containing at least seven elements including a Housing Element. Rules regarding Housing Elements are found in the California Government Code Sections 65580 through 65589.8. Housing Elements must be updated on a regular basis. The City's current Housing Element was adopted in 2004 and certified by the State of California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The Draft Housing Element builds upon the 2004 Housing Element as an important starting point.

**Housing Element Subcommittee**

In 2008 the San Anselmo Town Council created a 5-member Housing Element Subcommittee, consisting of two Town Council members, two Planning Commissioners and a local housing advocate. The Subcommittee meetings were advertised and were attended by staff, Housing Element Consultant Jeff Baird, and interested citizens.

The Housing Element Subcommittee met 6 times, including an organized walking tour of potential affordable housing sites. The Subcommittee meetings provided an opportunity for members of the public to offer comments and suggestions for the items being discussed and the public was also encouraged to provide written comments.

**Planning Commission Workshop**

The Planning Commission held a Housing Element Workshop on July 30, 2009 to solicit ideas for the Housing Element update. Discussion included the community's vision for housing, identification of possible housing strategies, barriers and opportunities for the development of affordable housing, and identification of possible housing policies and programs.

**DISCUSSION**

The project is a proposed update of the Town of San Anselmo General Plan Housing Element as required by California law. The proposed Housing Element establishes housing objectives, policies and programs in response to community housing conditions and needs. The Housing Element Update is a comprehensive statement by the Town of San Anselmo of its current and future housing needs and proposed actions to facilitate the provision of housing to meet those

needs. The Housing Element is a policy level document which provides direction for the implementation of various programs to accommodate the housing needs of projected population growth, and to encourage the production of housing units in a range of prices affordable to all income groups.

As a result of community comments, Planning Commission direction, and Subcommittee direction, the Preliminary Draft Housing Element was prepared and in 2010 the Planning Commission held a hearing on it and recommended that the Council forward the Draft Housing Element to the State of California, Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for consideration. The Council subsequently held a public hearing on the Preliminary Draft Housing Element and voted to send it to the State for review and comment. For nearly two years, Staff has been working with HCD to further revise the Housing Element to a point that HCD felt that it met the intent of State law and could be certified. While the State was generally supportive of the draft document forwarded by the Town, there was a considerable amount of “tweaking” and “fine-tuning” that was necessary to meet the State’s requirements.

The revised document being considered at this time is essentially the same document that was previously considered by the Planning Commission and Town Council with some wordsmithing for clarification and the addition of information to specifically identify sites in the Town that could accommodate future residential units. The Preliminary Draft Housing Element referred to opportunities to provide mixed use development Downtown and along Greenfield Avenue. When HCD reviewed the preliminary Draft, they requested that we specifically identify, on a parcel-by-parcel basis, where such mixed-use development might be possible. This has been done and is described on pages 85-91 of the Draft Housing Element.

The purpose of this public hearing is to confirm that the proposed Housing Element is consistent with the adopted Town of San Anselmo General Plan and to recommend to the Town Council that they adopt the Housing Element and forward it to HCD for certification. No development is being permitted under the proposed Housing Element where it is not currently permitted, and all new development under the proposed Housing Element is proposed in areas already designated for residential or mixed use development. The Town’s housing goal is to promote the social and economic diversity of the Town by encouraging safe and affordable housing for all social and economic segments of the community.

Following review and approval of the Draft Housing Element by the Town Council, it will then be sent to HCD for certification.

Prepared by:

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Attachments:

1. Draft Initial Study and Negative Declaration
2. Draft Housing Element

*To access the attachments above: go to [townofsananselmo.org](http://townofsananselmo.org), click on "Public Meeting Information" on the left side of the page and then click on "Planning Commission Meeting Packets". If you need assistance contact Phil Boyle at 415-258-4617 or [pboyle@townofsananselmo.org](mailto:pboyle@townofsananselmo.org)*