



# Town of Berlin

**2023 Plan of Conservation and Development Committee Meeting #7 & Affordable Housing Plan Meeting**

**3/21/22**



# Agenda

1. Review Plan Goal
2. Review Strategies
3. Next steps

# Affordable Housing Plan Goal

Achieve the development of additional affordable housing units in Berlin that will meet the needs of all Town residents and will result in a total share of affordable housing that exceeds ten percent of the Town's total housing supply.

# Strategy 1: Provide more affordable home ownership opportunities.

## Actions:

- Explore partnerships with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity to construct affordable home ownership units.
- Evaluate Town land that could be made available for the creation of affordable home ownership opportunities, excluding properties, or areas of properties, that were purchased for conservation or are important open space asset.
- Evaluate zoning strategies that would facilitate the creation of deed restricted affordable homes (e.g. review existing Neighborhood Affordable Housing Development zoning regulations to encourage their use).
- Evaluate whether financial incentives (e.g. tax abatements and others) should be developed to further create affordable home ownership opportunities

# Strategy 2: Provide more affordable housing for seniors.

## Actions:

- Continue to support the Berlin Housing Authority project approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission to build 50 units of low and very low-income senior rental housing at 143 Percival Avenue. The Town has an option to sell that site to the Berlin Housing Authority for \$1 to support the project.
- Evaluate adding other organizations to the provision in the zoning regulations that allows the Berlin Housing Authority to build senior housing in single family residential zones by special permit.
- Ensure that universal design features (standards ensuring homes are more accessible) are incorporated into all new multifamily housing structures by requiring a percentage of units be constructed with these features.
- Proactively lobby State and Federal representatives to help add funding for these projects.

# Strategy 3: Refine existing zoning regulations to better support affordable housing.

## Actions

- Review residential zoning districts for opportunities to add additional housing typologies that may not be allowed today (i.e. two-family/duplexes)
- Evaluate allowing mixed-use development with affordable housing in potential redevelopment areas at Webster Square and Ferndale Plaza areas.
- Review BTD zoning to ensure that the regulations adequately support the development of affordable housing.
- Evaluate allowing greater densities in the Kensington Village Core 2 overlay district with the addition of a requirement that developments include an affordable component.

# **Strategy 3: Refine existing zoning regulations to better support affordable housing. (cont.)**

## Actions:

- Consider offering local incentives, including tax abatement, for affordable housing projects.
- Evaluate potential changes to the Accessory Dwelling Unit provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Evaluate potential changes to the PDD district to provide specifications for affordable housing uses.
- Evaluate requirements for bedroom counts and unit sizes for affordable rental units.

# Strategy 4: Maintain a focus on expanding affordable housing supply.

## Actions:

- Review and recommend actions to diversify the Town's housing stock as part of the Town's ongoing 2023 update to its Plan of Conservation and Development and subsequent POCD implementation plan.
- Establish a Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Committee to track Plan Implementation especially with respect to housing affordability.
- Maintain adequate staffing and skill sets to administer affordable housing programs.
- Offer Affordable Housing training to staff and members of land use boards.
- Continue to require and monitor affordable housing implementation plans for all projects that include an affordable housing component.



# Strategy 4: Maintain a focus on expanding affordable housing supply. (cont.)

## Actions:

- Continue tax incentives for mixed-use, inclusionary projects.
- Develop a public education campaign in town to communicate the need for affordable housing and discuss the need and benefits of housing across all types and income spectrums. Discuss and present housing as an economic development tool in Berlin.
- Support the creation of most needed affordable housing for households at less than 50% of AMI.
- Explore extending the required duration of deed restrictions beyond 40 years or make them permanent.
- Communicate with affordable housing developers about opportunities for affordable housing development in Berlin.
- Explore the potential for creating affordability deed restrictions for portions of the existing housing stock.

# AHP Next Steps

- AHP Committee will meet again prior to April 5 to approve the final draft plan for transmittal to the Town Council.
- Draft AHP to be provided to Council at or before April 5 Council meeting.
- At the April 5 meeting, Council will vote on a May 17 hearing date for the AHP.
- Draft AHP filed with Town Clerk and posted to Town website for public review 35 days prior to May 17 hearing (by April 12).
- Public hearing will be held on May 17. Following receipt of public comment at the Public Hearing, the Council will determine whether there are revisions to the Plan that are necessary.
- If, following the close of the Public Hearing, the Council determines that no revisions are necessary, then the Council can vote to adopt the Plan that night.
- If, following the close of the Public Hearing, the Council determines that revisions are necessary (significant enough substance that they cannot be dealt with simply in the motion to adopt), then the Council will be provided the details of the revisions they desire and a date will be set for a special meeting to review and act on the revised Plan before June 1.

# POCD Committee Next Steps for AHP

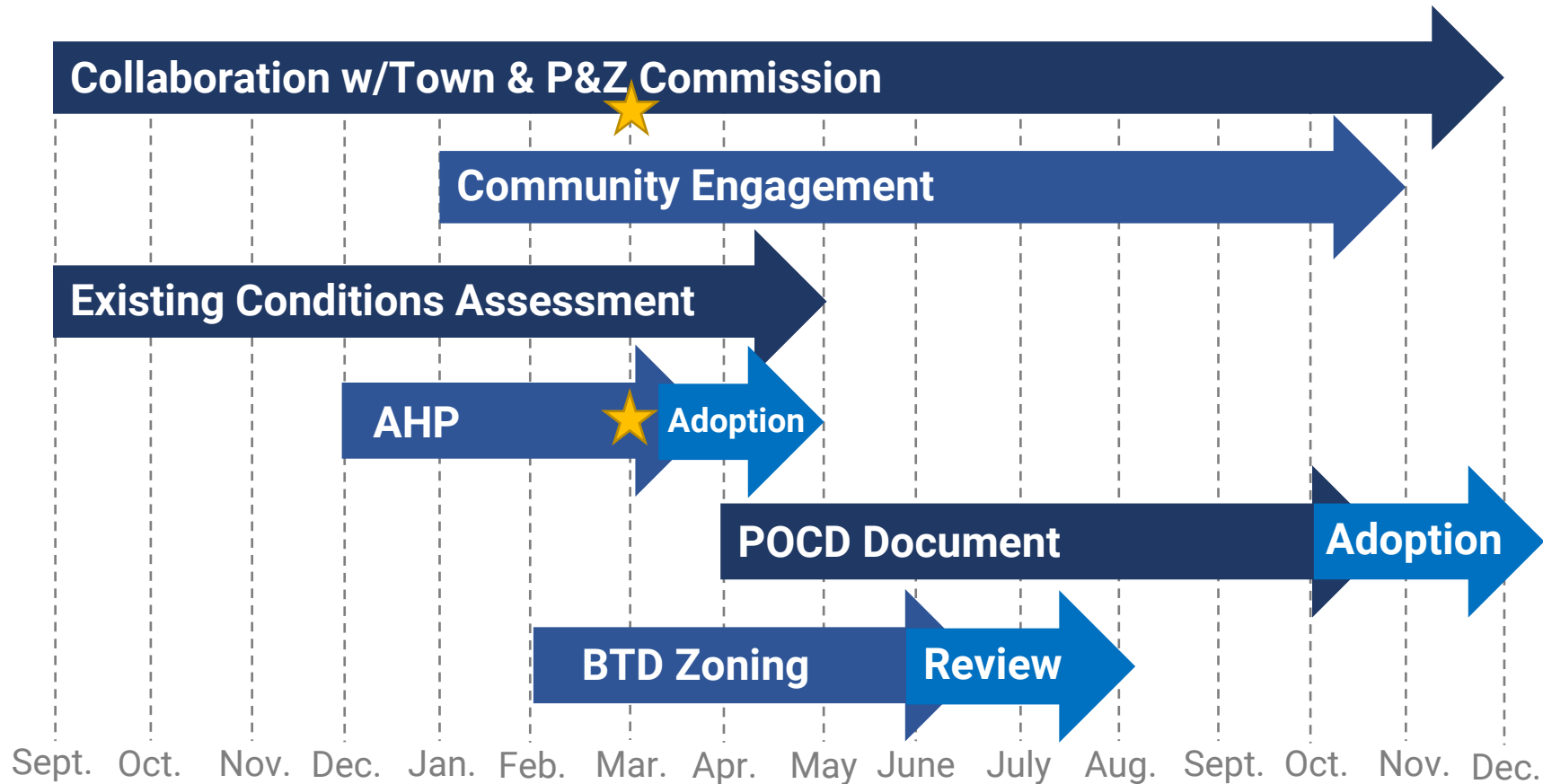
- POCD Committee will receive the draft plan being transmitted to the Town Council.
- POCD Committee may submit comments to the Town Council concerning the draft plan.
- POCD Committee will receive the final plan as approved by the Town Council and will consider its contents and recommendations in as it prepares the 2023 POCD Plan update.

# POCD Next Steps

- Launch Community engagement efforts
  - Develop press release and social media content
  - Launch online survey
  - Develop list of key stakeholders for interviews/focus group meetings.
- Continue to coordinate mapping with NEGEO
- Collect information on transportation, facilities, and infrastructure

# POCD Project Schedule

15 months (concluding by end of 2022)



# Next POCD Meeting

- Facilities and Infrastructure
- Meeting date Thursday, April 28th at 6:00 pm.

APRIL 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Holidays and Observances: 17: Easter Sunday, 18: Easter Monday, 18: Tax Day

Wiki Calendar