

Policy Paper on Government and Housing
Bedford Residents Association
bedfordresidents.com
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Background on the Housing Appeals Board

The most pressing and current threat to the NH Advantage is the Housing Appeals Board, a 3-person regional council that was created by 3 Republican NH Senators at the behest of Governor Chris Sununu. It repeatedly failed to pass as a normal bill and was consequently secreted into the budget by those same Senators.

HB 288 (2021) was a bill to repeal the HAB, but did not come to a full House vote before the session ended.

WE MUST BRING BACK THE ESSENCE OF HB 288 AND PASS IT.

[A new bill for 2021-2022 has been filled by Merrimack Rep Bill Boyd to repeal the HAB.]

What does the HAB do? Just three people whose livelihood is in the real estate and development business, have been appointed to this board which is allowed to override ANY local town board decision regarding housing. This includes planning and zoning boards, conservation commissions, and even school boards.

HAB rulings can therefore nullify any town meeting vote.

The legislature has repeatedly defeated or laid on table many bills that would have enabled developers to get subsidized, 9-year tax breaks for building high-density, low-income apartment buildings where they are not appropriate or needed. These bills were proposed to implement Governor Sununu's plan to "mitigate" a supposed housing shortage. What they really do is artificially integrate people of varying economic status, the same goal as the AFFH (Affirmative Furthering Fair Housing act from the Obama administration).

<http://bedfordresidents.com/bra/2019/10/31/a-central-planning-nightmare-is-about-to-happen/>

We maintain that this plan (including the HAB) is unconstitutional on its face. There is no provision in the NH Constitution that allows the state to provide housing for or mandate or control what types of housing each town must provide, especially in defiance of the voters' wishes. Additionally, HAB members may have serious conflicts of interest.

The HAB made its first ruling against the Planning Board of Frankestown for its decision regarding a portion of land listed in the National Register of Historical Places:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_County_Road_South_Historic_District

Read more about it here:

<http://bedfordresidents.com/bra/2021/05/16/housing-appeals-board-hab-violates-rights-of-voters-in-frankestown/>

If we are to maintain the NH Advantage, preserve the value of the suburban and rural areas of the state, guard the property values of single-family homes, keep the unemployment rate high and the crime rate and taxes low, we should do all we can to advise the legislature and the Governor that the HAB budget provision should be repealed and the board itself dissolved immediately. The HAB has the ability to nullify your vote at the cherished and traditional NH town meeting. It is an outrageous slap in the face of all that is NH. The HAB was never approved by we the people or our NH Representatives!

Cases pending can be seen on the HAB Website: <https://hab.nh.gov/hearings.aspx>

Social Justice Warriors

Social Justice Warriors have been around forever.

Here is a quote from Yale University's Skull and Bones Commissioner of Education Harold Howe, in a speech at Columbia University on May 3, 1966. Mr. Martin, Alabama, Cong. Record, 8/9/66 where he decries the fact that our nation has grown a prosperous middle class:

"To a disturbing degree it has come to mean the polarization of families according to the size of their split-level homes or the size of their welfare checks. We are faced with the fact that we are becoming a nation of plush suburbs on one hand and mid-city slums on the other."

Howe's anger is directed at those *"who live in a world of wall-to-wall carpeting, pleasant back yards, and summers at camp"*. Such affluent families *"forget that their neighbors in the central city have children who play in alleys and live six to a room,"* as if it were the successes of those families that were the cause of the failures of others to reach a similar economic status.

"By the judicious use of Federal funds, the commissioner will compel them to remember. His thought is to contrive "new boundary lines" that ignore county and city limits. He would bring ghetto children to the suburbs and suburban children to the ghetto. Or he would develop "educational parks" of perhaps 20,000 students, where a proper "cultural mix" could be imposed."

Sununu's Council on Housing Stability

In November 2020, Governor Christopher T. Sununu, through Executive Order 2020-22, established the cross-sector Council on Housing Stability (Council). The Council was established for the purposes of creating and implementing a plan to create housing stability for all citizens of the State of New Hampshire. In the documentation, it cites as a goal to "improve racial equity"

So, by Executive Order, Sununu created the "Council on Housing Stability", apparently taking up the same cause as President Biden — **forced social and economic integration of neighborhoods**.

<http://bedfordresidents.com/bra/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Council-on-Housing-Stability-2021—2024-Strategic-Plan.pdf>

<https://nhchs.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Council-on-Housing-Stability-2021—2024-Strategic-Plan.pdf>

The plan often mentions "homelessness" but in NH, 90% of all homeless are in that position by choice or because they are addicts who refuse to get help. Very few are people who simply cannot afford housing.

The Council on Housing Stability (CHS) was charged last November with two primary tasks:

- ◆ Complete a full assessment of New Hampshire's housing needs with a focus on those experiencing homelessness; and
- ◆ Use that assessment to deliver a road map that would inform coordinated actions of all partners and the deployment of resources to best meet the housing needs of New Hampshire's residents, especially those who are considered vulnerable and low-income for years to come.

While the state might be justified in keeping statistics on housing, they have no right to use our tax dollars ("deployment of resources") to hand out to others to mitigate what they see as a "shortage" of, or lack of "diversity" in, housing.

Note: Many towns in NH, whether considered upscale or not, are already very "diverse" in that people of many origins are represented. This is a fact that seems to be ignored. Apparently, the "diversity" label does not apply to those residents who have achieved economic success?

Specifically the document states the plan is to "remove regulatory barriers", offer "financial incentives or tax off-sets" (to developers), "increase production of publicly-financed affordable housing" (using your taxpayer dollars of course) and "a productive legislative strategy for the 2022 session" (i.e. propose more bills such as HB 586 which was one of many similar bills rejected by the legislature).

Sununu's new council is supportive of the plan by the Biden administration to administer "social justice" in the area of housing by assuming federal and/or state control over local zoning laws. This plan is basically an attack on single-family zoning and the suburban dream.

<https://nypost.com/2021/05/17/bidens-infrastructure-plan-wages-war-on-the-suburban-dream/>

Biden's plan would, as would Sununu's plan has already done in the state by virtue of the HAB, "...put the federal government in charge of local zoning and to install apartment buildings throughout single-family-home neighborhoods".

Governor Sununu just signed into law HB 154 which would also allow apartments to be built ANYWHERE in a town while rewarding developers with tax free status for 9 years:

"The tax breaks allow the town to provide property-tax relief for up to nine years for affordable housing projects, with the requirement that one-third of the housing units be designated for families with 80% or less of the median area income. But for years, the tax break areas have been limited to downtown areas. HB 154 allows them to be extended to any development within the town borders."

Let's compare to Biden's proposed policies.

<https://pjmedia.com/news-and-politics/stacey-lennox/2021/07/01/atlanta-is-a-preview-of-what-joe-bidens-preferred-housing-policies-intend-for-the-suburbs-n1458831>

Part of Biden's plans include efforts to:

- **End single-family zoning**, allowing any property owner by right to build an additional dwelling unit (called an "Accessory Dwelling Unit," or ADU) on any lot now zoned for one family residence.
- Allow the property owner by right to then subdivide the lot and sell the ADU separately on its own "flag lot," then presumably build another and repeat the process.
- "Loosen" the building requirements, such as size and height, for ADU's making them cheaper, encouraging the use of modular housing technology.
- **Reduce minimum lot sizes** and minimum set-backs from the street and adjacent properties to get more buildings onto every property.
- Allow any property owner within one-half mile of a MARTA (ed note: transit) station to build an apartment building with up to 12 units, regardless of the neighborhood's zoning.

– **End minimum residential parking requirements** citywide so that new apartment and condominium buildings would not have to provide parking for their residents requiring them to park on city streets.

– End minimum parking requirements for commercial properties, allowing more of them to occupy a given area.

The above goals are not exaggerations. Consider this: *"In recent years, there's been a push to move zoning decisions further from the local level. In 2019, Oregon passed House Bill 2001, making it the first statewide law to abolish single-family zoning in many areas. By expanding the state government's jurisdiction to include zoning decisions previously handled by local agencies, the law entails an alarming centralization of state power. This was quickly followed by the introduction of similar bills in Virginia, Washington, Minnesota, and North Carolina. Now President Biden is attempting to increase federal influence over local zoning."*

<https://mises.org/wire/biden-wants-seize-control-local-land-use-regulations>

Clearly the effect would be a CHANGE IN THE DEMOGRAPHICS of any voting block in NH.

What is the Federal Government's and the State's Purview on Housing?

We challenge anyone to demonstrate where in the US or NH Constitutions, it allows the state or federal governments the right to mandate housing or to take your tax dollars to award developers to build low income housing where it is not needed or wanted. The bottom line is, what the Governor is doing is **redistribution of the wealth, and crony capitalism**, with the resulting tax burden falling on the middle class. We maintain that nowhere in the state's constitution does it allow for the mandate of any sort of housing, while rewarding chosen businesses such as developers, with YOUR tax dollars.

The Roots of the Urbanist Movement

In the US, we are seeing the rise of "New Urbanism" — the push to herd all people into crowded living areas of limited square footage, where they will live, work, and play and abandon the use of cars, becoming dependent only upon government transportation such as buses and trains. (<https://www.cnu.org/>) An example is State Representative Ivy Vann, Town Planning and Urban Design of Peterborough, who is an avowed "New Urbanist". She recently filed several bills that would allow homeowner to chop up their single-family dwellings into 4 units.

<http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/house/members/member.aspx?member=377319>

<https://ivyvanntownplanning.com/>

The roots of New Urbanism date back to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals by which the UN aims to control 'human settlements' and to reclaim the wildlands for animals. (Research "Wildlands Project" <https://nwri.org/the-wildlands-project/>)

"The New Urban Agenda was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 20 October 2016. It was endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly at its sixty-eighth plenary meeting of the seventy-first session on 23 December 2016.

The New Urban Agenda represents a shared vision for a better and more sustainable future. If well-planned and well-managed, urbanization can be a powerful tool for sustainable development for both developing and developed countries."

<https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>

Fantasies and Fallacies of New Urbanism

Social and economic engineering?

<https://patch.com/new-hampshire/bedford-nh/fantasies-fallacies-new-urbanism>

New Urbanism: Same Old Social Engineering

<https://fee.org/articles/new-urbanism-same-old-social-engineering/>

Bolshevism in Russia: Will NH be Any Different?

In 2010, some residents of NH were stunned to receive a huge questionnaire in addition to the usual census. It was called the "American Community Survey". Most did not fill it out because they were justifiably alarmed at some of the questions, such as "How many bedrooms do you have and what are they used for"?

Why would the government need to know that?

If people would read and take heed of past history, they would discover the chilling effects of government takeover of housing.

How the Bolsheviks Handled Housing

http://bedfordresidents.com/bra/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Housing_Revolution_Petrograd-Hubertus_F_Jahn-1917-1920-SOV.pdf

Planning is Socialism's Trademark

In this article, Zeitlin was advocating for socialism.

http://deliberatedumbingdown.com/ddd/wp-content/uploads/2004/02/Zeitlin_Planning_Socialism.pdf

CONCLUSION

Unelected regional councils at the federal and state levels are the mark of Bolshevism whereby control is taken out of the hands of local governance and into a federal- or state-run centralized system where a minimal amount of biased and unaccountable appointees are in charge. Examples of this in NH are Regional Planning Commissions, the HAB, and the Governor's Council on Housing Stability which by their very nature, are prone to corruption and crony capitalism and are often not representative of the values of the majority of voters. They often make decisions that are in direct conflict with what the taxpayers of a town have determined as to how they want their town to develop.

If allowed to go forward, Sununu's legacy will be that he changed the natural demographics of towns in NH, destroyed the "NH Advantage", endangered the state's status of enjoying low unemployment, low crime, low poverty, and being deemed most livable. Instead, he will have helped to turn NH into a welfare state.