

Members present: Councilor Jadczyk, Donna Cuipylo, Kevin Perrier, Councilor Kiam Jamrog-McQuaid, Councilor Denham, Carolyn Cushing, Janna Tetreault, David Boyle (virtual)

Members of the public: Jean Pao Wilson

Link to Shared Drive: [Rent Study Committee Shared Drive](#)

Documents: December 9, 2026 minutes; 01/06/26 Potential Timeline; Research and Report Summaries

The meeting was called to order by Councilor Jamrog-McQuaid at 6:01 PM

1. Public speak

None

2. Approval of December meeting minutes

Motion to approve by Kevin Perrier ('KP'), seconded by Councilor Denham ('KD')
Unanimous vote to approve minutes

3. Deciding on a note-taker (formal committee clerk or rotating responsibility)

Discussion on how to handle notes going forward. Group agreed to rotate note-taking responsibilities going forward, with Donna Cuipylo ('DC') volunteering to take notes for February.

4. Updates on potential guest presentations/Q&As

We were not able to get someone from Boston on such a short turnaround time. Councilor Jamrog-McQuaid ('KJM') is working on getting someone to join in the future. He did make a summary of the research on the shared drive ('Research & Report Summaries'), and suggested the group divvy up readings for future.

Research & Report Summaries

1. Home for Everyone: 2 documents on the share
2. Building Homes, Building Futures
3. Advocates Guide
4. Our Homes Our Future
5. Out of Reach
6. State of Nation's Housing

Question on whether rent stabilization would apply to public housing from DC. Public housing is already rent-controlled. Easthampton doesn't have any federally funded housing, we have state-funded housing. Rent is based on tenants' income.

Discussion on how to engage with documentation on drive. Pull out what makes sense from what other states have done, and what makes sense for Easthampton. What similarities and differences do we have with regard to other communities? We can pull up other research and data too. Utilize assessors records to find out who are the biggest landlords in town, what % of renters rent from them, etc.?

Question from KP- are we recommending that rent control is definitely what we want to propose, or are we more investigating if we want to propose rent control?

David Boyle ('DB')- we should try to do our own thing, not necessarily just follow what Boston has done. Mention that Maura Healey just shared in a newspaper article that she's against rent control. We should do things differently. KJM- original resolution was around exploring the process to do a home rule petition. Our goal isn't to decide whether or not rent control is happening in Easthampton or not, it's about fleshing out all the policy parameters and then presenting it to the community. KP: also there is some real low-hanging fruit available.

KJM- discussion on Maura Healey's statement and how it relates to the proposed 5% cap ballot initiative. Mayor of Boston has critiqued, saying cities and towns should have the option.

DB- has a list of low-hanging fruits. Maybe an out-of-state buyer can't raise rents for 6 months. Would this be an ordinance? Perfection is the enemy of good.

KD: humanizing this is so important. Issue is getting worse.

KP: also important to understand specific examples

Councilor Jadczyk ('FJ'): Tenant's union meets every Thursday, we should go. Also, one of our other main focuses is to help support renters as much as we can. So we should discuss the low-hanging fruit further.

DB: big investors look at rents more from a theoretical perspective. Disparity between what a unit can get in rent, vs what it costs to build or convert the union. It's not necessarily greed, but the replacement cost is too far away from income approach now. Replacement costs are driven by land, zoning. Ultimately we need more units.

Janna Tetrault ('JT'): we are in process of updating zoning, so it's a good time to discuss low-hanging zoning fruit. We can add more things, or people can bring things up to the planning board. Big opportunity to do that too.

5. Brief overview of current zoning efforts in town

The committee moved this agenda item up to be discussed earlier.

Review of AFHP Zoning Recommendations Overview sheet (in Research & Report Summaries packet); currently before the Ordinance Committee. Public input is welcome at this point in the process. We could write a letter, or go to the Ordinance Committee meeting, to provide input.

Discussion of zoning recommendations, can we add ideas? How best to do that strategically? For the next meeting, can we commit to bringing a short-list of ideas? (Kevin, David will do so). Examples of ideas include ADUs, tiny homes, etc. First-floor

residences in highway business zones. KJM: suggest that folks bring ideas to the next meeting.

6. Discussing research, reports & case studies to explore further

Page 2 of Research and Report Summaries document- list of case studies.

Why did Cambridge get rid of rent control? 1996 state legislature made rent control unworkable. Cities can do rent control, but they have to subsidize the difference between that rent and market rent out of their budget.

At this point, the committee started volunteering to do deeper dives into some of the research and case studies compiled on our shared Google Drive, as follows:

Carolyn Cushing ('CC'): NJ, NY

KJM: PolicyLink report

JT: Cambridge MA

DB: St Paul

KD: Portland ME

DC: California

FJ: Oregon

KP: zoning, cost comparisons on energy codes (may impact whether or not we see future multi-family buildings being built in Easthampton in the future). Discussion on how/why Easthampton signed up for climate energy code

7. Timeline

See document: Timeline, prepared by DC

Per state statute, there are two ways to bring forward home rule petition change: citizen initiative, or by city council. For state legislature to approve, they would want to see broad public support (discussion on whether or not a ballot initiative is needed). Seems doable but also we need to investigate further. Council vs citizen approach? Should this include commercial?

Agenda item for next Feb meeting- discuss how we want to update the council in their next Feb meeting.

We can set up listening sessions on our own as a committee. DC liked that it was done on Zoom (in Boston). Listening sessions can be both listening and educational.

8. New business

- Jim Cayon has decided to step back from serving on the committee
- We need to bring more people onto the committee, especially renters
- KJM plans on asking when he attends Tenants Union meeting this Thursday
- Process- send KD (our new Council President) an email stating interest

9. Next meeting: 2/3/26, 6 PM

DC motion to adjourn, FJ seconded

Meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM