

10 Goals for Senior Housing – August 2019

At the 22 August 2019 Planning Board meeting, I was encouraged to create a set of goals that describe “Senior Housing”. I offer the following list of goals as a basis for a discussion at our next meeting toward changing the Zoning Ordinance to permit Senior Housing.

Rich Brown – 28 August 2019

1. Senior Housing is a place where Lyme Residents can live independently and age in place. The residents may be downsizing from their own residence, or may simply be looking to spend less time and effort maintaining a home.
2. Senior Housing developments could include a) houses or apartments with limited organized social activities and few additional services, or b) “independent living units” that might provide meals, transportation, housekeeping, laundry service, social and educational services, and 24-hour emergency call service. Under this definition, Senior Housing would *not* include assisted living, nursing care, or continuing care retirement communities.
3. Senior Housing could have a range of unit sizes, from studio units at perhaps 650sf to one to three bedroom units of 1,400sf or even 1,800sf. Units could, but would not necessarily, include full kitchen and living and dining areas. All units are designed for mobility accessibility, with elevators for multi-floor buildings.
4. Senior Housing developments could provide garages and storage space for each unit, as well as shared-access facilities, such as dining rooms and amenities for socializing, recreation, and fitness.
5. Senior Housing developments may allocate one living unit for a building manager, and may provide additional units for live-in health aides or short-term guest use. This allows residents to have smaller units, knowing that they don’t have to maintain spare bedrooms for when their children, grandchildren, or other friends visit.
6. Senior Housing must be sited to allow easy access to shopping and essential services. Walkability is desirable, but access via major town or state roads is vital.
7. Senior Housing units can be priced at market rates, but should have some units priced at workforce housing levels. [In Grafton County](#), this means a purchase price for a home for a family of four below \$292,500, or a rental unit for a family of three priced below \$1,210/month.
8. Senior Housing must be financially feasible for a commercial developer to undertake the project. There must be sufficient unit density to allow them to cover the costs of land acquisition, architect and engineering fees, construction costs, financing expenses, project management, their own developer fees, and profit.
9. Senior Housing should be permitted as a matter of right, requiring only a Site Plan Review that ensures compliance with national, NH, and local code requirements.
10. Senior Housing designed according to these principles would allow a developer to design, finance, receive approvals and permits, and begin construction within a 12 month period.