



**Eastern Shore Regional Housing Workshop  
Northampton County – January 29, 2020  
Small Group Exercise Results**

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Northampton County, in partnership with the Eastern Shore Regional Housing Coalition, is working to strengthen local capacity and resources to support the expansion of affordable and workforce housing opportunities.

On January 29, 2020, Northampton County hosted public workshops to kick off its local initiative and begin defining local priorities and potential policies to support workforce and affordable housing

Two workshops, sponsored by a capacity building grant, were held concurrently in the Towns of Cape Charles and Exmore. These meetings brought 50 community members together to provide feedback and ideas on how and where to focus affordable housing efforts in the County. This document provides a complete report out of the workshop. Major takeaways from the meeting include:

- There is an overwhelming need for affordable housing and rental opportunities.
- Three major housing issues affecting the Eastern Shore are: lack of affordable housing, lack of available rental properties, and that owners do not have the funds to maintain and repair housing.
- As Northampton considers ways to address housing needs, areas of focus include: providing homeownership education, seminars, and resources, providing funding programs to rehab existing homes, promoting affordable housing, and creating opportunities for new housing developments.
- Everyone can benefit from affordable housing on the Shore, but especially the working class and those with low income.
- Areas most ready for additional housing include Nassawadox, Exmore, Cheriton, and Eastville. Affordable housing should not be targeted “down the necks”.
- There are various critical organizations available to help develop affordable housing.
- The barriers to developing affordable housing on the Eastern Shore, include but are not limited to, lack of infrastructure (sewer and water), cost of development and lack of incentives for developers, and local development regulations.

**Instructions:** In groups of 4-8, discuss each of the questions below. These questions are intended to advance thoughts and conversation about creating more affordable and workforce housing on the Eastern Shore. Select a presenter from your group who will report out your responses. This exercise is intended to take 45-60 minutes.

**What type of housing development is most needed on the Shore? (e.g., single family, duplexes, rental apartments, condos for sale, mobile homes, housing for seniors/elderly, none)**

Cape Charles Group 1	Rental apartments, studio apartments, small single family
Cape Charles Group 2	Rental apartments - all year, condos, single family
Cape Charles Group 3	Rental apartments, duplexes, accessible housing (all of the above except mobile homes)
Cape Charles Group 4	Rental apartments - multifamily, mixed use (townhomes), density restrictions
Cape Charles Group 5	Rentals (based on lower price), duplex rentals (affordable)
Cape Charles Group 6	Single family, duplexes, rental apartments
Exmore Group 1	Single family, duplexes
Exmore Group 2	Affordability is the driving factor more than type but local people would probably prefer single family homes
Exmore Group 3	Multi-family housing, single family purchase, single family rental, affordable rentals, senior/elder housing are all of equal importance
Exmore Group 4	Senior housing where other family members can live, single adult with kids, more 1 or 2 bed apartments (not big apartments)

**Of the options below, what are the top three housing issues impacting the Eastern Shore? Cite any additional comments.**

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|--|---|
| (1) Lack of housing available for purchase | (4) Property owners can't afford to maintain and repair housing |
| (9) Lack of housing available for rent     | (3) Rising housing values                                       |
| (2) Vacant and/or dilapidated housing      | (1) Declining housing value                                     |
| (9) Lack of housing that is affordable     |   |

**Additional Comments:**

Cape Charles Group 3	All of the above are important
Cape Charles Group 4	AirBnB/short term rentals, rising housing values with wage and cost mismatch
Exmore Group 2	There is a lack of housing to purchase or rent that is affordable

Exmore Group 3	Not much is affordable
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**What should the Shore and its partners focus on as they address housing needs?**

- (6) Creating opportunities for new housing developments
- (7) Promoting affordable housing
- (4) Allowing homes with an accessory apartment that can be rented
- (8) Providing funding programs to rehab existing homes
- (3) Addressing blighted properties through property code enforcement, demolition, and other means
- (8) Providing homeownership education, seminars, and resources (e.g., down payment assistance)

**Additional Comments:**

Cape Charles Group 3	Allowing homes with an accessory apartment that can be rented should be countywide
Exmore Group 2	Transitional housing
Exmore Group 3	Short term rentals/ tourism are of concern, would prefer long term, When creating opportunities for new housing developments make them affordable in town or on town edge
Exmore Group 4	Hold landlords responsible for the condition of the property and encourage developers/ landowners to build affordable housing

**Who should benefit from affordable housing on the Eastern Shore?**

Cape Charles Group 1	Low income people, handicapped, the elderly
Cape Charles Group 2	Teachers, labor force, anyone below median income
Cape Charles Group 3	Teachers, police officers, health care workers, local eastern shore residents; elderly, disabled
Cape Charles Group 4	Working people; 40 hours a week
Cape Charles Group 5	Low income, work force
Cape Charles Group 6	Low income, working class families
Exmore Group 1	Families with low income, single parents, the elderly and those with disabilities
Exmore Group 2	Qualified buyers
Exmore Group 3	Everyone; owner occupied- new development for purchase
Exmore Group 4	Anyone making below \$44,816. There should be enough decent housing stock so that anyone can find an affordable place to live.

**Are there areas that are more ready for additional housing units than others? (Please be as specific as possible)**

Cape Charles Group 1	Bayview, Wilson Court, County owned property, Keckwell site (Farmfield west of benders lane), Nottingham Estates (cheapside)
Cape Charles Group 2	On the bus line, Cheriton
Cape Charles Group 3	Areas that are currently zoned for residential in the existing comprehensive plan and areas close to employment centers
Cape Charles Group 4	Nassawadox; have some waste treatment infrastructure, Renovate hospital; change to mixed use, Eastville
Cape Charles Group 5	Cheriton, railroad property
Cape Charles Group 6	Nassawadox, Exmore, Cheriton, Eastville
Exmore Group 1	Lower Northampton County, some farmland should be rezoned for housing
Exmore Group 2	Private development areas in Eastville, Exmore, and lower Northampton County
Exmore Group 3	Nassawadox and Exmore, town or outskirts
Exmore Group 4	Eastville, Cheriton, Machipongo, towns that are near 13, bus stops, improved roads, good cell phone service, street lights, safety, neighborly

**Are there areas that should not be targeted for affordable housing developments?**

Cape Charles Group 1	No
Cape Charles Group 2	Historic District, no room and expensive
Cape Charles Group 3	Areas that are too rural, removed from existing services and areas that do not have access to infrastructure
Cape Charles Group 4	Low lying areas that do not have public transit or infrastructure broadband
Cape Charles Group 5	Anything that takes away sight lines of beach areas
Cape Charles Group 6	Areas need to be prioritized
Exmore Group 1	I feel where there are extra bills such as water and sewage and trash pick up, houses down the neck
Exmore Group 2	Coastal areas
Exmore Group 3	“down the necks”
Exmore Group 4	Down the necks, Jamesville, Wardtown- no tidal flooding, no swamps

**What are the most critical organizations that should play a role in developing housing opportunities on the Eastern Shore?**

Cape Charles Group 1	ANDPC, HUD, Habitat for Humanity, Northampton County, VHA, FHA
Cape Charles Group 2	Social Services, NCPS, BOS, Churches, SIDA, Chamber -advocacy/business
Cape Charles Group 3	Potentially the Habitat for Humanity, DHCD, VHDA, Regional Housing Coalition, affordable housing committee
Cape Charles Group 4	Local government- county and state, regional housing authority, chamber of commerce
Cape Charles Group 5	Within town/county, CC Planning Commission, CC Town Council, CC Town Staff- Planning Department, VHCD, VHDA
Cape Charles Group 6	HUD, New Ravenna
Exmore Group 1	More jobs brought in
Exmore Group 2	PDC, both counties- local community development corps and non profit organizations, financial institution
Exmore Group 3	Counties, supervisors, ANDPC, ES of VHA, Local Planning Commission, State support
Exmore Group 4	Health department should get on landlords to clean up properties, county fire marshal for safe housing, Habitat for Humanity should support funds

**What resources can be used to promote affordable housing that are not being fully utilized already?**

Cape Charles Group 1	Local design professionals and builders
Cape Charles Group 2	Federal and State government, maybe (local) foundations, Department of Housing and Community Development, Va Housing Development Authority
Cape Charles Group 3	The building community
Cape Charles Group 4	Grants and low cost loans, incentives for developers- zoning/ tax breaks
Cape Charles Group 5	Lack of central locations for education resources for housing
Cape Charles Group 6	Educational services on finance
Exmore Group 1	VHDA unit, social media, local newspaper
Exmore Group 2	LNHTC, DHCD, CDBG subdivision

Exmore Group 3	Banks - local community reinvestment, tax breaks for development, community partners of the eastern shore (CPES)
Exmore Group 4	County real estate association- contact large, unused or failed developments, encourage owners to develop smaller units

**Identify the top 3 most significant barriers to developing more affordable housing on the Eastern Shore.**

Cape Charles Group 1	Cost of construction, low profit margin, lack of educated population relative to affordable housing, lack of infrastructure
Cape Charles Group 2	Racial biases, poverty, lack of full time/ year round jobs, resistance to change
Cape Charles Group 3	Lack of roads and infrastructure (mass wells and septic), funding/ incentives for developers/builders, and protecting residents interests in the homes and not absentee owners/landlords
Cape Charles Group 4	Money, Infrastructure, Lack of incentives for developers, Lack of local contractors (skilled trades) and subcontractors
Cape Charles Group 5	Zoning ordinances, for Cape Charles- cost of housing/rentals within this beach community (current market supports high price), high costs for refurbishment of older homes (eg. sewer and water upgrades), lack of incentives to build affordable homes, lack of qualified workforce to build homes and apartments
Cape Charles Group 6	Money, zoning, consensus, no incentives
Exmore Group 1	People set in their ways, not enough opportunities, people are not educated, transportation, less discrimination on people with different backgrounds
Exmore Group 2	Development cost and qualified buyers
Exmore Group 3	Zoning, Data to support funding/grants, tax breaks for developers
Exmore Group 4	Funding, fear of lowering property values, people with the money/means to privately develop housing are not interested in small/affordable

**Do you have anything else you'd like to share?**

Cape Charles Group 1	Employment lacking so affordable is not possible, affordable housing should be accessible to stores and services, towns and county should subsidize, bring in more outside money
Cape Charles Group 2	Housing, jobs, the school system are linked together and the weakness of any one of the three impacts the other. Families do not move because of a lack of jobs, businesses do not come because of the lack of a workforce. Teacher retention is a problem because of the difficulty of the county to compete with other county's salaries. Because of low pay and high cost of housing teachers have.
Cape Charles Group 3	How do we keep momentum moving forward from these engagement meetings?
Cape Charles Group 4	Northampton County population declining, school system, high paying jobs. How do we get the people who actually need the housing to get involved?
Cape Charles Group 5	Need for mixed income developments and not in isolated pockets, this subject is tied to job opportunities, housing, and education quality
Cape Charles Group 6	Better telecommunications, broadband internet
Exmore Group 3	Homelessness not addressed, transitional housing, available workforce, mixed use community, business/ residential combination for liveable community, keep close to town for service ("small development in every town"), remember the groundwater, keep open space, must address rehab and allow elders to age in place
Exmore Group 4	Develop a garden apartment complex/single story of two bedroom apartments with <u>rules</u> of no smoking, alcohol, foul language, no guns. Complex should have a lot of handicap apartments and parking, accommodate grandparents raising grandchildren