



Huntington Township Housing Coalition

WHY WE NEED RENTAL HOUSING IN HUNTINGTON

Fall, 2014

- **Why Does Huntington Need Rental Housing?** Long Island's businesses are leaving, in part, because their workers as well as young people cannot find affordable housing. **This exodus could undermine our economy, our tax base and the value of our homes.**
- **Why Don't People Purchase Rather Than Rent?** Since the collapse of the housing market in 2008, **mortgages are now more difficult to obtain.** And, as the housing market begins to recover, **home ownership is out of reach for many families.**
- **How Much Rental Housing Do We Have?** Only **18% of Long Island's housing consists of rental units, compared with about 35% in Westchester.** Because it is scarce, our rental housing is also expensive.
- **Who Needs Rental Housing?** Rental housing is critical for workers and young people; **most young married couples rent until they can afford to purchase a home.** Rental housing is also important for senior citizens who want to downsize from ownership to rental housing.

Home Ownership is Out of Reach for Two Thirds of Huntington Families

- ◆ **Long Island is the sixth-most expensive place to live in the US.¹**
- ◆ In 2014, the **median sale price of a home in Huntington was \$525,000.²** To be affordable – i.e., for the cost to be 30% of income – **a family would have to earn \$175,000 a year to afford this home.**
- ◆ But **two thirds of Huntington families earn under \$150,000** a year, making the median-priced home unaffordable to them.³
- ◆ This is why Suffolk has one of New York State's highest foreclosure rates.⁴

¹ *Newsday* editorial, "A Dubious Distinction for High-Cost Long Island," March 6, 2014.

² http://www.trulia.com/real_estate/Huntington-New_York/.

³ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/36/3653396.html>

Long Islanders Rents Are Unaffordable

- ◆ **Typical Suffolk County rents are: \$1,309 for a one-bedroom unit and \$1,613 for a two bedroom unit.**⁵
 - In order to afford a two bedroom unit ***a family must earn \$64,520 a year*** (using the standard that 30% of family income should be spent for housing costs.)
 - But about ***one quarter of Suffolk residents earn under \$58,000*** a year and ***16% of Huntington families earn under \$50,000*** meaning that the typical apartment is unaffordable for them.⁶
 - Because Huntington rental apartments are scarce and therefore expensive, ***54.1% of Huntington renters pay “unaffordable” rents that are more than 30% of their income.***⁷

Too Many Long Islanders Struggle with Housing Costs

- ◆ A 2014 study found that ***44% of Long Island homeowners pay more for housing than they can afford***, among the highest rates in New York State.⁸
- ◆ Almost ***200,000 Suffolk workers earn less than \$47,700*** which is the true poverty level for a family of four on Long Island. Many live on the verge of hunger or homelessness due to their high housing costs.⁹
- ◆ ***Middle-income senior citizens have very few choices*** if they want to sell their homes and retire to an affordable rental unit or co-op.

The Lack of Affordable Housing Threatens the Future of Our Economy and Tax Base

- ◆ A 2013 study concluded that ***“the shortage of affordable rental homes is already straining Long Island’s economy,*** and will make it much harder to compete for jobs in the years ahead.”¹⁰
- ◆ *Newsday* reported on June 5th, 2014, ***that Computer Associates was moving their headquarters off LI, joining “a parade of [almost 30 companies] that have done so”***¹¹

⁴ *The New York Times* editorial, “Struggling in Suburbia,” July 7, 2012 and Realty Trac, December 2012.

⁵ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 2014 Fair Market Rental for Suffolk County.

⁶ U.S. Census American Fact Finder, Suffolk County, 2012.

⁷ U. S. Census, American Fact Finder, Huntington, 2012.

⁸ Schachter, Ken, Maura McDermott. “Housing Gap,” *Newsday*, March 11, 2014.

⁹ Welfare to Work Commission of the Suffolk County Legislature. “Struggling in Suburbia: Meeting the Challenges of Poverty in Suffolk County,” 2012

¹⁰ Regional Plan Association, Long Island Community Foundation, Ford Foundation. “Long Island’s Rental Housing Crisis,” September, 2013.

¹¹ Ryan, Joe. “CA Shifts HQ to Manhattan,” *Newsday*, June 5, 2014.

- ◆ Recognizing the threat to the LI economy, the Long Island Association has as one of its 2014 priorities, to “**generate construction of rental units throughout Long Island [and] increase the availability and diversity of the region's housing supply including new affordable and multi-family housing projects.**”¹²
- ◆ ***If the LI economy declines, the value of homes on Long Island will decline as well.***

Our Young People Are Leaving LI in Droves

- ◆ A 2014 study found that **75 percent of young people, ages 20-34, said the lack of affordable housing options on the Island may limit their ability to stay.**¹³
- ◆ Because Long Island lacks affordable rental housing, **there were 15% fewer 25-to-34-year-olds in 2009 than there were in 2000**, a larger decline than in any other part of the New York metropolitan region.¹⁴
- ◆ A 2014 study found “**a huge exodus of young people, especially from mostly white, higher-income Long Island neighborhoods,**” due to the lack of affordable rental housing.¹⁵
- ◆ This brain drain is a threat to the LI economy and a **net loss to taxpayers who spend on average \$300,000 to educate a child**, grades K-12, only to see them leave the Island because, in part, they can't find affordable rental housing here.
- ◆ If the hemorrhaging of young people off Long Island continues, **who will be left here to buy our homes when we want to sell?**

¹² <http://www.longislandassociation.org/lia-priorities.cfm>

¹³ Winslow, Olivia, “Young adult survey: LI needs more housing options, jobs to keep us here,” *Newsday*, June 10, 2014.

¹⁴ The Long Island Index, 2010 report.

¹⁵ Winzenberg, David. “Young, Restless and Getting Out of Here, Fast,” *Long Island Business News*, February, 2014.

Myths and Facts about Affordable Housing

Myths	Facts
1. It is for poor people	Affordable housing is needed by young people, senior citizens and families – most of whom are middle class
2. It is high-rise, low-income projects	These kinds of high-rise projects are no longer being built. Affordable housing can be attractive town houses (e.g., Millennium Hills in Melville)
3. It is ugly, dense and brings down property values because Huntington will look like “Queens.”	There are many examples of beautifully designed, multi-family housing (see the images on the next page.)
4. It will bring renters who are transients.	Most people who own their own homes were once renters. Many young people and seniors want to rent and are committed to their communities.
5. It will add many children to the schools.	Numerous studies have shown that multi-family produces fewer children than single-family ownership units.
6. It will increase property taxes.	Studies show that many affordable housing complexes are tax neutral (no increase in taxes) or tax positive (add to tax revenue.)
7. It is for minorities	Many minorities need affordable housing due to segregation and prejudice in the housing market, but they are only a part of the demand for housing.
8. It is not needed in Huntington. We don't have poor people.	Affordable housing is needed by a range of incomes, from poor (\$40,000) to middle income (\$120,000). All these people live in Huntington.

Images of Affordable Housing Complexes on Long Island¹⁶

What Are We Afraid Of?



The Courtyards at South Hampton



Avalon Court, Melville



Long Island Housing Partnership

¹⁶<https://www.google.com/search?q=Long+Island+Housing+Partnership+images&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ei=GnyQU7yGGtHhsAS16Y>