

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR LYDIA EDWARDS



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE CITY OF BOSTON ASSESSMENT OF FAIR HOUSING

WHEREAS, In 2016 the City of Boston began the process of creating an Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) an analysis of fair housing data, an assessment of fair housing issues and contributing factors, and an identification of fair housing priorities. The City enlisted an AFFH Community Advisory Committee (CAC) and engaged in an extensive 16-month community outreach effort, involving public testimony, fourteen community meetings and a citywide survey generating 2500 residents responses. As the City and CAC partnered to develop the AFH, the new federal administrators at HUD in January 2018 suspended the existing rule, discontinued review of AFHs, and in July 2020 the Trump Administration terminated the 2015 AFFH rule in favor of the rule “Preserving Community and Neighborhood Choice.” Despite the changing HUD requirements, the City agreed to continue to work with the CAC to complete the AFH.

WHEREAS, On June 6, 2020, CAC organized a citywide virtual town hall with an audience of approximately 100 participants to inform residents how their feedback from the Spring/Summer 2017 public meetings were reflected in the planned assessment of fair housing (AFH) report and shared a working draft.

WHEREAS, In September 2020, the culmination of over 3 years working on the AFH, the City and CAC began their penultimate negotiations regarding what would comprise the final AFH report. In December 2020 a small City/CAC Working Group was convened to complete the report by January 2021 to include drafting and finalizing an executive order and reaching agreements regarding the executive summary.

WHEREAS, The City Council voted unanimously on December 9, 2020, in favor of Affirmatively Further Fair Housing (AFFH) in zoning. Where Goal 7.1 of the AFH is amending the zoning code to reflect fair housing and anti-displacement language; and on December 18th the BPDA Board followed suit. On January 13, 2021 the Zoning Commission unanimously approved the amendment clearing the final hurdle for Mayor Walsh’s approval.

WHEREAS, The City has a long history of housing segregation and exclusionary housing practices that have been acknowledged in past Analysis of Impediments. Furthermore, recent studies released in the Summer of 2020 by Suffolk University and the Boston Foundation, MIT and City Life Vida Urbana, and National

Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC) respectively showed existing discrimination against section 8 voucher holders and people with disabilities, disproportionate evictions amongst people of color, and Boston's ranking of 3rd in the nation in income inequality.

WHEREAS, While the adoption of AFFH in the Zoning Code is a victory for fair housing – it will take sustained community activism and commitment by the City to ensure that the principles of affirmatively furthering fair housing are implemented and ingrained in all future city planning. ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

RESOLVED: That in April 2021, Fair Housing Month, the Boston City Council recognizes the 2021 “City of Boston Assessment of Fair Housing” and supports its adoption and implementation of the stated policies and goals.

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