

Accessory Apartments in Agawam?

Public Forums to Consider
an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Bylaw in Agawam



Wednesday, November 6, 2019 at 6 pm
at the Agawam Municipal Golf Course

Wednesday, November 20, 2019 at 10:30 am
at the Agawam Senior Center



TOWN OF
Agawam
MASSACHUSETTS



Catalyst for Regional Progress

PVPC

Kimberly H. Robinson, MUP
Executive Director

Agenda

1. Welcome/Introductions
2. ADU Overview
 - What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)?
 - Types of ADUs
 - Why do ADUs make sense, and why now?
 - Benefits of ADUs
 - Bylaw Considerations
 - Examples of ADU bylaws
2. Public Input – Benefits & Concerns of ADUs
3. VOTE on priority issues

What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?

- Accessory apartment
- Accessory dwelling units
- Accessory Cottage
- Carriage house
- Backyard bungalow
- Garage apartment
- In-law apartment
- Mother-in-law apartment
- Secondary unit



What is an Accessory Apartment?

A secondary (smaller) dwelling unit located within or attached to an existing single-family home, or in an accessory building on the lot of an existing single-family home.



House with Accessory Apartment in Palmer

What an Accessory Apartment is NOT:

- Duplex
- Multi-family housing

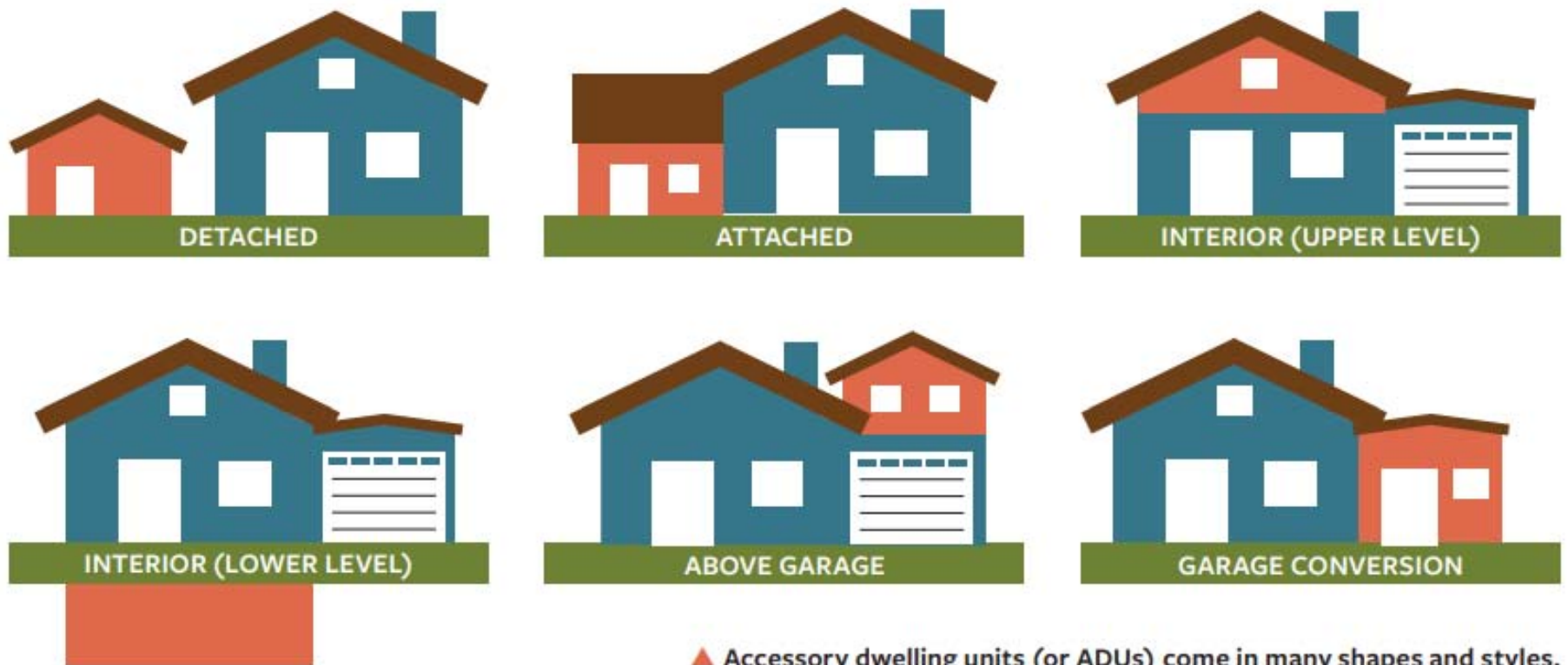


Belchertown building with multiple dwelling units



Belchertown Duplex

Types of Accessory Apartments



Source: AARP – The ABCs of ADUs

Examples: Interior ADUs



Palmer, Massachusetts



Example: Basement ADU (Apartment)



▲ By lifting the house and digging beneath it, designers, engineers and builders turned a two-story, single-family home into a three-story, multifamily residence.

Source: AARP – The ABCs of ADUs

Example: Detached (Garage Apartment) in Northampton



Example: Detached (Garage Apartment)



Example: Detached (Backyard Bungalow)



◀ **A DETACHED ADU** (aka DADU) is a stand-alone home on the same lot as a larger, primary dwelling. Examples include backyard bungalows and converted outbuildings.

*Location: Portland, Oregon |
Photo by David Todd*

Source: AARP – The ABCs of ADUs

Example: Modular Backyard ADU



Why do Accessory Apartments make sense?

- Aging population
- Decreasing average household size
- Increasing prevalence of non-traditional families

Shifting demographics & changing trends in household formation suggests need for more varied, flexible, and responsive housing stock.

Housing size has increased while Household size continues to decrease

YEAR	1950	2017
Average square footage of new single-family homes	983	2,571
Number of people per household	3.8	2.5
Square feet of living space per person	292	1,012

Source: AARP – The ABCs of ADUs

Agawam demographics

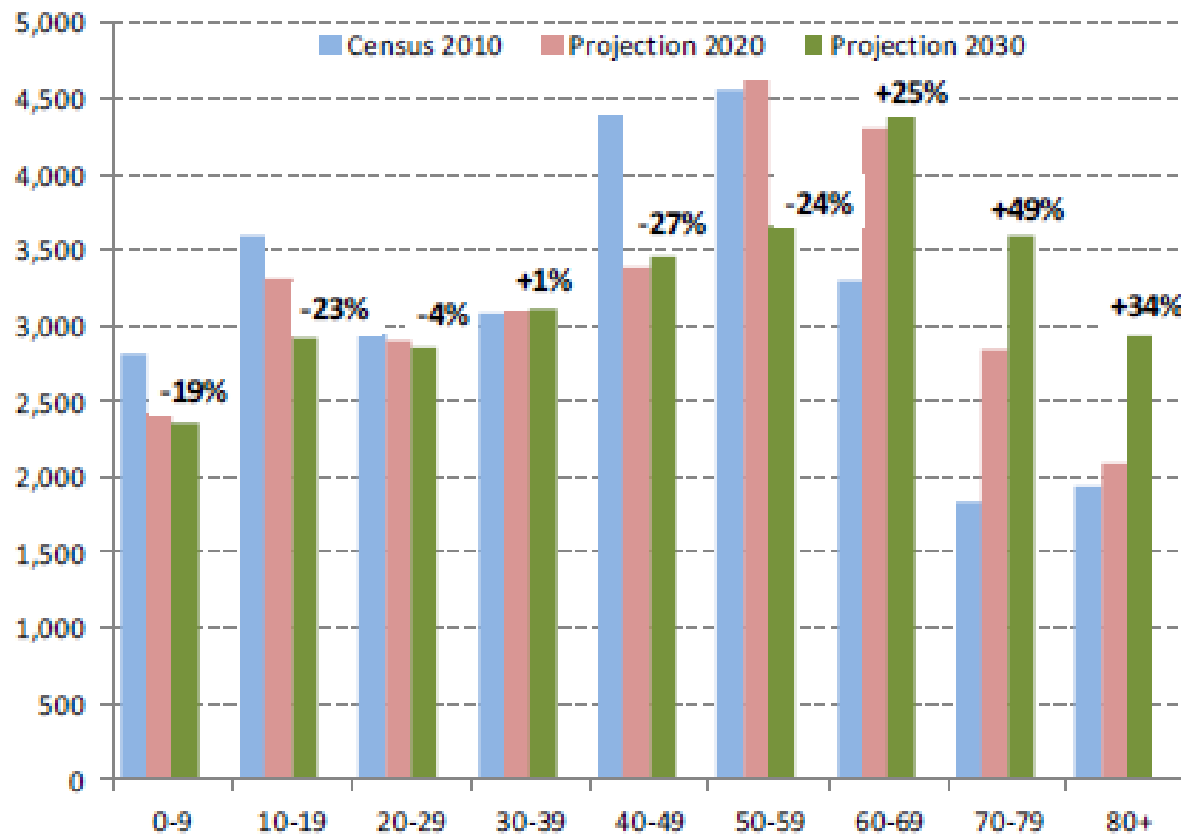
- Average household size is 2.38 people
- 30% of householders live alone
- 19.2% of population is older than 65 (compared to 15.3% statewide)



Source: AARP – The ABCs of ADUs photo by Fredrik Brauer

Age projections 2010-30

Figure 1-4: Age Projections 2010 to 2030 and Percent Change



Source: University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute Population Projections <pep.donahue-institute.org/>

Benefits of Accessory Apartments

Affordable housing option

- Generates **rental income** for current homeowner
- Cost to build is only for the unit, as land is already owned by the homeowner

Housing for people of all ages

- **Empty nesters** can move into the smaller space and rent out their homes
- Offers **entry level housing** choice for young people
- Provides space for **caregivers** or to take care of older or disabled family member

Good for the environment

- Require **fewer resources** than full-sized homes
- Use **less energy** for heating and cooling

Good for the community

- A way to include smaller, relatively affordable housing in established neighborhoods with **minimal visual impact**
- A **dispersed and incremental** way of adding homes to a neighborhood
- Develop a permitting process for **existing (illegal) units**



Reasons for Building ADUs (2018 AARP Home & Community Preference Survey)

- provide a home for a loved one in need of care (84%)
- provide housing for relatives or friends (83%)
- feel safer by having someone living nearby (64%)
- have a space for guests (69%)
- increase the value of their home (67%)
- create a place for a caregiver to stay (60%)
- earn extra income from renting to a tenant (53%)

Benefits for all parties

Homeowner

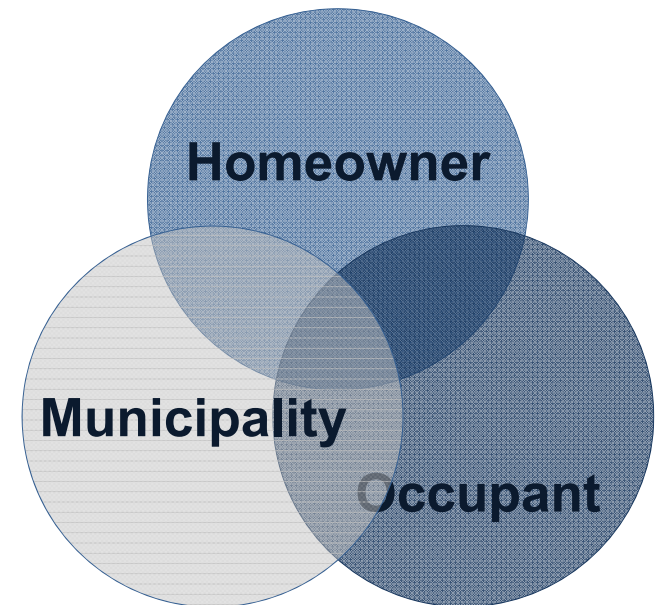
- Earn rental income by transforming extra space into additional revenue
- Improve sense of security
- Separate space for family member/caretaker

Occupant

- Affordable rent in desired location
- Continue to live independently

Municipality

- Increase tax base
- Low-cost housing units without subsidies
- Awareness of existence to town (vs accessory units that are build illegally)
- New housing on existing infrastructure or septic





History of ADU Discussions in Agawam

- **2011 – Comprehensive Zoning Review**
recommends adopting an ADU Bylaw “to provide a lower priced housing alternative with little or no negative impact to the character of the neighborhood”
- **2018 – FY18-22 Housing Production Plan** includes a regulatory strategy to “Adopt an accessory apartment bylaw to expand housing options”

Zoning Considerations

- Attached, internal, detached, garage apartment or conversion
- **Size and height** of units – Generally 350 – 1000 sq ft
- **Appearance** – does it need to match primary dwelling?
- **Entrances and stairs** – Often side or back required
- **Ownership** – Does one unit need to be owner occupied?
- **Parking** – Additional parking required for ADU?
- **Setbacks & requirements** for detached ADUs
- **Short-term rentals** – consider developing a policy



DETACHED-BEDROOM ADU

Examples of ADU Bylaws

Northampton, MA

- By right for attached, Special Permit for detached
- 3 Parking spaces for house and ADU combined
- Homeowner must occupy one of the units (main house or ADU) – notarized letter required at property transfer
- Entrance on the side or rear of the main building
- Gross floor area no more than 900 sq ft
- ADU may be occupied by no more than 3 people
- No short-term rental policy – but must register with Town



Photos credited to Wright Builders with thanks to Northampton

Photos credited to Wright Builders with thanks to Northampton

Examples of ADU Bylaws

Pelham, MA

- Special Permit required & notarized letter from owner saying that he/she will occupy one of the units
- 3 Parking spaces for house and ADU combined & must be screened
- Deviation from requirements allowed to encourage units for disabled & handicapped
- Entrance on the side or rear of the main building

Examples of ADU Bylaws

Lexington, MA

- By right if apartment is located within principal dwelling and no more than 1000 sq ft or 2 bedrooms
- Exterior appearance must maintain the appearance and character of a one-family dwelling with accessory structures. Stairways must be within walls of dwelling.
- Special permit for **Expanded Accessory Apartment** (no more than 40% of size of principle structure) and **Accessory Structure Apartments** (no more than 1000 sq ft)



Mass Municipal Association

Best Practices Recommendations (2019)

- Do not restrict occupancy to relatives of the homeowner.
- Allow simultaneous construction and conversion of a primary dwelling to an ADU.
- Allow for attached or internal ADUs (by right).
- Allow flexibility in parking requirements.
- Establish clear and objective standards around design.
- Consider a square footage cap (not a percentage of the primary dwelling), as this can limit ADUs for older homes that are commonly smaller. MA average is 800-900 square feet.
- Develop a comprehensive short-term rental policy



QUESTIONS?

Public Input

- What do you consider as the main benefits of adopting and ADU bylaw in Agawam? (10 min)
 - *This will help us to develop a Purpose Statement for the Bylaw*
- What are your main concerns? (10 min)
 - *Are there any restrictions that you think should be placed on ADUs, or any areas of town that are of particular concern? Should the Town allow all types of ADUs?*
- VOTE (5 min)



Contact information:

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Resources:

- ***The ABCs of ADUs: A guide to Accessory Dwelling Units and how they expand housing options for people of all ages*** (AARP 2019)
- **Smart Growth/Smart Energy Toolkit Modules – Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)** – Mass.gov - <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/smart-growth-smart-energy-toolkit-modules-accessory-dwelling-units-adu>
- Massachusetts Municipal Association Best Practice Series: Update Accessory Dwelling Unit Bylaws – January 2019, Vol 4, Number 5