

# Voters pass work-force housing law

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YORK — Last week, voters took the first step toward solving the town's affordable housing needs.

A work-force affordable housing article, which passed 4,728 to 3,319, will allow for work-force housing to be built in the town's growth zone.

Patricia Martine, executive director of the York Housing Authority, was happy to hear the ordinance passed.

"I think its optimistic," she said. "It's nice to hear that the people understand there is a need for affordable housing."

Under the ordinance, families whose household income is between 50 and 120 percent of the median family income for the region would qualify. In, 2008 that amounted to between \$37,000 and \$88,000 for a family of four.

Only the York Housing Authority or another nonprofit housing corporation will be allowed to build the housing units. YHA will qualify all applicants and if the owners choose to sell their home, it will be given the first option to purchase it.

The YHA has not found land to build housing units yet, Martine said, and it does not know when its first project would begin.

**The Housing Partnership, a nonprofit affordable housing organization based in Portsmouth, N.H., is interested in creating housing units in York, said Executive Director Dick Ingram.**

**The Housing Partnership is about to break ground on a project in Kennebunk, he said.**

**"Once we get that underway we'll be looking for new opportunities in Maine," he said. "And York would be a great place to do that."**

Selectmen Ted Little, one of the members who drafted the ordinance, said York is on its way to becoming a model community for work-force housing because of this ordinance.

"We are a welcoming community that understands the need for it and all of the good things it can bring," he said. "I think what we need to do now is just look at the ordinance and make it come to life in a great way for the town."