



## Partners in Housing Local Advocacy

In 1994, the Home Builders Association of Winston-Salem and Winston-Salem Regional Association of REALTORS® joined together as advocacy partners- *Partners in Housing*. This powerful alliance of members is united by a shared Government Affairs Director who leads advocacy efforts for the Associations. Through this partnership, Builder and REALTOR® Members have worked to advance public policies and candidates that build strong communities, protect private property rights, and promote a vibrant business environment. NC REALTORS® PAC and NC BUILD PAC are just two of the tools used by the *Partners in Housing* to advocate for issues that affect your business and your clients, along with grant programs that engage the community. Here are just a few issues over the years affected by local advocacy, PAC involvement, and grant programs:

2011 -

- **Defeated RUCO (Rental Unit Certificate of Occupancy):** REALTORS® and Builders supported legislation that limited local governments' ability to enforce rental registration programs.
- **Real Estate Sign Enforcement:** JLC members encouraged members to report any examples of current sign regulations that prohibited the placement of real estate signs and worked with local municipalities to revise and adopt reasonable ordinances.

2012 -

- **Change of Use Committee:** WSRAR and HBAWS formed a task force along with City of Winston-Salem Planning Department to revise and expedite the Change of Use process for buildings in Winston-Salem/Forsyth County. This committee and subsequent process received the 2018 Innovations in Code Award from the International Code Council.

2013 -

- **Clemmons & Lewisville Tree Ordinance:** Members worked with the Planning Board to revise ordinance language to ensure tree ordinances wouldn't have negative effects on the cost of housing.

2016 -

- **Map Act Changes:** These changes prevented NCDOT from holding property in perpetuity without paying the landowner and adjusted the price to be paid to the property owners in a new corridor. Local REALTOR® Party members lobbied our legislators to pass these changes.
- **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs):** Winston-Salem City Council made changes to ADU policy that struck the kinship requirement from the code.

2018-

- **Mold Ordinance:** Members worked to ensure an ordinance attempting to regulate housing code in City of Winston-Salem was not too restrictive by offering clarifying perspectives on the presence of mold in dwelling spaces.

- **UDO-283:** Winston-Salem/Forsyth County zoning text amendment that allowed multifamily residential uses in HB and GO zones in order to provide more housing opportunities in our community passed.
- **Bermuda Run Multifamily Text Amendment:** REALTOR® members blocked the passage of a text amendment that would have limited multifamily residential development to locations above commercial space.
- **System Development Fees:** Due to a change in state legislation, WS/FC Utility changed how water/wastewater meter and tap fees were charged, causing the cost of meters to rise exponentially. REALTOR® and Home Builders Members worked to delay implementation of the fees. Further changes on this issue will have to be made at the state level.
- **Pints and Politics:** WSRAR was awarded a Housing Opportunity Grant through NAR REALTOR® Party resources that allowed us to host elected officials and staff for a reception to discuss housing, economic development, and skilled labor in WS/FC.

#### 2019-

- **UDO-290:** WS/FC Planning Board struck down an ordinance that would regulate the appearance and materials of front-yard fences.
- **Sewer Tie-Ins, WS/FC:** WSRAR partnered with Home Builders to create a task force to revise the sewer tie-in process with City of WS Utilities Department.
- **Pints and Politics:** Event was expanded to Wilkes County and held again in Winston-Salem.
- **Housing Opportunity Grant:** REALTOR® Party was awarded an NAR Grant to hold a REALTOR®/Lender Workshop focused on Local Down Payment Assistance Programs.
- **REALTOR® Party Funds Successful Candidates:** 100% of RPAC-Funded candidates won their local elections (11 candidates supported).
- **WSRAR Merger with Wilkes County Association:** In the first full year of the WSRAR merger with the Wilkes County Association, government affairs services were expanded into the region through grant applications and relationships built between elected officials, community leaders, and REALTOR® members.
- **Construction Career Days:** HBAWS secured a grant from the National Housing Endowment in order to help sponsor 2019 Construction Career Days, which exposed hundreds of high school students to the variety in careers in the trades.

#### 2020-

- **Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Erosion Control Changes:** We are engaging with state elected officials to monitor and analyze changes to local Erosion Control that would result in \$3000-\$5000 increase in average lot prices.
- **Housing Opportunity Grant:** WSRAR was awarded a \$5000 grant to partner with the Wilkes County Economic Development Corporation in order to commission a Housing Needs Assessment Study for Wilkes County.
- **Career Fairs at Local High Schools:** HBAWS members will present career options to local students at 7 different schools in WS/FC.
- **Real Estate and Construction Trades Deemed Essential:** During the early days of the Coronavirus pandemic, we were able to get real estate and construction trades included as essential services that could continue under stay-at-home orders.

**As our Associations continue to grow, we will count on members like YOU to help us achieve our advocacy successes. We appreciate our members who are committed to protecting the dream of homeownership, private property rights, and the real estate industry!**