

# Mayoral candidates Reynolds and Grubb on affordable housing

[The Bethlehem Gadfly](#) [Affordable Housing](#), [Candidates for election](#), [Election](#) May 4, 2021

 *Latest in a series of posts on candidates for election* 

selections from [Christina Tatu, “Q&A with Bethlehem’s Democratic candidates for mayor.” Morning Call, April 22, 2021.](#)

## **Q. What do you think the city can do to address the issue of affordable housing?**

**Grubb:** As a real estate photographer and secretary-treasurer for the affordable housing nonprofit Housing Opportunity Movement, I know this is a difficult task. I recently wrote the guidelines for HOM’s closing assistance program, where qualified first-time homebuyers can receive up to \$12,000 toward their closing costs. The city will need to consider other assistance like this as well as zoning changes to encourage low-to-moderate-income home ownership, and more development of affordable housing. Bethlehem could also allocate some federal COVID relief funds, and consider the use of federal infrastructure funding, which President Joe Biden is proposing, to address the affordable housing need. In addition, funding assistance from already established federally funded CDBG and HOME programs to nonprofits such as Habitat for Humanity must continue. Addressing the many issues with affordable housing won’t be easy, but a multifaceted approach will make a successful start.

**Reynolds:** Housing is the single biggest expenditure for almost every family in Bethlehem. During the past year, I have worked with Councilwoman Grace Crampsie Smith, the mayor’s administration, our nonprofit sector and our community to create policy recommendations and proposals to tackle the issue of affordable housing for our most vulnerable citizens. We need to start by making our Affordable Housing Task Force a permanent, regularly meeting body. We are also creating an Affordable Housing Trust Fund to leverage public dollars with private investment to tackle the issue. As new development occurs in the coming years, we also must insist that it is assisting our mission to develop more affordable housing. Finally, we need to focus on the other monthly financial pressures that squeeze our families. We have always been a city

where everyone could afford to live and we need to continue to be that kind of community.

**The Bethlehem Gadfly**