

Hartford Committee on Housing and Homelessness March 28, 2024 Meeting Minutes (Approved)

Members Present: John Haffner (Chair), Jennifer Kravitz (Vice-Chair) Dan Nott (remote), Brandon Smith (Selectboard Liaison), Lori Hirshfield (staff)

Members Absent: Nancy Trottier, Maggie Burnett

Members of the Public: Laura Simon

1. Call Meeting to Order

John Haffner called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

2. Welcome Brandon Smith Selectboard Liaison

Brandon introduced himself and elaborated on his work history and, notably, his association with the building/housing field in his present job. He invited the committee members to consider going to “BS & Brew” a local building science group which he attends as able. The committee members present introduced themselves to Brandon.

3. HCHH Member to do Meeting Minutes

Jen Kravitz offered to do the minutes for this meeting.

4. Review Order of Agenda

Laura Simon requested we address Item #14 early in the meeting as her time was limited. The Committee agreed do this following public comment.

5. Approve February 15, 2024 Committee Meeting Minutes

There were no changes to the Minutes. Jen Kravitz made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and Brandon Smith seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

6. Public Comment

Laura Simon explained that she is interested in creating a property for farming with some housing to accommodate farmers. She wondered if changing the regulations limiting the use of RVs would be an option to decrease the need to provide expensive infrastructure.

14. Continue to discuss solutions for the unhoused community (e.g., RV ordinance and other recommendations from Hartford Ad-hoc Committee on Emergency Shelters)

There was discussion of the history of the proposed RV ordinance and other recommendations from the Hartford Ad-hoc Committee on Emergency Shelters. Lori Hirshfield explained that the

proposal was discussed informally at a few Town Planning Commission meetings, but unresolved questions remained. The HCHH determined that a more appropriate avenue for Laura's project might be to explore development of a campground- type system for infrastructure and the use of "tiny houses" as ADUs. Brandon Smith posited ideas for contacts to consider tiny home construction and "incinerating toilets". Funding sources were also discussed including VHIP grants or loans through the Windsor-Windham Housing Trust.

Although an option for the HCHH, pursuing the Emergency Shelter Zoning Ordinance was not deemed a priority for the committee at this time.

7. Reschedule April 18th HCHH Meeting

Lori Hirshfield will find out if a meeting space is available for April 11th.

8. HomeShare Public Information Session at Bugbee Senior Center on May 8th

John Haffner has arranged a HomeShare VT informational session at the Bugbee Center at 1 PM. HomeShare VT will provide the content, the Bugbee Senior Center will provide the venue and HCHH will promote the event. Dan Nott will put together a flyer with information from Shari Borzekowski of HomeShare VT.

9. Housing Development Program Update/Home Creators Expo - June 1st at HACTC Town

John Haffner reported that this second annual Expo will be held again at the Hartford Area Career and Technical Center on June 1st and is a collaboration of Two Rivers-Ottaqueechee, the Town of Hartford, Vital Communities and HACTC. They are recruiting vendors and material suppliers. This HCHH will promote and support the Expo. Lori Hirshfield pointed out that this also is an opportunity to develop a list of technical advisors for the Housing Development Program.

10. Town Plan Housing Chapter Update

Nothing to report at this time.

11. Town Plan Economic Development Update & Select HCHH Member for Planning Commission

Lori Hirshfield reported on the progress of Better City consultants. They have conducted focus groups, a community meeting, and individual interviews to assist in updating the economic Development Chapter of the Town Plan. A revised survey is available on the town website for residents. The consultant group will summarize the information, set goals, develop and strategies and an action plan for the next 5-8 year. She noted that the consultants have proven strong at implementing plans in other communities. A liaison from this committee is needed to attend the Planning Commission Ad Hoc Economic Development Steering Committee meetings for the next 4 months. Jen Kravitz volunteered to attend.

12. Discussion on Hartford Rental Registry

Deferred to the April meeting due to time constraints.

13. Update on Town Website Page on Housing

Dan Nott suggested the site include three main topics being: 1) New development or plans being implemented to keep current on the housing improvements year by year. 2) Information on ADUs 3) HomeShare Vermont information. There was discussion on the need for easy access to information. Dan will continue to spearhead this. He will work with the Planning and Development Department's Administrative Assistant.

15. News from Committee Members

Brandon Smith will be away and unable to attend the June 1 Expo.

16. Adjourn Meeting

Jen Kravitz made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Brandon Smith seconded it. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting ended at 7:55 PM.

Committee Members as of 11-16-2023

John Haffner, Chair (through 12/12/2024)
Jennifer Kravitz, Vice Chair (through 4/03/2025)
Dan Nott (through 11/28/2024)
Nancy Trottier (through 9/18/2025)
Maggie Burnett (through 12/11/25)
Brandon Smith, Selectboard Liaison
Vacant Position
Lori Hirshfield, Staff Liaison