

Hartford Committee on Housing and Homelessness

July 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes Approved

Members Present: John Haffner (Chair), Jennifer Kravitz (Vice-Chair), Brandon Smith, Nancy Trottier, Maggie Burnett, Lori Hirshfield (staff), Lexi Webster (staff)

1. Call Meeting to Order

John Haffner called the meeting to order at 6:00PM.

2. Review Order of Agenda

There were no changes to the order of the agenda.

3. Public Comment

There was no public comment. Members of the public in attendance were Crystal Pearson-Moses and Angy Zhang.

4. Approve June Meeting Minutes

There were no changes to the minutes. Maggie Burnett made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and Nancy Trottier seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Continue to Discuss Solutions for the Unhoused Community

Lexi Webster provided multiple dates for the screening of *Just Getting By* based on responses from committee members. It was determined that Lexi will confirm a viewing location for Sunday, September 21 at 4PM to show the documentary and provide an opportunity for discussion after the showing.

6. Hartford's Big Little Build: Small-scale Housing Pilot Project

John introduced Crystal Pearson-Moses, a member of the Hartford Business Revolving Loan Fund Committee (HBRLF) and a community member who has navigated the ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) building process. John provided two hypothetical ADU build scenarios to illustrate potential HBRLF and VCDP financial assistance.

Crystal utilized a VHIP (Vermont Housing Improvement Program) grant that required a 5-year covenant regarding the rental rate that can be charged.

Crystal mentioned items that people should consider before starting the ADU process:

- What it means to be a landlord
- Why do you want to build an ADU?
- How can an ADU add value/be used in other ways in the future
- Understand tax implications

Crystal's challenges in her own experience:

- Finding a reputable/available contractor
- Finding suitable tenants (eviction can be difficult in VT)

- The permitting and inspection process
- Knowing who to involve from the Town
- Different regulations in VT and NH
- Impact of making changes during the process

Positives that Crystal has gained from the process:

- Being able to help someone who needs housing
- Adding value to her home
- Setting an example for what's possible with small-scale development
- Long-term revenue and possibilities for aging in place

Financial considerations around ADUs that the group discussed:

- Grants/loans can set rental amounts
- \$350/\$400 sq. ft. to build detached structure is a rough estimate of what to expect, it can be less to renovate an existing structure
- Tax assessments/valuation changes for improvements
- VHIP is a competitive grant process

HCHH discusses what a pilot program might include:

- Community discussions to find interested parties
- Illustrate the connection between housing and economic development
- Applicant building plan (similar to a business plan)
- Willingness of HBRLF to work on a case-by-case basis
- ADU roadmap
- Volunteer liaison/support group to provide support during the process

Next Steps

- Survey employers for workforce housing needs
- Create word of mouth/spark interest
- Create roadmap
- ADU blurb on listservs

7. News from Committee Members

The committee discussed takeaways from the LaValley Modular Housing Facility tour. There is potential for multiple Upper Valley communities to invest in small modular units for workforce/affordable housing via a bulk purchase agreement. Crystal mentioned looking into Amish cabins/sheds. Nancy mentioned the number of large empty houses that could be renovated and used for multi-family housing.

The committee agreed that the rental survey should be marketed one more time before the August deadline.

8. Adjourn Meeting

Nancy Trottier made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Jen Kravitz seconded it. The motion was approved unanimously and the meeting ended at 7:37PM.

Committee Members

John Haffner, Chair (through 1/6/2027)

Jennifer Kravitz, Vice Chair (through 4/28/2027)

Dan Nott (through 11/25/2026)

Nancy Trottier (through 9/18/2025)

Maggie Burnett (through 12/11/25)

Brandon Smith, Selectboard Liaison (through 3/1/26)

1 vacant Committee Member Position

Lori Hirshfield, Staff Liaison

Lexi Webster, Staff Liaison