

Hartford Committee on Housing and Homelessness

August 14, 2025 Meeting Notes Approved

Members Present: John Haffner (Chair), Jennifer Kravitz (Vice-Chair), Nancy Trottier, Lexi Webster (staff)

1. Call Meeting to Order

John Haffner called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM. Given that there was no quorum and the meeting was primarily informational, the meeting proceeded and no decisions were made or voted on.

2. Review Order of Agenda

Lexi added an item to the agenda to discuss HCHH's FY27 budget request before news from committee members.

3. Public Comment

Kendra LaRoche from the Special Needs Support Center and Lina Menard from Niche Consulting were in attendance and introduced themselves.

4. Approve July Meeting Minutes

Since there were not enough members in attendance for a quorum, the July meeting minutes were not approved.

5. Meet with Staff/Representatives from the Special Needs Support Center on Housing and the Disability Community

Kendra LaRoche, the Executive Director of the Special Needs Support Center (SNSC), presented a short slideshow on the need for accessible housing. The demand for accessible housing regularly outpaces the supply in the current market. Kendra also noted that those with disabilities often earn significantly less than the general population and have higher rates of poverty as a result.

Committee members had questions on what entities or people are in charge of enforcing ADA compliance laws in housing and whether that enforcement is at the local, state, or federal level. Kendra also noted that SNSC is partnering with a public policy class at Dartmouth College during the fall semester, and that the ADA compliance enforcement topic was a great question that the class could research and come back to HCHH later and present the results.

6. Meet with Lina Menard from Niche Consulting on ADUs and Tiny Homes

Lina Menard, Founder of Niche Consulting, introduced herself more in-depth and provided information on her background in planning, development, designing, and building. She has a passion for "building smaller in shared spaces". In addition to her own professional and academic interests, she also has built and lived in ADUs, tiny homes, and cottage courts.

Lina attended the Home Creators expo event as a resource in 2023 when she was living in Vermont. Although she now lives on the U.S. west coast, she is still very interested in making an

impact in Vermont and collaborating with the committee. She offered that she provides a variety of courses on ADUs, tiny home living, downsizing, and organizing.

7. Final Outreach for Rental Inventory Survey and Plan for Selectboard Update

Lexi provided an update that the survey has received 40 responses from renters and 27 responses from property owners. She is going to have JD, the Town's Communications and Media Specialist, broadcast the survey one more time on the Town's newsletter and on the Town's website.

John will be going to the Selectboard on 9/30 to give an update on the survey results and it was discussed that he and Lexi will connect prior to that to come up with a summary of the findings.

8. Continue to Discuss Solutions for the Unhoused Community

- Update on screening location & discussion of potential panelists

Lexi provided an update that the *Just Getting By* screening would be held at the Bugbee Senior Center on Sunday, 9/21 at 4:00 PM. It was discussed that Lexi could serve in a semi-moderator role after the film during the discussion portion of the event, but the members did not want to have an official panel of speakers – they prefer the discussion to be more of a public forum where anyone can speak with questions, answers, and experiences.

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

Lexi discussed her handout around the pilot project, including funding considerations, the two options for funding, and timeline and rollout of the project.

10. Co-create Agenda for September Work Planning Meeting

At this time, the members felt it was not necessary to have a future meeting devoted to work planning, but John brought up that a big item coming forth to the Town was the Coolidge Hotel Redevelopment project and the projected housing it will provide.

11. Budget for HCHH for FY27

Lexi discussed that the Town is working on budget requests for FY27. Members discussed that funds could be used to possibly sponsor an ADU Considerations course for the public.

12. News from Committee Members

Nancy announced that she is working at the Upper Valley Haven as a shelter staff member.

13. Adjourn Meeting

The meeting ended at 7:45 PM.

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)

Rob Hebert II (through 7/13/2027)

1 vacant Committee Member Position

Lori Hirshfield, Staff Liaison

Lexi Webster, Staff Liaison