

TOWN OF ESSEX HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 6, 2024

Housing Commission (HC): Anna Brouillette (Chair), Lauren Ressue (Vice Chair), Carolyn Ellenberger (Clerk), Rupesh Asher, Deb Flannery (absent)

Administration and Staff: Kent Johnson (Town Planner)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Anna called the meeting to order at 3:06 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

There were no changes to the agenda.

3. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

There were no members of the public present.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lauren motioned to approve the July 2, 2024 meeting minutes, Carolyn seconded. The motion passed 3 – 0.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Development Review – 53 Center Road

- i. The Housing Commission has an opportunity to provide comments and recommendations on the 53 Center Road development proposal from Sterling Homes, to be included in a report presented to the Planning Commission; the HC is not required to provide recommendations
- ii. The Planned Unit Development (PUD) includes 26 single family homes and 4 duplexes; the plan does not include affordable housing
- iii. The plan is current at sketch level, which is the best stage to provide recommendations; the plan will be reviewed at the Sept 12 Planning Commission meeting

- iv. The HC agreed to consider recommendations based on existing housing regulations; recommendations could potentially include those on types of homes, amenities, open space
 - v. Action: Lauren will lead the effort to prepare recommendations and will meet with Anna to discuss ideas to include; recommendations will be presented, discussed, and voted on at Sept 3 HC meeting
- b. Stakeholder Meeting Update: Essex Municipal Site at Upper Main Street
 - i. Anna attended meeting on August 1 at which Stantec provided overview
 - ii. Members of various Town of Essex commissions had an opportunity to provide feedback; suggestions included a desire to include housing, types of buildings/materials, and co-housing services (e.g., library, childcare)
 - iii. Anna requested an update on The Essex Experience workforce housing proposal at the Sept 3 HC meeting
- c. Work Plan Updates from Members
 - i. Resource Website Development
 - 1. Carolyn requested clarification on scope of resources to include in housing resources webpages
 - 2. HC agreed to focus on a curated list that doesn't duplicate existing resources (e.g., State of Vermont Housing Resources website)
 - 3. Consider other ways to reach intended audience, e.g., Front Porch Forum, Essex Town Facebook, monthly Essex newsletter
 - 4. Carolyn and Lauren will continue to work on list of resources to include
 - ii. Housing and Demographic Data Review
 - 1. Anna and Lauren met and discussed what data are available and will continue to explore and provide updates at future meetings.
- d. Work Plan Discussion: Assign additional roles/responsibilities to support moving work plan forward outside of meetings
 - i. There was no discussion of additional work plan items.

- e. Other Business
 - i. Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission
 - 1. Kent confirmed that HC doesn't need to reach out
 - 2. Suggestions for HC included:
 - a. Connect with Jericho's HC, which is active and may have shared issues; the HC discussed reaching out to other HCs in Chittenden County and Vermont; Action: Anna will reach out to Jericho HC
 - b. A state-level housing assessment is coming
 - c. Consider hiring a consultant to do other studies, make recommendations, needs assessments; funding requests would need to be approved by Selectboard
 - d. Given the large amount of information on housing available, the HC could serve a purpose by being an expert on what info is available and provide as needed to Selectboard and public
 - ii. Selectboard will want to receive an update from the HC in the near future
 - iii. Explore Essex Fall Festival
 - 1. Action: the HC will consider opportunities to be involved in the festival and to connect with the public

6. MEMBER REPORTS

There were no member reports.

7. ADJOURN

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:27 PM.

Minutes submitted by Carolyn Ellenberger, Clerk.