

TOWN OF ESSEX HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 4, 2025

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

Administration and Staff: Kent Johnson (Town Planner)

- Call to Order
- Agenda additions/changes
- Public to be heard
- Approval of Minutes
 - Approve minutes from February 4, 2025 meeting
- Business Items
 - Town Showcase Reflections
 - Continue Review of Housing Commission Work Plan for 2025
 - Update on Act 181 and Future Land Use Map Focus Group
 - Member and Staff Updates
- Reading File
 - Off-Site Construction Opportunities
- Adjourn

1. CALL TO ORDER

Anna called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

No additions or changes to the agenda were requested.

3. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

No members of the public were present.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Lauren motioned to approve the February 4, 2024 meeting minutes; Carolyn seconded. The motion passed 3 – 0.

5. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

- a. Town Showcase Reflections
 - i. Anna and Lauren represented the Housing Commission at the March 3 Town Showcase, providing resources and QR code to Housing Resources website and engaging in discussion with the public
 - ii. Learnings for the future include having information on how members of the public can contact the Housing Commission (e.g., email address)
 - iii. Questions/comments from the public included concerns about affordability and ease of modifying houses/properties, in particular prohibitive zoning regulations and aging in place modifications/accessory dwellings for additional family members
 - iv. The Essex Legislative delegation is interested in having a conversation with the Housing Commission about modular homes
- b. Continue Review of Housing Commission Work Plan for 2025
 - i. Members completed review and update of 2025 Work Plan
 - ii. Review of 2025 Work Plan ([link](#)) and Ongoing Activities List ([link](#)) will be a standing agenda item at Housing Commission meetings to track progress
 - iii. **Action:** Point Person assigned to each activity to add timelines to Work Plan
- c. Update on Act 181 and Future Land Use Map Focus Group
 - i. Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission is creating a work group focused on Act 181 and Future Land Use Map
 - ii. Land use map will be used for state designations for Act 250 exemptions
 - iii. Anna will participate in the group and update Housing Commission at April's meeting
- d. Member and Staff Updates
 - i. Kent is not aware of any applications for vacant Housing Commission seat; **Action:** Ken to determine whether Housing Commission can post announcement of vacancy on Front Porch Forum

- ii. Kent has not received an update on the submitted budget proposal; **Action:** Kent will determine status of budget request
- iii. CVOEO grant was not pursued due to short turn-around time and no plans for an appropriate project at this time
- iv. Consider discussing with members of the Essex Police the homelessness trends over time in Essex
- v. No further input from the Housing Commission on the Upper Main St project is needed currently
- vi. The Essex Planning Commission is developing their workplan, to be discussed at March 13 meeting
- vii. No list of housing related waivers exists
- viii. **Action:** Kent to provide draft of Zoning Regulations

6. Reading File

- a. Off-Site Construction Opportunities
 - i. Document assesses use of factory approach to build houses and provides potential next steps
 - ii. Kent suggested that Housing Commission could look at Essex Town regulations to determine any prohibitions to this type of housing and writing a letter to those who commissioned the report in support of off-site construction and Essex Town involvement (consider Town's manufacturing space and Tech Center)
 - iii. **Action:** Housing Commission members to review report and further discuss opportunities

7. ADJOURN

Lauren motioned to adjourn the meeting. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:21 PM.

Minutes submitted by Carolyn Ellenberger, Clerk.