

# TOWN OF ESSEX HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

**Tuesday, August 5, 2025**

**Housing Commission (HC):** Anna Brouillette (Chair), Lauren Ressue (Vice Chair), Carolyn Ellenberger (Clerk); Noah Detzer; 1 vacant seat

**Administration and Staff:** Kent Johnson (Town Planner); Brittany McGregor (Town of Essex)

**Guests:** Cheryl Van Epps

- Call to Order
- Agenda additions/changes
- Public to be Heard
- Approval of Minutes
  - Approve minutes from July 1, 2025 meeting
- Business Items
  - Housing Needs Assessment Update Discussion
  - Review of Materials in Reading File
- Member and Staff Updates
- Reading File
  - DHCD Update on Housing in Vermont - CCRPC
  - CCRPC - Future Land Use Map Version 2.0
- Adjourn

## **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Anna called the meeting to order at 3:02 PM.

## **2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

## **3. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

Cheryl Van Epps, a 21 year resident of Essex Town, was present.

#### **4. APPROVE MINUTES FROM JULY 1, 2025 MEETING**

The minutes from the July 1, 2025 meeting were approved.

#### **5. BUSINESS ITEMS**

##### **a. Housing Needs Assessment Update Discussion**

- i. In considering an update to the Essex HNA, Lauren and Carolyn met and discussed the following points:
  - Who is the audience for the Essex HNA? HC needs to better understand the audience, what role the HNA serves, and what questions need to be answered by it
  - Who used/is using the HNA and/or is asking for an updated version?
  - If the HNA is updated, considering also including an improvement plan
  - Are the Essex goals different from CCRPC goals? If not, just use CCRPC HNA?
  - Consider conducting surveys first to understand sentiment and existing; then address concerns and questions in an updated HNA
  - Consider a short 1-pager or infographic in addition to or instead of an updated HNA, depending on the need; Lauren is currently working on a handout
  - Consider conducting a literature review
  - Consider the health and health equity impacts of new or revised policies and programs related to housing
- ii. It was noted that the Essex Selectboard amended their set of Values and Goals originally adopted in 2024 to add a new goal of “Prioritize housing needs by identifying gaps in availability and infrastructure and take steps to fill those gaps.” **Action:** Brittany will reach out to Selectboard to understand how they will achieve the new goal, its impact on HC, and what role we may play; is an updated HNA expected to support this goal?
- iii. Cheryl noted that many of the homes being built are not affordable and don’t meet the current need
- iv. Consider whether updated recommendations are needed, either in addition to or separate from an updated HNA; include both benefits and costs of the recommendations

- v. HC members agreed that a go-to, brief communications tool with data and trends (e.g., an infographic or other short document) is needed
  - vi. Next month's meeting will review feedback from the Selectboard and discuss next steps with regard to the HNA update and a brief communication tool
- b. Review of Materials in Reading File
- i. DHCD Update on Housing in Vermont
    - 1. Consistent with previously available information; can be used to inform Housing Needs Assessment update
  - ii. Future Land Use Map Version 2.0
    - 1. No changes were made for Essex

## **6. MEMBER AND STAFF UPDATES**

- a. One seat remains open on the Housing Commission, vacated by Rupesh; **Action**: HC members to promote vacancy to recruit new member
- b. Noah received marked up Zoning Regulations word document and continues to highlight recommended changes
- c. Noah identified upcoming Essex Community Day (Sept 20) as key upcoming tabling opportunity; Brittany registered the Housing Commission for the event; at next month's meeting, HC members will coordinate details and materials

## **7. ADJOURN**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:57 PM.

Minutes submitted by Carolyn Ellenberger, Clerk.