

TOWN OF ESSEX HOUSING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 2, 2025

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

Administration and Staff: 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 August 5, 2025 meeting
- Business Items
 - Housing Needs Assessment Discussion and Plan to Loop in Selectboard (continued)
 - Prepare for tabling event at Essex Community Day (arrange details and materials)
- Member and Staff Updates
- Adjourn

1. CALL TO ORDER

Anna called the meeting to order at 3:03 PM.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES

Anna requested to add an agenda item on meeting scheduling.

3. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

Cheryl Van Epps, Essex Town resident, was present.

4. APPROVE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 5, 2025 MEETING

The minutes from the August 5, 2025 meeting were approved.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

- a. Housing Needs Assessment Discussion and Plan to Loop in Selectboard (continued)
 - i. Brittany spoke with Karen, Essex Town Deputy Manager, who suggested that a member(s) of the Housing Commission join an upcoming Selectboard meeting to discuss their expectations and ideas; the HC was requested to submit questions in advance of the meeting for consideration by the Selectboard
 - ii. **Action:** Brittany to request a discussion with the HC be added to the October 6 Selectboard meeting; Anna, Lauren, and Carolyn plan to attend
 - iii. Main discussion points will include 1) learning about the Selectboard's new housing goal and how the HC can partner to support; and 2) Whether an updated Essex Town Housing Needs Assessment is needed
 - iv. **Action:** Anna will assemble and submit questions to the Selectboard in advance of Oct 6 meeting; HC members please send questions to Anna
 - v. If available, the 1-pager/infographic could be provided to the Selectboard as a pre-read
 - vi. If a HNA update is needed, budget request should be made in October for the annual financial planning cycle
- b. Prepare for Tabling Event at Essex Community Day (arrange details and materials)
 - i. Essex Community Day will be held September 20, 2025
 - ii. Lauren presented a draft 1-pager that could be available on the table at the event
 - 1. Suggestions for the 1-pager included adding Essex Town data to make it more relevant to Essex and adding potential actions/steps that readers can take, e.g., speaking with local elected officials
 - 2. **Action:** Lauren to share updated 1-pager draft with HC members for offline review
 - iii. A second flyer advertising the vacant HC seat could be made available at the event
 - iv. At prior tabling events, HC members have received questions about what housing is currently under development in Essex;

those inquiring could be shown the Essex Town website page that lists current and past 6 months of Development Applications (Essex Town Website / Zoning / Current Development Applications); **Action:** add standing agenda item to HC meetings for Brittany to review Development Proposals

- v. **Action:** Anna to propose a tabling schedule (Anna, Noah, Lauren) for the Sept 20 event
- vi. **Action:** Anna will provide table and tent for Sept 20 event
- vii. Attendees discussed how to encourage developers to include affordable housing option; HC is encouraged to identify incentives and present to the Planning Commission, which is currently discussing zoning changes (recommendations can be made over the next 4-6 months); **Action:** Anna to contact CCRPC for information on successful strategies for incentivizing developers to create more affordable housing

c. Meeting scheduling time

- i. HC members considered whether the current meeting time (first Tuesday of the month, 3:00 - 4:30 PM) remains feasible given the return to the office requirement for State of Vermont employees
- ii. HC members agreed to keep current day and time and evaluate once new schedules are established and Noah can join the conversation, and the new HC member is recruited; a potential alternate day/time was identified, if needed: 4th Monday of the month, 5:30 PM

6. **MEMBER AND STAFF UPDATES**

There were no member and staff updates.

7. **ADJOURN**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:46 PM.

Minutes submitted by Carolyn Ellenberger, Clerk.