

## Jan 16, 2025 | 📅 Waterbury Area Housing Task Force

Attendees: Joe Camaratta, Alyssa Johnson, Peter Hack, Skip Flanders, Em Lamson, Chris Balzano, Eliza Novick-Smith (late)

Meeting commenced 6:02pm

Joe Camaratta provided an overview of the agenda with items to review. Chris made a motion to approve the December minutes and Peter seconded the motion.

Alyssa provided an update from the selectboard. The selectboard is going over the 2025 budget plan and has provided a line item for an additional \$75,000 for the Housing Trust Fund. Alyssa mentioned that the budget is posted on the website if anyone has any comments regarding the town budget.

Owen provided an update on Revitalizing Waterbury.

Skip provides EFUD update. Joe to attend meeting to explain housing resources.

Discussion of 2025 Objectives.

- Consensus to put apply for grants on back burned, we have enough money for now.
- Consensus to limit scope of partnership w/ HH→ support.

### **Objective 1: Continue to support for small scale development (1 - 4 units)**

The second goal for the task force calls for new housing in areas that minimize the need for infrastructure improvement (also known as “infill development”).

This goal was supported in 2024 by passing of the Unified Development Bylaws (Phase #1), establishment and funding of a Housing Trust Fund, and securing a grant for a workshop series to educate and empower individual property owners to increase housing capacity. The Task Force will build on these successes through the following actions:

1. Hold 4 workshops in an education series called *Building Better Waterbury: Homeowner Solutions for Housing Growth and Resilient Living* targeted to individual property owners.
2. Develop at least one program for the Housing Trust to increase availability of affordable housing in the town.
3. Support Habitat For Humanity with site selection for an initial project (duplex) in Waterbury (this supports item 8 of the 2018 Municipal Plan Housing Actions)

### **Objective 2: Support town's efforts on mid (5 - 20 units) and large (20+ units) development**

The task force can assist the town in expanding housing capacity by supporting the development of larger projects through the following actions:

1. Conduct a focus group with (local) developers to discuss how to initiate and accelerate new development projects, and recommend incentives for developers for creating long term housing units.
2. Engage local employers in efforts to expand workforce housing through solutions that aim to increase the overall supply of affordable housing in the community.
3. Continue to engage other Vermont Housing Committees to identify best practices that can be implemented in Waterbury.

**Objective 3: Assess the continued development and allocation of the town's housing**

Longer-term planning for investment and actions to support additional housing, and measuring impact of existing initiatives will be supported as follows:

1. Support Planning Commission to develop housing chapter of updated town plan.
2. Track progress with applications and analyze data from town's rental registry.

**Motion made by Em, second by Peter, to adopted Draft Objectives as modified. Approved by unanimous vote.**

Cheryl presents update on Educational Series.

Workshop #1 Agenda Reviewed

- Mike, Neal and TBA Fire Inspector to present on Zoning Application, DRB Process, Fire Safety & Inspections.
- Mike & Neal preparing navigator website.
- Will be Zoom option.

First workshop will occur before next meeting. Cheryl to finalize presentation, will request email feedback with window, approved to make decisions with feedback in time parameters.

Review and give feedback on key messages document that will guide future communications.

Review and give feedback on press release draft.

To be finalized by Monday, any feedback to Cheryl before then.

Workshop #2 review

- Brainstormed people to come to present/speak/panel discussion

Workshop #3 review

- Owen to reach out to lenders, looking into possible state partners

#### Workshop #4 review

- Create a list of landlords who can be on a panel

#### Discussion of Housing Trust Fund

Downstreet cannot provide enforcement support, but can administer the funds and disbursement.

- Enforcement rules/mechanisms need to be simple.

Owen gives an overview of how VHIP program works.

- 10 year forgivable loan and 5 year grant program discussed
- 20% match requirement
- Disbursement schedule and reporting requirements
- Reach out first to folks in Waterbury who applied to exhausted VHIP program.
- \$30-50k total loan amount.

Need a member to replace Maddy Young--preference for someone who is a renter

- Joe to work with Karen about posting.

Adjourn at 7:41 p.m.