

Vermont Council on Housing and Homelessness

Subcommittee on Housing Development

Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams
Thursday, October 12, 2023 3:00pm – 4:00pm

MEETING MINUTES

ATTENDEES

Council Members: Maura Collins (VHFA), Alex Farrell (DHCD), Kathleen Berk (VSHA), Gus Seelig (VHCB), Zak Hale (Hale Resources)

Guest: Leslie Black-Plumeau (VHFA)

Public: none

AGENDA REVIEW, ROLL CALL, APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Meeting was called to order at 3:04pm
- Minutes were not approved; tabled until next meeting

PUBLIC COMMENT

- No public comment
- Public comment closed at 3:06

INVENTORY/PIPELINE

Leslie Black-Plumeau was present to discuss the methodology behind the housing Needs Assessment. Leslie inquired about how she can provide the most helpful presentation to the group to inform the tactical action plan.

- Farrell explained that the group needs to understand the methodology behind the HNA and the long-term housing targets. What are the considerations? What are data-based indicators that might indicate a healthy housing market beyond just rental vacancy rate?
- Leslie will return on Oct 26 for a full presentation.

OTHER BUSINESS

Recommendations for increasing housing production:

Kathleen: Need to better understand what the other subcommittee is considering: just the services needed, or also the housing programs needed to safely house folks (e.g., rental vouchers)?

Maura: This needs to be a frank and big picture plan, even if the recommendations aren't politically or fiscally feasible. It is important to honestly outline the scale of investment and change needed to actually solve this problem.

Agreement from the group.

Gus: Rental assistance can be calculated, but the harder conversation is how many households will need to be housed in shelter, acknowledging the gap in permanent units.

Zak: Need to expand incentives for developers to attract more small-scale developers that may be able to supply housing to serve the homeless population. Currently only large non-profits are able to make this work.

Leslie: The HNA will examine the existing homeless population and the needs of the individuals therein.

The group determined that it makes sense to largely defer to the HNA in the Tactical Action Plan but highlight how that number will be used by the council.

Maura: It would be valuable to develop the plans and the methodology, then explain how we will apply the numbers to those plans once the HNA is complete.

Gus: Experts are indicating that there is reason to believe that the COVID migrants will remain in VT. That needs to be accounted for, as well as assuming that net positive migration will continue.

Leslie: Every year – in some ways every month – we get more insight as to how persistent that inward migration has been or will be.

Gus: Regarding the designation programs – with the inward flow of federal money for infrastructure, there needs to be a carve-out of that infrastructure money for water extensions, roads, sidewalks for housing development.

Zak: We need to measure the availability and capacity of municipal water and wastewater systems in Vermont. That needs to be expanded, but in order to measure progress, we need to take inventory of it.

DHCD will assemble a list of brainstorm ideas for a) programmatic/budget recommendations, and b) regulatory/land use/permitting ideas as a starting point for recommendations from this council. This will serve as a starting point so we can begin drafting recommendations at the 11/2 meeting.

Future Meetings:

- The group decided to cancel the 10/19 meeting
- The 10/26 meeting will focus on the Housing Needs Assessment and Production Target Methodology with Leslie Black-Plumeau (VHFA) returning to lead the conversation.

ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting adjourned at 3:54pm