

**TOWN OF ESSEX / CITY OF ESSEX JUNCTION
JOINT HOUSING COMMISSION
Minutes of January 4, 2023**

City Representatives: Katie Ballard, Chair (departed the meeting at 4:22PM); Gabrielle Smith, Vice Chair; Ned Daly.

Town Representatives: Emily Taylor, Clerk; Rupesh Asher (joined the meeting at 3:24PM) Deb Flannery; Mark Redmond.

Administration and Staff: Kent Johnson, Regina Mahoney.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND AGENDA ADDITIONS / CHANGES

Ballard called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM. There were no proposed changes to the agenda.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Smith made a motion, seconded by Redmond, to approve the minutes of December 7, 2022. The motion passed 7-0.

3. PUBLIC TO BE HEARD

There was no public to be heard.

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Proposed Charter Change: Just Cause Eviction Follow-Up

The Select Board adopted language on the Just Cause Eviction charter that will be reviewed at the January 17, 2023 and January 30, 2023 meetings. Ballard states the Housing Commission (HC) should have a more comprehensive conversation around this Charter change and will be on the January 18, 2023 HC meeting agenda.

HC members are seeking more information on how the Charter came to be, how it will be enforced, and current data on evictions (and if data exists on challenges that are not or underreported) in the Town to inform recommendations the HC can provide on the Charter. The HC is in favor of the Town offering protections and want to be able to provide specific recommendations that would allow the municipality to collaborate with existing programs rather than take on added responsibilities provided in the community already.

b. Updates from City Housing Trust Fund Discussion

The Housing Trust Fund (HTF) presentation to the City Council and Select board was well received. There were many questions following the presentation and the recording was linked and posted on today's meeting agenda. The groups want more information on funding sources, who oversees the HTF and how decisions are made, and want to ensure there is equitable and accessible outreach to various communities, especially the senior population.

c. Housing Trust Fund Next Steps

Ballard is seeking additional support in the HTF workgroup and ideally would have representation from a Town member.

Ballard will work with Smith, Mahoney, and Darren Schibler to compose a synopsis document around the HTF to share with Members. This will be reviewed at the February 1, 2023 meeting.

d. Town Plan 2024 Working Group Update

The Work Group has numerous Community Forums scheduled throughout the Town of Essex in the first two weeks of January. Town residents received mailers with more information on content and locations, asking everyone to come out and provide feedback. Taylor and Ballard are hosting one of the Forums on Susie Wilson Road next week. The work group will likely meet again at the end of this month to compile and review feedback.

e. Member comments

There were no additional Commission Member Comments.

f. Rental Registry and Inspection Program; Provide Feedback to City PC Discussion

The City Planning Commission (PC) is prioritizing housing issues and beginning with a Rental Registry and Inspection Program. The focus will begin with rental housing. The HC is poised to be in a proactive role to conduct inspections for fee and establish an ordinance in the City on habitability. The ordinance would mirror the current State ordinance. The PC is seeking input from the HC as they move forward with this program.

Ballard and Daly are attending tomorrow evening's PC meeting.

The Land Development Code dictates how many stories housing projects can be. Currently in the City, housing projects cannot exceed four stories.

g. Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) Housing Convening

The convening will be on January 30, 2023 at 6:30p.

h. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

The next Housing Commission meeting will be on January 18, 2023.

5. Reading File

There was no discussion on the reading file.

6. Adjourn

Smith adjourned the meeting at 4:29pm.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Emily Taylor, Clerk.