

JOINT MEETING OF THE
WINOOSKI HOUSING AUTHORITY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
AND
CHITTENDEN HOUSING CORPORATION
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 30, 2020
SPECIAL MEETING

A meeting of the Winooski Housing Authority Board of Commissioners was held electronically as allowed by special Vermont Statute due to COVID-19 requirements.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Potvin at 4:17 P.M. Upon roll call those present and absent were as follows:

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chair Potvin, Vice Chair Raymond, Commissioner Lambert, Commissioner, Arnell, and Commissioner Mace

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Nicky Dusharm, Member Kiki Leach, Member Potvin

GUESTS: Mayor Kristine Lott, Community and Economic Development Officer Heather Carrington

OFFICERS PRESENT: Executive Director KR Decarreau

Meeting called to order at 4:09

1. Approval of Agenda
No Changes
2. Introductions
3. Public Comment
No public in attendance
4. City Presentation on Housing Needs Survey
See Attached Slides

Heather Carrington presented on behalf of the City. She noted that Winooski has the highest percentage of affordable housing in the state. She noted the most difficult housing to find is for folks in the 80% to 120% annual median income. She also noted that vacancy rates continue to hover around 2%, whereas a healthy rate is 5%. ED Decarreau noted that the percentage of people offered a voucher who successfully find housing is 15%, which is also very low.

The City is targeting housing that is:

- 15% families below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI)
- 75% that serves the 80% - 120% AMI
- 10% serving families with over 120% AMI

The report also noted that the countywide Building Homes Together program for Chittenden County has yielded 3,200 new homes in four years with a target of 3,500 homes in five years. The program targeted 20% of those new homes as affordable and is failing to meet that target. New construction in Winooski exceeded the goal at 30%.

Mayor Lott and Ms Carrington noted that the City is looking to specifically increase the availability of family housing units of 2 or more bedroom, including units affordable to folks earning under 80% of AMI.

Commissioner Lambert noted that it was the City's desire to increase housing for middle- and high-income folks as Winooski already served more in need of affordable housing than elsewhere. The ability to build in a higher price range would also help with taxes. Commissioner Lambert will follow up with the City commissions making these decisions.

Commissioner Mace asked about policies being developed to address the issues. Mayor Lott and Ms Harrington noted work by the Housing Commission on parking requirement reductions and the Form Based Code approach, making building in Winooski less expensive. Commissioner Mace and City officials agreed that appropriate policy was vital in achieving the goals.

5. Explanation of the WHA and CHC and their Roles

ED Decarreau explained that the WHA was the public housing agent in the City and that CHC was a non-profit group whose role is to invest in affordable housing as a private agency.

See Board Notes. See attachment for bedroom counts by building and agency.

6. Q and A from Board Members

Questions were posed throughout the presentation and appear under the items where this occurred.

7. WHA Agency Plan – Key Points to Investigate

ED Decarreau noted that the Agency Plan (5 year) is overdue waiting for this process to occur.

Commissioner Lambert spoke in favor of a home ownership strategy within the final strategy.

Commissioner Arnell suggested the possibility of developing outside of Winooski, which would be the purview of Chittenden Housing Corporation more than Winooski Housing Authority.

Mayor Lott noted the possibility of a Public Private partnership to develop a mix of housing inventory.

The group expressed appreciation for the time of City staff and the opportunity to meet as a group.

8. Other Business

None

The meeting adjourned at 5:09 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

KR Decarreau