

Hartford Ad-Hoc Committee on Emergency Shelter

1/13/22 - Meeting Minutes - 5:00 PM

Committee Members present: Bryan Luikart (Chair), Ally Tufenkjian (Vice-chair), Simon Dennis (Secretary), Scott Sablan, Jon Chaffee, Tom Peltier

Brian called the meeting to order at 5:11 and reviewed the agenda.

Ally moved passage of the HADCES minutes of 12/09/21. Jon Chaffee seconded. The minutes passed without objection.

Updates on the RV Policy

Bryan reported that at the meeting of a workgroup including HADCES members and Planning Department Staff to take place tomorrow, we will discuss a bulleted list of points that emerged from the meeting when we last came before the Planning Commission. This following list had been generated by Jo-Ann Ells:

- We need to clarify proposal is not just for unhoused
- Simon/Becca/Bryan –Provide examples of RVs (standard manufactured and non-traditional)
- Provide a comparison to an Accessory Dwelling Unit
- Outline options for sanitation
- Respond to comment on limiting time for use (concern with enforcement)
- Respond to comment about taxes
- Define “separate areas”
- Suggest port-a-let be screened
- Provide information regarding noise from generators
- Define “independent living”
- Define “developed lot”
- Discuss occupancy limited based on sq. ft. of RV

The Committee discussed the list.

Simon stated that the two most substantive items on this list are the time limit (bullet #5 and the space limit (the last bullet).

It was asked whether there is a permitting process for RVs currently in place. It was stated that there is not, so long as the intent is to stay in an RV for no more than 14 days.

Simon mentioned his feelings about a tension between the proper functioning of democracy in Hartford and the timing of the RV Amendment process to date because it is asking a lot for a citizen group to maintain its momentum through a process that includes a 2-month delay between each step. He stated that he felt that the timing of the current process is unfolding without apparent structures of staff accountability to the public. Ally mentioned that she had discovered a similar sentiment from the Chair of the Climate Action Committee. Ally suggested a listening session to include feedback from affected Committee Members and others. There was general agreement expressed that this would be a good idea.

Jon Chaffee mentioned that we also need to recognize that Staff may be responding to their understanding of opposition to what we are proposing and said that we also need to engage in public lobbying, etc.

Other Business

Where do we go from here? Bryan suggested that we could have a permitted campground that exists year round that has facilities and has services. That would be an ideal result. It was mentioned that someone had suggested that we should ask on a listserv if anyone has a piece of property that is suitable for a campground, or a piece of property that could be subdivided for this purpose.

It was discussed that we should consider bringing forward a broader proposition regarding affordable housing and homelessness as a standing committee. Jon says he hates to see us disbanded in March if it meant that the RV proposal would be slow walked to a standstill.

Ally suggested creating a HADCES working group that could draft a new recommended charge for a standing committee on homelessness and affordable housing that would draw from the Final Report.

Bryan pointed out that such a working group would need not have a quorum

Simon moved to form a workgroup and charge the workgroup with bringing back a draft charge for a proposed standing committee. Jon seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Bryan, Scott and Simon all volunteered to be a part of this workgroup. It was agreed that these three would populate this subgroup and would bring back a draft for the next HADCES meeting.

Scott mentioned that he was unclear about how to make decisions regarding the bulleted list that we started the meeting with. Simon said that these decisions had effectively been delegated to the subgroup of Becca, Simon and Bryan.

Ally mentioned that the best opportunity to make a presentation to the Selectboard is February 22nd. So we need to move expeditiously.

Scott also mentioned the value of framing the discussion around the problem that we are trying to solve, and presenting the cost of not solving the problem and comparing it to the downside of solving the problem in this particular way. There was general agreement with Scott's point.

Ally moved adjournment. Simon seconded and all were in favor and the meeting adjourned 6:22 PM.

Our next meeting will take place on January 27th.

Respectfully submitted, Simon Dennis