

Hartford Ad-Hoc Committee on Emergency Shelter

11/18/21 - Meeting Minutes - 5:00 PM

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

Community Members present: Vassiki Chohan, Brett Mayfield, Martha Hafner

Brian called the meeting to order at 5:05 and reviewed the agenda.

Ally moved passage of the HADCES minutes of 10/28/21. Simon seconded. The minutes passed without objection.

Bryan welcomed Scott Sablan to the meeting and invited him to comment on his interests issues related to homelessness. Scott shared some of his past experience with a friend who had experienced homelessness and said he had been thinking about engaging in the problem in a broader way for some time.

Updates on Zoning Reg Amendment

Simon reported that he, Becca White, and Tom Peletier met with Lori Hirshfield and Jo-Ann Ells to iron out the details of a proposal that would go to the Planning Commission on November 29th. He reported that the group had reached an agreement that seems to be a good next step. Tom Peletier reported about the memo that he had written that requested five criteria for owner-occupied RV's. It was also noted that non-owner-occupied RV's would need to demonstrate compliance with current RV Regulations. Owner-built RV's would need to prove that they meet current building standards.

Updates on Recommendation for Adoption of Montpelier Public Lands Policy

Bryan reported that Tracy had been in meetings to discuss the development of a public lands policy with folks from Montpelier, in particular Cameron from Montpelier. It was recommended that we should vet the policy with environmental groups. Tracy has agreed to join us at the meeting on December 18th.

Bryan pointed out that it is important to include in the policy to set up infrastructure like the policy that was implemented by Burlington, VT.

Mac Harp asked if the committee had looked into the potential to create infrastructure that could include a portable water facility on State Park Land. It was agreed that this idea warrants further review.

Discussion of the Current State of the Housing Shortage and Homelessness and a Vermont Municipal Planning Grant

Working from the Hartford Committee on Homelessness Final report of Feb 23rd of 2020, Bryan presented some of the numbers and showed a graph of the Windsor point in time count for the past four years. It shows the total for 2021 at 150 for Windsor County. He noted that the county-wide numbers showed a relatively small increase, whereas the State of Vermont as a whole showed a doubling that goes up to 2591.

Michael said that the Point In Time Count is recognized as an unduplicated count of people experiencing literal homelessness. It includes people who are staying in shelters, people who are staying in Hotels through a voucher program, and people who are staying in cars or camping out. The camping or car-camping number could be undercounted. It does not include people who are couch surfing, or doubled up in apartments. These standards are uniform throughout the US.

Vermont Municipal Planning Grant

Ally reported that Lori Hirshfeld and the Planning Department are working with several towns to advance a Steering Committee, possibly to be formed as soon as January. This Committee could include people with direct experience and people from the Committee.

Other Business

The Town submits an annual report every year which includes reports from each committee of approx. 250 words. That report will be due on December 31st.

Michael announced that the cold weather program has been reinstated by the governor for the next 100 days and that the Haven is resuming a full occupancy.

Ally moved adjournment. Scott seconded and all were in favor and the meeting adjourned 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Simon Dennis