

**Town of Northfield, Vermont
Housing Subcommittee
Minutes of November 9, 2023**

Meeting called to order at 6:02pm

ROLL CALL

Committee Chair Erin Hicks-Tibbles, Members Lydia Petty, Tom Bright, and Danielle Pelczarski. Also in attendance Northfield Zoning Administrator, Mich Osiecki

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the 9/29/23 meeting were approved.

DISCUSSION

a. Future of housing subcommittee

Erin attended the past Select Board meeting and brought up the committee's concerns regarding having two groups (the subcommittee and task force) both focusing on similar areas and having overlapping membership. The board indicated that they appreciated volunteers and would support whatever the subcommittee decides. They did hope that the subcommittee might continue and consider meeting only as needed. Members could continue to participate in the Housing Task Force developed from the VCRD Our Common Future community visit. This would be a good option if open meeting law can be followed.

Discussion continued about the pros and cons of dissolving the subcommittee vs. having infrequent meetings. Danielle mentioned the possibility of meeting quarterly.

Another idea discussed was whether members could focus on one group and recruit more dedicated members to each group as needed so that volunteers are faced with double meetings. The issue of communication would still need to be resolved so that the groups weren't duplicating efforts.

The group also felt that having more direction from the Select Board could be useful if we're to continue meeting. After further discussion, the committee felt that if a way can be found to comply with open meeting law, it would be best to take a hiatus from the subcommittee and allow members to focus on the efforts of the task force for now. We could then come back together as a subcommittee as needed.

Lydia will check in with Jeff about open meeting law compliance.

The Subcommittee will meet again January 11th at 6:30pm in the Municipal Building.

b. OTHER BUSINESS

Mitch shared about the process Middlesex was going through with the Homes For All project that Northfield applied for but did not get chosen for.

Mitch also shared about the Downstreet ADU program that gives out grants of up to \$50,000 for people developing an ADU. A couple in Northfield has received this grant. It was discussed that the task force could reach out to them to see if they'd be willing to answer community questions or even host an open house for the community to see their ADU project. The Subcommittee could also promote this program to Northfield residents. Program info:

<https://accd.vermont.gov/vhip>

Mitch mentioned the program HomeShare VT and the fact that he thinks there are a lot of folks who are living in larger homes that might be open to considering home sharing. The committee could invite this organization to come speak to us and the broader community about their work and opportunities with home sharing.

Mitch also informed the subcommittee that the Planning Commission is nearing approval of the draft updated zoning by-laws. They will be holding a public hearing, likely in December. After that the Select Board will also hold a public hearing before considering approval of the updated bylaws.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:11pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lydia Petty