

## **Waterbury Housing Task Force Thursday, April 17th, 2025**

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Steele Community Room and via ZOOM

Attendees: Owen Sette-Ducati, Alyssa Johnson, Em Lamson, Eliza Novick-Smith, Chris Balzano, Joe Camaratta

Excused: Dana Allen, Skip Flanders

Absent: Peter Hack

Called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm

**Motion made by Eliza Novick-Smith to approve March minutes, second by Chris Balzano. Approved.**

### Updates:

Alyssa Johnson for Select Board

- Set terms for HTF membership, currently there are no terms for the appointments, discussed logistics.
- Other updates are later on agenda.

Planning Commission

- Visioning session 4/29

### Education Series Recap

- Workshop #3 was Tuesday 4/15/25, only 3 members of the public in person and one online. (beautiful day, taxes dues)
  - Created content that will live on website for folks interested in the future to reference. Content was well structured.
- Workshop #4: Jeff Larkin confirmed, phone tag with Jonathan Griffin.
  - Panel? Em, Peter, possibly Mary Koen.
- Can we take another swing at the first topic? Or pull together

### Housing Trust Fund

- Joe reports back on the presentation to SB.
- Questions about eligibility requirements for renters in units supported by trust funds.
- Concern that policy about how funds are used be set before anything is dispersed from trust fund.

**Motion made by Joe Camaratta that the allowable uses of the Waterbury Housing Trust Fund be to promote the development of affordable housing. Second by Chris Balzano. Motion Approved by unanimous vote.**

- Tenant Eligibility Criteria for WHIP program: income level, workforce requirement, enforcement
  - Waterbury AMI for renters estimated between \$45-50k

- Discussed 3 options: 30% of Gross Income, VHIP guidelines, Modified VHIP guidelines (differentiated by number of bedrooms)
  - How do we define household (people under one roof vs. family)
  - Option 3 (modified VHIP @ 100% of AMI) allows some one bedroom units

**Motion to set tenant income eligibility criteria for WHIP at: 1 bedroom unit = not greater than 100% of renter area median income, 2 bedroom unit = not greater than 100% area median income. Second Chris Balzano. Motion Approved by unanimous vote.**

- Workforce housing--is town too limited? Harwood teachers wouldn't include. Income criteria seem sufficient, particularly if we want this program to get started.
- Enforcement: how will town ensure rents are set at 110% FMR?
  - Landlord must produce the executed lease annually, signed by LL and tenant.
  - Tenant Income Eligibility: All members of household must verify income via tax return when the lease is initially signed, not on renewals. Any new tenant needs to be income verified
    - How does VHIP and Downstreet do tenant verification
    - Concern about privacy, who has tax returns, town, or landlord and submit and attestation.
    - Consult area housing provides on how they verify tenant income, review with Tom, make recommendation on which version is most feasible?
    - Landlord submits attestation that they have verified income based on tax returns vs. tenant submits tax return to town and town retains (or needs to create a policy on retention)--> review options with Tom first, will reconvene.

#### Public Comment

- Billy Vigdor: how can we confirm that housing subsidized by town is adding units that aren't already coming online?

**Motion to adjourn made by Em Lamson, second by Owen Sette-Ducati. Approved.**