

Waterbury Housing Task Force
Thursday, June 19, 2025 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Steele Community Room and via ZOOM

Attendees: Chris Balzano, Mike Bishop, Jess Neubeit, Alyssa Johnson, Joe Camaratta, Cheryl Casey, Em Lawson

Absent: Kati Gallagher, Skip Flanders, Eliza Novick-Smith

Meeting Commenced at 6:05pm

Joe Camaratta mentioned that he would like to add some housing data as a topic of discussion for the task force.

- Mike Bishop is providing an overview of the rental registry, a program the task force approved to get a better understanding of the rental environment and the impact of second homeownership on the town.
- Mike mentioned that most of the phone calls he received regarding the rental registry were positive. He mentioned that people want more regulation, and that maintaining compliance standards was a matter of importance for those who commented on the rental registry.
- Another aspect of concern was public safety, law enforcement, increased traffic, etc. People wanted to know when we were going to start charging on the rental registry, specifically on the short-term management front.
- Fire-inspector lite certification is essentially coming out. We can parse a lot of data, but we have to know the data that we want to know first. Collect short-term versus long-term, number of bedrooms per unit, etc.
- Joe Camaratta asked how many registrations Mike had, with roughly 200 so far. Jess Neubeit asked how many rentals are in town, in comparison to how many rentals have been registered. Joe Camaratta mentioned that we have 680ish LTRs and 180ish STRs.
- Mike Bishop stated he had been told roughly 600 rentals in total for all of the town.
- Alyssa Johnson stated that increased outreach might be necessary to gauge an accurate sample-size.
- Em Lawson asked if we could send postcards out when we send the tax day envelopes out, Mike Bishop said he could check on the situation.
- Mike Bishop mentioned the registry has already had two solid use cases for the registry so far.

6:20

Support for design of former Stanley Wasson and Woody Ave sites

- Joe Camaratta asked for clarification on the Stanley Wasson and Woody Ave sites, and Alyssa Johnson stated that she would provide clarification on the projects.
- Woody Ave is a municipally-owned site with some certain environmental regulations. There was discussion from municipal staff about whether this project would pencil. Looking at CBDG for potential funding, there's no role from the task force as they're doing behind-the-scenes work on financial feasibility.

- Stanley-Wasson, some of this might be in the minutes that were looked at. The town has the option to purchase it from the state of Vermont for \$400,000, Select Board discussion is how to approach this, Task Force's role would be providing advisory input on what to do with the site.
- Cheryl Casey mentioned that part of the thinking was primarily if it's an area that is well-suited to density, we should use it to promote density.
- 51 S Main over Stanley Wasson was more due to the location of the site. Alyssa Johnson provided some clarification on why the Stanley Wasson parcel had not been utilized for Downstreet's purposes.

6:35

Waterbury Housing Improvement Program

- Joe Camaratta stated there was a question as to whether this is a pilot, are we going to utilize evaluation. Joe reached out to Downstreet to discuss the administration, and we ran into a roadblock regarding E911 addresses. There's an issue with the E911 protocol, Tom Leitz and Joe Camaratta agreed that Downstreet awarding a program is enough to issue an E911.

6:43

Building Better Waterbury

- Cheryl Casey has developed a communications plan for Building Better Waterbury and the Waterbury Home Improvement Program. In terms of possibilities for the Task Force longer term, moving from the education series itself but promoting buy-in for duplexes, new-age housing topics, etc.
- Cheryl Casey provided an overview of the various outreach methods and distribution of content in order to educate people on the topic.
- We still have about \$7000 left in the grant, Joe Camaratta asked how we would prioritize the usage here.
- Chris mentioned that capturing the education series into a cohesive structure would be good as well.

6:57

- Not very steep affordable requirements, potentially just see about donation into the trust fund. Workforce for town employers, missing-middle, etc, if VHFA would be a correct usage for this or if missing middle income would be a portion of this.
- The closer you can get to developing a site the easier it is to get that project off the ground

7:10pm

- Joe Camaratta provides an overview of the rental registry licensing an attached file. They collect the physical address, owner's address, and describe the rental unit.
- Number of short-term rentals in general, report requests specifically.
- Number of long-term rentals by rental unit type, rental unit type.
- Are the units vacant, is it on the owner's primary property or is it not.
- What % of short term rentals are on the owner's primary property.
- It doesn't seem like compared to other towns if the short-term rentals are going to hurt us in any capacity, is it subtracting from the housing stock.

- What percentage of long-term rentals offer 12-month leases.

7:44 Meeting Adjourned