

**Montpelier Housing Task Force
City Council Chambers
July 18, 2019 5:15 p.m.**

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Called to order at 5:17 p.m.

1. Introductions and Approval of the Agenda

Members Present:

Jack McCullough
Mary Alice Bisbee
Brian Evans
Liz Genge
JoAnn Troiano
Andrew Sullivan
Polly Nichol, Co-Chair
Jennifer Hollar, Co-Chair
Mary Hooper

Jack asked that we have a discussion of the Loitering Ordinance and Council's reaction added to the agenda

2. Approval of May and June meeting minutes.

Kevin will follow up by email with both sets of minutes for review, and all draft minutes will be approved at the September meeting

3. Public Comment- No Members of the Public were present

4. Montpelier Housing Trust Fund

a. Notice of Funding : The committee discussed the potential due dates for this round of Housing Trust Fund Dollars

Release Notice of Funding Availability: By July 26, 2019
Proposals Due on August 15th
Committee Meeting week of August 18
Recommendation to Council for their meeting on August 28th

b. Potential Requests and Timing of Recommendations

First Time Homebuyers: Downstreet may request an increase in the subsidy since housing prices have risen even more dramatically this year. Kevin will reach out to Pattie Dupuis and see how she would like to proceed.

c. Council Appointments and Adoption of Guideline Amendments

Full Version of the amended guidelines along with the Fair Housing Language will be on the consent agenda for the meeting on August 14th.

We will need to 2 new members from the public. Kevin will reach out to Richard Amore who was on the previous committee and Polly will reach out to Rick DeAngelis and Ariane Kissam to see if they are interested in participating. These appointments must be made by the meeting on the 14th

5. Conversation with Rob Farrell, Executive Director of the Good Samaritan Haven

Rob gave a brief overview of the mission of Good Samaritan House. It is a 28 bed shelter in Barre that is the only full time shelter in Washington County. Rob mentioned that the recent focus on the loitering ordinance in Montpelier has raised a number of questions regarding the role of the different service agencies in how to deal with homelessness. GSH is focusing on outreach and making contact and connections with people “where they are” and offering access to services and connections to other agencies. Some people are ready for services and some are wary of the system. Rob also indicated that there is an influx of younger homeless people from the south in particular Tennessee and Florida. The indication is that these homeless youth have heard that there are services available to them that are not available elsewhere. GSH is looking to strengthen partnerships with Washington County Mental Health on medicine/medical stabilization which is a huge issue for the homeless. GSH outreach efforts are focused on providing access to wellness, developing life skills, building a resume, and help with navigating housing.

Polly asked “How can the Task Force Help?” Rob indicated that the three greatest needs for GSH are Volunteers, Fundraising and Developing and coordinating relationships with other service agencies.

Additionally Rob indicated that the need for a Family Shelter and transitional housing was growing.

Mary asked about the need for more transitional Housing.

Rob indicated that there is a need for more transitional housing and beds in general. Although they never exceeded capacity at the Bethany Church shelter, the need is growing. More housing is the answer and in particular housing that provides wrap around services and access to social service agencies and coordinated care.

ADDED ITEM: Loitering Discussion

The council was very clear that they did not support a loitering ordinance and there were no single councilors that supported it. In order to find solutions that address the core issue Bill Fraser has been tasked by the council with working on a task force to address the concerns of the business owners while protecting the rights of the homeless and the public. There needs to be a respectful discussion which engages all the parties. If anyone is interested in participating they should contact Jamie Granfield in the City Manager’s Office.

Mary Hooper suggested that the Community Justice Center should be brought in to assist.

6. Work for the Coming months.

a. Fall Summit?

Burlington had a housing summit that was attended by 200-300 people and brought together housing advocates and discussed topics such as ADU's, Housing Trust Funds, Parking Requirements, Short Term Rentals and Airbnb.

I suggested that we approach the RPC to see if they're interested in helping to host a summit, not that they've already indicated interest. I think I did say if they help host we would want to make sure that the summit includes the issues that are specific to Montpelier which are different from those in Barre (not Burlington).

Mary Alice mentioned that the Interfaith Action Council would be interested in participating since they played such a large role in the last housing summit that occurred at Christ Church in 2016.

Mary Hooper suggested that we reach out to Interfaith Action Council and maybe look at how the City can tackle the need for transitional housing. Polly suggested we might want to see if Interfaith Action can attend a future meeting to discuss.

b. Joint work with the Energy Committee?

Mary mentioned that there was additional money in this year's state budget for weatherization, and the funds can be used up to a higher income than the previous funding. Mary suggested we should discuss opportunities that may be upcoming with the energy committee. Mary mentioned that the upcoming roll out of the Efficiency Vermont weatherization program and will share what she learns.

c. Short Term Rental Report to Council?

The Task Force should put together a summary report of the short term rental problem in Montpelier and the associated loss of permanent rental properties to short term rentals.

7. Updates

a. Accessory Dwelling Units Pilot Program

Kevin Reported that since funding was announced that Tyler has gotten underway with initial site visits and initial ER reviews with Quin. 5 site visits this week and we anticipate that we will have some of these projects underway soon

b. VCFA Property Sale and Development: The development team that is looking to develop the 18 acre parcel met with the neighbors on Sibley Avenue to address their concerns and questions. Nothing formal has been submitted to the City for review.

- c. **Franklin Square Condos-** Funding was approved by Council, Kevin is waiting on the closing attorney to prepare the paperwork and the city can contribute through use of CD funds

8. General Announcements

None

9. Agenda Items for September Meeting

- 1. discussion of summit or series of public discussions/workshops;
- 2. meet with representatives of the Energy Committee
- 3. 3.Mike will join us to talk about the housing section of the Master Plan

10. Adjourned at 7:05 p.m.