



TOWN OF
NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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NEW LONDON HOUSING COMMISSION

April 27, 2022, 6:00PM

Whipple Town Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Nichols, Amy Kaplan, Winfried Feneberg, Tom Vannatta, Tim Lund

MEMBERS ABSENT: Marilyn Kidder, Randy Foose, Steve Theroux

OTHERS PRESENT: Nancy Rollins, Selectman; Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator; Mark Fougere, Consultant; Sandy Whiteplain, Mike Quinn

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:03pm.

Chair Nichols noted there are only ten more meetings before the due date that was set to put forth ideas for land use regulation changes. They also need to review the strategic plan and review rules of procedure.

New Commissioner – Selectmen in Process

Chair Nichols stated there are people interested in joining the Housing Commission. The Board of Selectmen will review the applications and will be making appointment selections.

Approve minutes of March 23, 2022

IT WAS MOVED (Amy Kaplan) AND SECONDED (Winfried Feneberg) to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2022 meeting. THE MINUTES WERE APPROVED. Tom Vannatta abstained from the vote.

Housing Needs Assessment Campaign

- **Report on UVRPC Housing Needs Assessment** - Chair Nichols reported that he and Jerry Coogan are representatives on the Upper Valley Regional Planning Commission and attended a meeting three weeks ago. The Housing Survey is getting a lot of hits from New London and this was due to the work of the Housing Commission members and getting the word out.
- **Employer Outreach Report** – Amy Kaplan reported she spoke with the owner of Blue Loon Bakery and she was aware of the survey and is willing to be part of an employer panel. Ms. Kaplan wants to make sure we don't miss hearing from the service industry. Ms. Kaplan also reached out to Hannaford and they would also like to participate as part of the panel.

Winfried Feneberg commented another group we need to include is the trades (plumbing, electricians) and landscaping companies. Other employer outreach could be made to Spring Ledge, the Barn Playhouse and the bookstore.

Planning: Employer Interview Panel

Panelists - Chair Nichols stated they have spoken to the three big employers in town and know they are willing to be on the panel. Chair Nichols is asking if they should be done separately or sprinkle in some small employers with the bigger ones and just do one employer panel. Tom Vannatta stated his recommendation would be to do two interviews – one with the bigger employers and one with smaller employers. The two groups may be looking at things differently. Tim Lund disagrees and thinks you may want to mix the panels. There should be representation on both so during the interview the questions can be answered by both and he doesn't think the answers will be all that different. You also don't want to send a message that one group is more important than the other. Chair Nichols stated perhaps by mixing it up the conversation won't be static and it will stimulate the engagement.

Interview Questions – Winfried Feneberg suggested narrowing it down to four or five questions so you get input from everyone and get good information. Chair Nichols distributed a handout with sample interview questions for review. Selectman Rollins suggested having the employers introduce themselves and answer four or five basic questions about their organization to set the stage of who they are and what they represent from an employer perspective. Tim Lund suggested the option of having fact sheets for all of the panelists so they don't spend a lot of time on an overview of each. Chair Nichols will take the list and the input from the group tonight and will refine it.

Timing, Venue, Setting/Venue – The group discussed having a friendly interactive round-table conversation. Selectman Rollins stated things that she has seen that work well are small panels in comfortable chairs with a person facilitating or driving the conversation and then opening it up to a bigger audience for more discussion. Chair Nichols envisions using Whipple Hall and having a round table discussion with three to five preselected questions. The group asked Mark Fougere to be the moderator and he agreed. Venue suggestions included Whipple Hall or Wheeler Hall at Colby-Sawyer College.

The target date for the panel interview would be May 25, 2022 with an alternate date of May 23, 2022. They would invite representation from the College, the Hospital and Hannaford's as well as two or three others (74 Main St, VNA, Tuckers, Inn at Pleasant Lake, New London Inn, LSC Club, Blue Loon, Ledyard bank) and meet for one hour. Winfried Feneberg also asked if they should consider having YCN tape the session. The group thought it was a good idea and Mr. Feneberg will reach out.

Future Panel – The Housing Commission discussed having a builder/developer panel discussion. Chair Nichols stated that Twin Pines is a major developer but thinks we should wait until we are ready because they will be a huge resource. He's thinking about other developers who understand the code in New London and have maybe backed away from it saying it won't work in this location. Mark Fougere suggested engineers as they are the ones that go before the boards, prepare the plans and they know the regulations. They have good insight about what barriers there are. Lawyers would also be a good resource. Selectmen Rollins asked what is the purpose of bringing this group together. Mark Fougere responded it would give them a window into the regulatory issues that may or may not be here. The ordinance was adopted ten years ago but no one has developed housing yet.

Review NLHC Rules of Procedure – Chair Nichols stated the Board of Selectmen have requested that all committees give consideration to their Rules of Procedure and specifically with respect to the issue of civility. The Rules of Procedure can be changed as they see fit but any amendments need to be read the meeting before a vote is taken so proper reflection can be given. If anyone has any comments or thoughts, please let Chair Nichols know.

Review Strategic Plan – Chair Nichols made copies of the strategic plan for everyone to review. The focus has been on the needs assessment and they have received information on demographics so far. Another area of focus should be to read through the master plan to make sure they are using that plan as a directive.

Other Business – Sandy Whiteplain, a resident of New London attended the meeting. She stated the work that the Housing Commission is doing is wonderful. She stated she was happy to see in the strategic plan that it addressed equitable and affordable housing as it is so important.

Ms. Whiteplain informed the group that Lebanon housing authority is doing a 44 unit development project that is beautiful on Heater Road. She recommended that the Housing Commission check out their website as the builders listed probably know the regulations and may be helpful to us. She would also like the commission to think about universally designed housing for people with disabilities.

Future Meeting: The next meeting will be held on May 18, 2022.

Adjournment

IT WAS MOVED (Amy Kaplan) AND SECONDED (Winfried Feneberg) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson

Recording Secretary
Town of New London