1. Call to Order

Vice Chair Patrick Danaher called the meeting to order at 6:10 PM. Lori Hirshfield read a prepared statement regarding remote participation in the meeting.

2. Review Order of Agenda

No changes were requested or made to the order of the agenda.

3. Approve March 23, 2023 Committee Meeting Minutes

Sandy Mariotti and Jen Kravitz abstained since they were not members of the Committee at the last meeting. Approval of minutes was tabled until a quorum of non-abstaining members could vote.

Approval of minutes was revisited at 7:29 PM with a quorum present. The minutes were approved as presented by a roll call vote with 4 members voting in favor and Sandy and Jen abstaining.

4. Update on Town Plan Housing Chapter Ad Hoc Steering Committee

Lori Hirshfield provided an overview of the Homes for Hartford event on April 13th at the Bugbee Center. The meeting was well-attended and successful; members who attended noted that it was well-facilitated and a useful introduction to the topic of housing. Notes from the breakout sessions at the event will be used to assist the Ad Hoc Steering Committee in moving the planning process forward.

As a follow-up, there will be a multimedia engagement station available starting at 4/21 at Junction Arts and Media center (JAM formerly CATV) in White River Junction where the public can participate in the planning process. The station will move around town in the coming months; Committee members were encouraged to participate.

5. Home Creators Expo – May 6th

Lori Hirshfield gave the committee an update on the Home Creators Expo scheduled for May 6th. John Haffner noted that there were about 70 registrants so far; that number is expected to increase with planned outreach in the next few weeks. Committee members were encouraged to stop by the event.

6. Continue Development of HCHH Workplan for 2023

Lori Hirshfield provided an overview of the condensed notes from the prior meeting’s brainstorming session. Ten potential action areas were identified and grouped into short-, medium-, and long-term categories. There was significant discussion amongst members as to how to refine and begin working on
items in the work plan, understanding that there are more tasks in the work plan than could be tackled at once and members may have topics they are particularly interested in. Members agreed that some of the initial work should involve reaching out to other local housing committees to learn from their work (Task #1), compiling information on current housing developments, programs, and initiatives in Town and the Upper Valley (Task #2), and identifying how the Committee’s work fits in with other Town boards and commissions that deal with housing (e.g., Selectboard, Planning Commission, Energy Committee) (Task #3).

For the next meeting, it was decided that members would individually work on Task #1 and reach out to a local housing committee and enter their response in a form to set up by Lori. The following assignments were made:

- Lebanon, NH – Ally
- New London, NH – Alex
- Thetford – Jen
- Woodstock – Sandy
- Bradford – John

For Task #2, Lori noted that the Committee could designate a representative to provide comments on housing development applications as part of initial consultations with applicants or as public comments at Planning Commission meetings. Alex Belensz suggested that there could be two parallel initiatives under #2 – tracking and commenting on housing development applications, and compiling information on local and regional housing programs and initiatives.

There was then a broader discussion about areas of focus for the Committee, with members indicating interest in addressing homelessness and continuing to engage with residents on the topic of housing once the process to update the Town Plan Housing Chapter is complete. Michael Redmond noted that he could assist with efforts around homelessness, including providing recent point-in-time count data.

7. News from Committee Members

There was no additional news from Committee members.

8. Adjourn Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 PM via unanimous roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted by Alex Belensz

Committee Membership as of 4/20/2023:

John Haffner, Chair (through 12/12/2024)
Patrick Danaher, Vice Chair (through 11/28/2024)
Alex Belensz, Clerk (through 11/28/2024)
Dan Nott (through 11/28/2024)
Sandra Mariotti (through 4/03/2025)
Jennifer Kravitz (through 4/03/2025)
Ally Tufenkjian, Selectboard Liaison
Lori Hirshfield, Staff Liaison