

## Stowe Housing Task Force

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Akeley Memorial Building  
67 Main Street  
Stowe, Vermont



**Housing Task Force Members:** McKee Macdonald, Josi Kytle, Ken Braverman, Sarah Henshaw Scott Coggins, Town Manager Charles Safford (Ex-officio), Mila Lonetto (Ex-officio)

**Absent:** Walter Frame, Stephen Grundmann

**Attendees:** Will Fricke, Jeff Sauser, Beth gadbois, Alison Karosas, Rob Levee

### Call to Order

Chair Macdonald called the meeting to order at 9:00am.

### Approve Agenda

Josi Kytle moved to approve the agenda. Sarah Henshaw seconded. Motion carried (5-0).

### Review Draft Report and Survey Update

The Task Force reviewed the draft presentation slides and survey results in preparation for the upcoming Selectboard meeting. Discussion focused on which housing metrics are viable to track, how and how often they should be tracked, and who would be responsible for the tracking. McKee Macdonald stated that while categorizing of types of units is useful, the high cost of land in Stowe means that achieving traditional capital "A" affordable housing will be very difficult, and noted that even 20% of the projected housing goal is Affordable, it would be a success. Mila Lonetto noted the need to define what "affordable" means, while Josi Kytle emphasized that it should not be limited to traditional Affordable housing units. McKee Macdonald suggested that the term "affordable" may be a barrier and proposed using "permanent" housing instead. Jeff Sauser noted there could be two separate goals with the total units being a goal of 580 and affordable units being a separate goal. Charles Safford added that in the future, any release of funds from a housing reserve would need to be tied to statutory definitions and quantifiable criteria.

Ken Braverman asked for clarification on the definition of "small A" affordable housing. Mila Lonetto explained that the State of Vermont defines this as ownership housing at or below 120% of Area Median Income (AMI) and rental housing at or below 100% AMI. Ken Braverman expressed support for increasing those limits in Stowe, given its unique position within Lamoille County, and acknowledged the challenges of delivering projects at those levels. Mila Lonetto noted that zoning bylaws can't define them as higher but asked reserve funds could support them. McKee Macdonald responded that there may need to be a dual-track approach: one for affordable housing and one for other types of year-round housing. Josi Kytle emphasized that affordable housing is just a subset of full-time residency, and that full-time residents should be the broader focus.

Charles Safford noted that there would need to be a method for deed restrictions for local resident housing. Mila Lonetto mentioned that verifying full-time residency could be done through utility bills, paystubs, and other documentation, and that existing organizations could administer these requirements. However, without restrictions, higher-income individuals could still occupy lower-cost housing. Ken Braverman noted that Champlain Housing Trust uses a restricted applicant pool, and that whether the housing is capital A or small A, restrictions are needed. Charles Safford added that Downstreet Housing & Community Development would likely be the administrator in this region.

The Task Force agreed on a housing target of 600 total new units, with 100 of them deed-restricted across both capital A and small A categories.

Charles Safford introduced the concept of inclusionary zoning, where developers would be required to provide capital A units, could opt to provide small A units for a reduced fee, or pay a higher fee in lieu of any affordability. Mila Lonetto noted that even one more Sylvan Park-style development would be a win. Scott Coggins said that mixed-income developments are rare because most funding is directed to 100% affordable projects. He noted that if a housing reserve fund is created, rules will be needed to determine which projects receive support.

Mila Lonetto asked about a potential water and sewer allocation ordinance. Charles Safford explained that sewer capacity is not currently a problem; there is a need to replace the aging Lower Village pump station. The primary issue is identifying a new PFAS-free water source. Drafting an allocation ordinance would divert the Public Works Director from pursuing a new source. Josi Kytte asked about the possibility of expanding the water distribution area. Charles Safford replied that this could be addressed in the Town Plan, but the Town does not currently plan to expand water and sewer districts. Expansion is typically paid for by the developer unless there is a clear public good or benefit to existing ratepayers.

The Task Force discussed how a charter change could support housing initiatives by authorizing new forms of revenue. Potential revenue sources could include additional local option taxes or a ski lift tax. Will Fricke noted that the ski lift tax model in Vail, Colorado is not directly comparable to Stowe's situation and any Charter change would require legislative approval.

The meeting concluded with review and discussion of the draft cost-benefit analysis matrix for evaluating housing strategies.

#### **Staff Report / Next Meeting Agenda**

The 80% draft report will be presented at the June 11 Selectboard meeting. Upcoming HTF meetings are on June 18 and July 2.

#### **Public to be Heard Non-Binding**

No public comment.

#### **Adjournment**

Chair Macdonald adjourned the meeting at 11:00am.

#### **Notes**

Minutes submitted by Will Fricke.

The Stowe Housing Task Force meets on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 9:00am.

A recording of this public meeting is available at: <https://www.stowevt.gov/HTF>