

Stowe Housing Task Force

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

Akeley Memorial Building
67 Main Street
Stowe, Vermont



Housing Task Force Members: McKee Macdonald, Walter Frame, Josi Kytle, Ken Braverman, Town Manager Charles Safford (Ex-officio), Mila Lonetto (Ex-officio)

Attendees: Assistant Town Manager Will Fricke, David White, Brian Pine

Absent: Scott Coggins, Sarah Henshaw, Stefan Grundmann

Call to Order

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

Approve Agenda

Walter Frame moved to approve the agenda. Josi Kytle seconded. Motion carried (4-0).

Guest Speaker – David White and Brian Pine of White & Burke

David White and Brian Pine of White & Burke described the firm's work as a contracted real estate development consultant supporting both private and public clients. The firm assists municipalities with project development, including Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts, such as in St. Albans.

McKee Macdonald asked whether Downstreet Housing & Community Development would be the appropriate partner to administer deed restrictions. Walter Frame added that the Task Force also seeks guidance on eligibility for different funding streams. David White explained that although Stowe overall does not qualify as a low-income community, external funding eligibility depends on demonstrating that a project benefits lower-income residents, specifically those who work in Stowe but cannot afford to live there. Downstreet already serves as a capable administrative entity for deed restrictions, whereas the Town itself would face challenges assuming that role.

David White reviewed the requirements for CHIPs, explaining that projects must support affordable or workforce housing, fund supportive infrastructure and not the housing construction itself, and must meet a but-for test if they are market-rate units. Affordability requirements apply for the life of the financing.

David White described TIFs and CHIP funding mechanisms, noting three pathways: through the Town, a private developer, or the Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA).

Ken Braverman asked whether Stowe could establish a TIF district. David White said a feasibility assessment would be necessary. Charles Safford added that while Stowe has bonding capacity and low debt, the Town may not meet the "but-for" test required for TIF approval, and has attempted to get one in the past.

David White replied that the next step is to identify specific projects. For example, the Town could acquire land and issue an RFP or RFQ to sell it for a dollar with deed restrictions in place. He suggested inventorying underutilized or infill sites to identify opportunities.

McKee Macdonald asked whether the Town could purchase deed restrictions on existing housing. David White said that would likely be slow and limited in effect. Josi Kytle asked who would identify sites for new housing. Charles Safford responded that the Town could do so if there was capacity given.

The group discussed the importance of establishing a clear vision for each property, defining what type of housing is desired, and remaining open to private developers as well as nonprofit partners.

David White noted that Stowe's relative wealth presents unique opportunities to support mixed-income housing. CHIP needs to support workforce/affordable housing, but the opportunity is there where market-rate development can cross-subsidize workforce housing. He also highlighted the potential for "slow money" investment from local residents interested in socially beneficial projects. McKee Macdonald suggested Vail Resorts could play a role in such efforts.

Public to be Heard Non-Binding

No public comment.

Adjournment

Chair Macdonald adjourned the meeting at 10:30am.

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>