

October 10, 2023

The Regular Meeting of the Housing Authority of the Town of Springfield was held at the Westview Terrace Community Room at 8:00 A.M.

Roll Call: Present were Mr. Peter Andrews, Ms. Jessica Martin, and Ms. Mimi Yahn.

Staff: Laura Ryan

Guests: none

Old Business:

(A) Minutes: The minutes from the September 12, 2023 meeting will be distributed by email.

(B) Financial Report: The financial report will be distributed by email.

(C) Woolson Block: There are currently two vacancies in the residential portion of the building. Additionally, we are anticipating an insurance inspection soon. There is some concern, since the cancellation of policies at Mountain View, Maples and High St. There have been no claims at the property, but the insurance industry seems to be changing.

(D) Capital Projects –

a. Huber Ventilation Project

i. Still have testing, balancing and painting remaining. The contractor delays have persisted.

b. Whitcomb Stormwater

i. The planters have been installed in front of the building, as a vehicle barrier. The planters are filled with concrete, with space for containers. Gurney Bros. has yet to remove the barriers, but planters will be placed at the side of the building as well.

(E) Development Updates

a. Summit Ave. – RVTC should begin building with the school year starting.

b. 31 Pearl Street – The property has been boarded up and insured. There was considerable “pharmaceutical waste” found during the process, so it is very good that we have secured the property.

c. South Street – The appraisal was submitted to Rural Development for their consideration of the subdivision of the property.

(F) Other Business –

a. Tenant Receivables. Receivables are stabilizing. Mountain View has 1 non-payment eviction with the courts. The Huber Building will have 1 filed in the near future. There was discussion on what is done before filing for eviction. Residents are generally referred to financial assistance agencies. However, sometimes they exhaust the available programs. It is very easy to get into an impossible situation with “income-based rent”. Missing a month would require payment of 60% of income the following month, and after missing

several months, it is very difficult to recover. Thankfully, these evictions are relatively rare.

(E) New Business:

- 1) Request for Donations –
  - (a) None

- 2) Other Business:

- a. The Town Report – details of the report (attached) were discussed at length. Waiting lists were noted to have nearly doubled in the past year. There was discussion about duplication of names on the list. It is a regular occurrence that individuals apply to more than one property. Additionally, Westview's list is maintained both internally, and by VSHA. The report was distributed to the members for signature.
- b. Covid Policy – Mimi Yahn requested that we discuss the covid policy for the building, due to a recent increase in local cases, including some at the Whitcomb Building. SHA is not informed when someone has Covid, which limits the ability to respond. Rather than create a policy, it a "reminder" of recommended health practices will be distributed. Additionally, the board approved the funding of vaccine clinics at the three senior properties. Mimi requested that we have Linda look into the possibility of the clinics being provided by Rescue Inc.

(F) Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 9:15 A.M. The next meeting will be held November 14<sup>th</sup> at the Westview Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Ryan  
Secretary to the Board &  
Executive Director



Peter Andrews  
Chairman  
Springfield Housing Authority

The units at the Whitcomb and Huber continue to operate under HUD's RAD (Rental Assistance Demonstration) program. This program will give all the tenants a project-based Section 8 voucher, so that their rent remains affordable. These two buildings had a lower occupancy rate than normal at 87%. The current waiting list shows 84 applicants. We anticipate capital projects at both buildings in the coming year. At the Huber Building we replaced the roof, fire alarm panel, did plumbing and elevator upgrades and with the assistance of a CDBG-CV Grant in the amount of \$525,000 hope to have ventilation system completed in the near future. At the Whitcomb Building, we will be replacing the roof in the coming year, as well as continue to address the stormwater issues that have caused previous flooding.

The Authority also manages 64 Section 8 vouchers. Due to many issues, including funding and the tight housing market, we were only able to use 41 of our vouchers for the past year. However, the SHA did use HUD Section 8 funding to lease as many families as possible and paid over \$272,189 to the local landlords for leasing to our Section 8 tenants. Currently, there are 41 families on the waiting list. The waiting period for local residents is over 24 months. Due to the long waiting period for service, the Board closed the waiting list in 2019.

The Maples, the Rural Development project on South Street, shows 80 families on the waiting list. This past year saw an occupancy rate of 92%. Also, during the past year, we continued the process flooring replacement in the units. Our future plans include continued flooring, the purchase of new appliances, and repainting the common areas.

The Mountain View Apartments has been owned by the SHA since 2007. This development had an occupancy rate of 88% this past year and a waiting list of 170 families. The major capital improvements this year consisted of our continued replacement of appliances, continued repaving of the parking lots, the replacement of the water lines under several buildings and the installation of new kitchens as the units become empty, as supply chains allowed.

Westview Terrace Apartments were purchased by the Springfield Housing Unlimited organization in January of 2012. The property had an occupancy rate of 98% this past year. Currently, there are 298 families on the waiting list. These 58 units of family housing are a part of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program. They service families that can earn up to 60% of the median income for Windsor County. This project continues to be a valuable asset to the Town by providing people of limited income access to safe, clean, and reasonably priced rental housing. The major capital items this year consisted of repaving walkways, appliance replacement, new carpeting & flooring in several apartments.

Ellis Block was officially opened in October of 2011. This property includes a three-screen movie theater as well as another 9 units of affordable housing for the downtown area. The movie theater was an important part of the restoration of the Ellis Block building and continues to be a key part in the revitalization of downtown. The current theater operator, Chad Free, continues to do an outstanding job in making the theater a vital part of the downtown. The Ellis Block is owned by a partnership in which Springfield Housing Unlimited (SHU), the Authority created non-profit, is a co-general partner with Evernorth (formerly Housing Vermont). The Springfield Housing Authority manages the property but has

no ownership interest. This past year the nine units were 93% occupied. Currently, there are 87 people on the waiting list.

The Woolson Block, which was co-developed with Evernorth, was completed for residential occupancy in December of 2020. We now have 20 new apartments and 4 refurbished store fronts. The commercial spaced are occupied by Shear Beauty Salon and Uplift Acrobatics. There is a Youth in Transition program on the garden level in the building, providing supportive housing & a live-in manager to the 4 youths currently participating in the program. This building is another key addition to the restoration of downtown. This past year the 19 units were 92% occupied. Currently, there are 157 people on the waiting list.

Finally, the public can now access information on the SHA properties and get applications in person at 80 Main Street, request by phone at 802-885-4905, or on our website: [www.springfieldhousingauthorityvt.org](http://www.springfieldhousingauthorityvt.org).



Laura Ryan

Executive Director



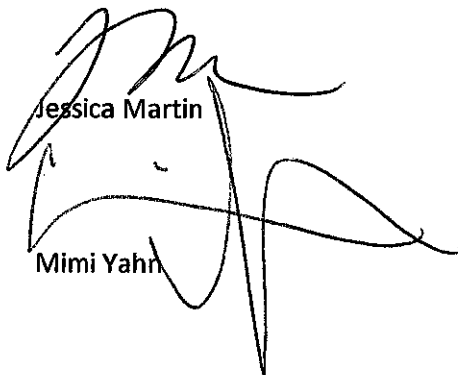
Peter Andrews

Chairman

Daniel Harrington

Vice-Chairman

Jeff Perkins



Jessica Martin

Mimi Yahr