Town of Chester Housing Commission
Governing Bylaw

1. Mission:

The mission of the Town of Chester Housing Commission is to create a strong, sustainable, inclusive community and quality affordable housing for all.

2. Purpose:

The commission advises the Town Manager, Selectboard, Planning Commission and other municipal boards and committees on the housing needs of the community, including review and consultation of policy and zoning changes related to housing. The Commission works to educate the public on housing topics and develop partnerships with developers, non-profits, state agencies, and social service organizations to advance the community's housing goals. The Commission maintains and analyzes the community's demographic and housing stock information and provides periodic updates on housing issues to town officials.

3. Membership:

The Commission is composed of between five and nine members with each appointed by the Selectboard. Each member shall serve a staggered three-year term with no term limit. At conception, appointments will be made as follows: Three – 1 year term; Three – 2 year terms; and Three – 3 year terms. All subsequent appointments will be made as 3 year terms. Membership shall include one member of the Planning Commission and/or the Town Planner. In appointing the remaining Commission members, the Selectboard should select members who represent a variety of relevant interests and backgrounds, including but not limited to: Regional Planning Commission; for-profit and non-profit housing developers; housing authorities and agencies; social services organizations; banking and finance professionals; legal professionals; and representatives of area businesses. The Town Manager will be considered an ad hoc member of the Commission. The Commission shall receive staff support from Town departments as needed.

4. Meetings:

The Commission meets twice per month, in person, or in a virtual setting. Commissioners should attend all meetings of the Commission, and if a meeting must be missed, notify the chair as soon as possible. If more than 25% of the meetings are missed within a year, it is possible the Chair may recommend replacement. Commissioners are expected to fully participate and engage in the meeting conversations, including asking pertinent questions, engaging in respectful dialogue, and giving time for all Commissioners and guests to speak as needed.

5. Organization:

A quorum shall consist of a majority of the total members. At its annual organizational meeting, the Commission shall elect a chairperson, vice-chair and clerk and shall adopt such rules/by-laws as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions. Officers shall be elected annually.

The Commission shall keep a record of all transactions and meeting minutes shall be filed with the Town Clerk as a public record. All Agendas and Notices shall be posted in the Town Clerk's Office, Chester Post Office and Chester Hardware, as well as on the town's website. All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with Vermont Open Meeting Laws.

Adopted by the Selectboard of the Town of Chester on this 5 day of July, 2023.

Arne Jonynas

Lee Gustafson

Heather Chase

Peter Hudkins

Arianna Knapp