



**JOINT ESSEX HOUSING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA**

Online and 81 Main Street  
Essex Junction, VT 05452

**March 16, 2022  
3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

[housing.commission@essex.org](mailto:housing.commission@essex.org)

[www.essexvt.org](http://www.essexvt.org)

Phone: (802) 878-1343  
(802) 878-6950

This meeting will be held both remotely and in person. Available options to watch or join:

- **ATTEND IN PERSON** at the downstairs conference room of the Town Offices, 81 Main Street, Essex Junction, VT
- **JOIN ONLINE** [via Microsoft Teams](#). Depending on your browser, you may need to call in for audio.
- **JOIN BY CONFERENCE CALL:** [\(802\) 377-3784](tel:8023773784) | Conference ID: 120 122 951#
- **PUBLIC WIFI** is available at municipal offices, libraries, and [hotspots mapped by VT Public Service Dept.](#)

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND AGENDA ADDITIONS / CHANGES**

2. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

3. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

- a. [Approval of Minutes](#)
- b. Inclusionary Zoning – Developer Forum Debrief
- c. Village Separation Implications for Housing Commission
- d. Community Forum Planning / Logistics
- e. Adaptive Reuse and Affordable Housing – Robin
- f. Other Business

4. **ADJOURN**

*Members of the public are encouraged to speak during the Public to Be Heard agenda item, during a Public Hearing, or, when recognized by the Chair, during consideration of a specific agenda item. The public will not be permitted to participate when a motion is being discussed except when specifically requested by the Chair. This agenda is available in alternative formats upon request. Meetings, like all programs and activities of the Village of Essex Junction and the Town of Essex, are accessible to people with disabilities. For information on accessibility or this agenda, call the Unified Manager's office at 878-1341 TTY: 7-1-1 or (800) 253-0191.*

**From:** Robin Pierce <robin@essexjunction.org>

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 2, 2022 8:28 AM

**To:** Katie Ballard <charbonk07@gmail.com>; Darren Schibler <DSchibler@ESSEX.ORG>

**Subject:** FW: Adaptive reuse and affordable housing

As promised/threatened.

Robin.

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A quick definition of adaptive reuse (and overview of possibilities for affordable housing ) could look thus: A specific variety of redevelopment that makes use of existing building stock for the purposes of contemporary living, even if that existing building stock was built for obsolete uses in a bygone era.

Adaptive reuse can be seen two basic ways; the key to urban revitalization or a harbinger of gentrification. At its most basic it is the renovation of an existing building for, mostly, residential use. Often these buildings had been built for a completely different use. I for example, in Philadelphia, renovated old schools, churches and rectories into residential apartments. It has been a key development type in the transformation of U.S. cities in the late 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Adaptive reuse has driven the revitalization of historic neighbourhoods, for better and for worse. For example, the Highline in New York is a successful project that attracted developers to renovate buildings in close proximity. The end result was low-income renters being priced out and forced to relocate as gentrification occurred. Whole neighbourhoods changed, from the corner store becoming high end deli, to barber shops becoming beauty spas.

Designated Village and Town Centres are often ripe for adaptive reuse. This also fits well with the Vermont Brand of compact settlements surrounded by productive open farmland. In an after the pandemic world where people can choose to work from home rather than driving into the office (think of the vehicle emission reduction in that scenario), there may be an opportunity to 'repurpose' office space, whether in an old or new building for residential use.

I believe that a policy that promotes affordable housing in existing buildings in Village and Town Centres through incentives at the federal, state and local level is one of the ways to increase the development of affordable housing. And in designated areas there are tax credits for certain building improvements such as; façade, accessibility, and IT improvements to name a few.

Existing properties have past investments that can reduce today's costs of residential development: Streets, infrastructure, foundations, walls, roofs already exist. Proximity to services, employment, schools, public transportation is another benefit. New build does not come with these advantages. I believe that establishing incentives at the local level that encourage developers to provide affordable housing in existing structures will bring more community rewards (in the form of affordable housing) than mandating same in new build scenarios where neighbours in in the same development who purchase market rate housing often bear the burden of the affordable home subsidy.