



**LEBANON HOUSING TASK FORCE
FEBRUARY 9, 2026 - 8:15 AM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL OR
REMOTE VIA VIRTUAL PLATFORM
LEBANONNH.GOV/LIVE**

1. Call to Order

- A. To participate in this meeting, please [join live via Microsoft Teams](#) or call 929-229-5356 (access code: 609 636 52#). If you have trouble accessing this meeting, please email [Catheryn Hembree](#).

2. Approval of Minutes

- A. December 15, 2025

3. Study Items

- A. Housing Action Items Brainstorm Discussion

4. Other Business

5. Future Agenda Items

- A. February Planning Board Work Session: Housing Chapter Discussion

6. Adjournment

The order of agenda items is subject to change.

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If you have any questions, please contact the Planning and Development Department by sending an e-mail to planning@lebanonnh.gov, or by calling 603-448-1457, or by visiting the Planning and Development Office located in City Hall during regular work hours, Monday through Thursday, 7AM to 5PM. You can view the entire agenda packet on the City's website at [LebanonNH.gov/Agendas](#).

DRAFT

**LEBANON HOUSING TASK FORCE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
Monday, December 15, 2025
8:15 AM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim McNamara, Andrew Faunce, Vice Chair, Ryan Dube,
John D'Entremont (Remote), Sarah Riley

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ellen Smith Ahern, Dave Duncan (Alt)

STAFF PRESENT: Nathan Reichert, Director, Planning & Development,

1 **1. CALL TO ORDER:**

2
3 Meeting was called to order at 8:17AM by Mr. Andrew Faunce, Vice Chair

4
5 Mr. Nate Reichert read the preamble.

6
7 **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

8 A. October 20, 2025

9
10 B. November 17, 2025

11
12 *Mr. Ryan Dube MOVED to approve both sets of the Minutes as written*
13 *Seconded by Vice Chair Andrew Faunce*

14
15 **The MOTION was approved (5-0)*

16
17 **3. STUDY ITEMS:**

18
19 A. Outreach & Engagement Report

20
21 Mr. Steve Whitman, RKG Associates, started with an overview of what's included in the Outreach draft
22 report and a highlight of some of the major findings. He said that it is fantastic that the City of Lebanon
23 heard from more than 1,000 people, and that the variety of methods used along with the dedication of
24 employees and this Housing Task Force was the driving force behind these results. He added that they do
25 not usually see these types of excellent results.

26
27 Key findings from all outreach reinforces the conversations they have been having:

- 28
29
 - Housing costs are a major pressure against all household types
 - Limited supply restricts options for homeowners and renters
 - Competition and eligibility requirements creates barriers to access

30
31

- 1 • Property taxes and overall high cost of living influence housing decisions in Lebanon
- 2 • Neighborhood fit, scale, and design remain important to community considerations (this was also
- 3 reflected in the last Housing Chapter)
- 4 • A wide range of housing types needed to meet community demand
- 5 • Rental experiences and property management practices affect housing stability
- 6 • Housing challenges directly affect the local workforce and regional economy
- 7 • Transportation access shapes housing feasibility for many residents and would be residents
- 8 • Community members are open to creative and flexible housing solutions

9

10 He said that the remainder of the document is set up with summaries, for example, the focus group
11 feedback begins on page 4, the community conversations are grouped together and summarized as well,
12 and lastly the housing survey including who they heard from, the demographics, and they have included
13 all of the raw data including actual responses, in the Appendix.

14

15 Chair McNamara asked Mr. Whitman if there was anything “new” to them? Mr. Whitman responded that
16 people new to the community and renters have found it challenging to find housing and for renters, trying
17 to get through the process with landlords.

18

19 Chair McNamara said one thing that stood out to him was that so many of the respondents are already
20 residents of Lebanon and he was encouraged by this. Mr. Dube added that the mix of these respondents
21 was almost 50/50 (residential property owners/renters), which provides both perspectives. Both sides are
22 facing similar but yet very different challenges, realities, and difficulties in either maintaining their
23 current status as a homeowner or becoming one. Whether or not they are looking to rent or to buy. He
24 appreciated that RKG provided all of the raw data and said that as he read through this his takeaway is
25 that everybody had their own reasons/ issues/scapegoat to blame but many people offered suggestions and
26 were optimistic and choose to remain here in Lebanon. For example, one scapegoat is Dartmouth Medical
27 Center, and yet many employees of DMC responded that they are not highly paid doctors, and they are
28 facing the same issues as other residents/would be residents.

29

30 Everybody agrees that more affordable housing is needed.

31

32 Chair McNamara said that there is *not* a lot of support of large-scale building of more studios and one-
33 bedroom rentals. Employers have said this as well. We need smaller-scale housing developments, more
34 distributed than what the City has on Mount Support Road.

35

36 Mr. Dube added that small-scale housing is needed, and that many people with larger properties are also
37 ready to downsize or interested in looking to downsize and yet they too have limited opportunities for
38 smaller housing options.

39

40 Chair McNamara said that the results affirm some of the colloquial things that he was hearing with some
41 real data. Mr. Dube said that it was also helpful to see what the “other housing” was such as renters of
42 rooms, and that these are clearly not regulated, and is a cause for concern, and it gives a clearer
43 perspective to this Housing Task Force. He also said that with his work in the community, that a majority
44 of rents have more than doubled since 2019, and yet improvements (or lack thereof) are not in line with
45 these increases. This is a large drag on the local family economy.

46

47 Chair McNamara asked Mr. Nate Reichert how the results they have with this initiative correlate, if at all,
48 of where they are heading with some of the Zoning amendments that are housing related.

49

1 Mr. Reichert said a key takeaway to get housing in general with a preference to ownership opportunities
2 as well as more rentals and that the Zoning changes they are making are reflecting this need. He added
3 that Zoning cannot dictate the exact housing that will be built in Lebanon, and there is a misunderstanding
4 with some of the public, as many think that Zoning controls the exact types of housing that can be built in
5 Lebanon.

6
7 Vice Chair Faunce was asked about an update on The Brickyard. Vice Chair Faunce said that he thinks
8 this project will be +400 units total (potentially with ownership opportunity), which will be 5-6 mid-rise
9 complexes with a majority being single bedrooms and/or efficiency (studios), and there will also be
10 approximately 51 townhome units that are rumored to become condominiums.

11
12 Mr. Dube said that of what he knows, the waiting list for people in need of small renter units like is being
13 built, has over 200 people waiting (for 1 bedrooms and studios), and depending on the list, 5-10 (or more)
14 years waiting for a voucher for lower income families. He reiterated that these are the same people that
15 will need different housing as they marry, have families, etc. There will be a greater need for more houses
16 and larger rental properties. And there is already an unmet need for many seniors, even though Lebanon
17 has more senior housing per capita than other areas in New Hampshire.

18
19 Mr. Reichert said that building costs are a real detriment as well. Costs structure on the building side of
20 "Autumn Path" near Oakridge Rd., for 1500 square ft. units have a build cost of close to \$750,000. If they
21 are rented, rents will go for at least \$2,000-\$3,000 per month, even with employer-based subsidies from
22 Dartmouth Medical Center. Most families cannot afford these amounts.

23
24 He suggested they talk with the builder along with Dartmouth (partnered with this builder) to learn more
25 details about this project.

26
27 Chair McNamara said they are seeing this same type of thing on the Barrows Street project, though he
28 also thinks that modular units are still reasonable. They are finding it difficult to find contractors to finish
29 siding, add porches, etc. The ancillary services like these are problematic and when they do get bids, the
30 pricing is typically egregious.

31
32 Mr. Dube said he knows of builders needing to charge high prices to build and cited an example of a 2-
33 bedroom house that would cost about \$800,000 to build here in Lebanon, just to break even; if they want
34 to make a profit these would sell for \$900,000. This might be because of our higher standards or planning
35 or zoning costs. He also hears it from local homeowners where they get quoted higher here than in other
36 New Hampshire towns. Impact fees were noted as being high in Lebanon as well, and an impediment to
37 building here. Vice Chair Faunce added that these fees also help offset higher taxes for Lebanon property
38 owners.

39
40 Mr. Reichert added that many contractors from out of the area come to work in Lebanon. Many follow the
41 building codes and rules, whereas some nearby towns do not follow the rules, building codes, etc.

42
43 Chair McNamara asked if we cannot control building costs, what can we (Lebanon) do and what direction
44 can the City of Lebanon head? For the Barrows Street project, the City decreased the land costs for
45 builders and plans to offer pattern zoning. Mr. Dube added that this has a long tail though, and it is hard
46 to know if what they are doing is working, at least for the short term.

47
48 The City of Lebanon has had a general policy for at least the past 20 years, that they do not want to
49 expand water and sewer. It is very costly to build and to maintain, and capacity is limited. There is no
50 desire to push out into new areas so we are for the most part looking at infill. Are we better off with

1 zoning that limits the number of large-scale apartment complexes and reserving that land for a future time
2 when the cost of construction is more reasonable? Once the land is gone, it is gone, and given it is finite,
3 this could be a logical policy to put in place here. Mr. Dube asked if this is posing more of a problem for
4 the short term. Vice Chair Faunce said that he thinks there is a place for both opportunities and he thinks
5 ***Planning needs to come ahead of Zoning from this point forward***, with a more human scale. Lebanon
6 needs to declare what they want here and entertain that. He suggested that building properties that look
7 like houses (2-4 units) could make sense, rather than mostly high rises. Solely single-family new
8 construction is not practical at this juncture. Providing approved plan sets for builders and buyers is in
9 the works, and this could be lucrative for builders while helping achieve Lebanon's housing goals.
10 Planning is very open and welcoming to those builders who want to build here.

11
12 Chair McNamara suggested it would be timely to have the City of Lebanon review R-3 to allow for more
13 duplexes and larger units (2-4), lower roofline housing.

14
15 Ms. Sara Riley asked to have a map displayed on the room screen and said that the duplex and triplex
16 would be allowed wherever the pattern zoning overlays R-3s are, and these can be completed in the
17 denser, downtown areas, which is a large area.

18
19 Chair McNamara said that there is a bank, Merrimack Savings Bank, who is willing to honor the low
20 interest rates of current homeowners, to loan them money (as a second mortgage) at that same low rate
21 (for example 3%), to build ADUs on their properties. Mr. Reichert said the issue here is that the ages of a
22 majority of these property owners are more senior (50-70 years of age or older) and they for the most part
23 are unwilling to become landlords at this stage in their lives.

24
25 Ms. Riley agreed with Vice Chair Faunce in his earlier comment that ***Planning needs to come before***
26 ***Zoning***. She posed that this Housing Task Force can take a closer look at this, to ***see what they would***
27 ***like for the City of Lebanon to look like, and also what kind of carrots could be put out in the market,***
28 ***to help make this vision happen, as opposed to what they have been seeing in recent years.***

29
30 Ms. Riley said there is also ample opportunity to build housing on parking lots, and turn those into denser
31 areas, both in Lebanon and West Lebanon.

32
33 There was much discussion and opinion about the term "neighborhood" and clearly, this takes on many
34 faces depending on the location. Mr. Dube suggested that this Housing Task Force define the term
35 neighborhood. Chair McNamara said he sees 2 different ways of addressing neighborhoods, one where
36 you are taking an existing neighborhood and amping it up a bit, without disturbing or destroying the
37 character of the neighborhood, in other words "infill". The second is creating a new neighborhood, such
38 as Centerra, and creating new neighborhoods is much more challenging than infill. Vice Chair Faunce
39 added that most of us grew up in neighborhoods, and those did not exist as some point in time, they were
40 created. The immediate task at hand is to influence what happens to housing here in Lebanon, and what
41 the City of Lebanon becomes.

42
43 They want to be more intentional about defining what a new neighborhood is; ***this is the inflection point***
44 ***for the City of Lebanon***. To be intentional, with a focus on encouraging what is needed to be built here,
45 the "long look", even though this takes longer with a plan for the next 20, 30, 40 years). ***Hurrying is not***
46 ***the answer.***

47
48 Mr. Dube mentioned Quail Hollow and wondered if that could be duplicated? Chair McNamara said he
49 was involved in that project from day one, it is freestanding and that this area has clearly become a
50 "neighborhood" to the people who live there.

1
2 In terms of “new neighborhoods”, next steps could be to identify those areas where there is potential to
3 contribute to an existing neighborhood or build a new one and also have a better definition of what
4 exactly the City of Lebanon considers a neighborhood, so that people understand what the City means
5 when this term is used. He noted that there is a lot of fear in the community that the City of Lebanon is
6 going to allow big apartment buildings to be plunked down in the middle of a single-family
7 neighborhood, which is not the case.

8
9 B. Housing Chapter Outline & Process

10
11 Mr. Reichert said that they are planning to have a meeting with the Planning Board, along with Steve
12 Whitman, RKG Associates, in the month of January. There, they will present the deliverable and once
13 they get that feedback, they’ll share potential deliverables with the Housing Task Force. Mr. Whitman
14 proposed that for their next meeting with the TF in January, the TF look at the outline and share any
15 issues or opportunities with how it was structured, prior to their meeting with the Planning Board, and
16 focus most of their time on what are some actions that are housing related, that could help guide the
17 writing of the Chapter.

18
19 Chair McNamara said it would be much easier if they had a team of developers that they could work with,
20 that was willing and able to build out that plan, ones that understand the City of Lebanon’s vision. He
21 asked, as they are developing their own Chapter, what do they want to see? They can create “perfection”
22 but that could then go on the shelf. They need to address a plan that can be implemented.

23
24 Ms. Riley asked about the old Land Use Chapter and they have an active Land Use Map. The Planning
25 Board might need to rethink the land use map, right away, given the space that can be built on is limited.

26
27 Vice Chair Faunce proposed that this Housing Task Force should write out things that they want and need
28 to promote, preserve, and modify. He will provide each TF member this same list of topics to work from
29 and come up with their own ideas of wants and needs; this can help inform how they move forward. All
30 of their ideas will be shared with Mr. Reichert. TF members were encouraged to step back from what they
31 think are possibilities or not, stay open, and be creative with vision; they will review their input in their
32 January meeting. Also, they were asked to look at the current Master Plan so that they are familiar with it.

33
34 Mr. Reichert suggested they be sure that they add housing challenges such as for the homeless.

35
36 Chair McNamara reminded the TF that they are heavily influenced by property taxes, and much of this is
37 outside of the City’s control, given the way New Hampshire taxes. There are NH towns like
38 Moultonborough and Meridith with extremely high valued second homes, and those properties absorb
39 much of the tax burden. Lebanon (and Manchester, and Concord and Portsmouth, and Keene) is a highly
40 desired community with an archaic way of taxing homeowners, and so homeowners here and in those
41 towns take the brunt of the tax burden. He added an example that approximately 70% of calls to the
42 Police Department are from people who are not residents here, which requires a much larger police force
43 that would otherwise be needed. The City has proposed ideas to help with property tax relief, but each of
44 their ideas to date have been turned down at the State level. So, they need to understand the environment
45 they are working in. Many would say that Lebanon is not surviving, and in fact is driving people away.
46 This is not a political issue; this will ultimately impact the State negatively and already has in some
47 instances.

1 Ms. Riley suggested they add Lebanon’s Open Space Plan to be included in the Housing Chapter, things
2 to be informed by in the Outline of Sections. There are lots of interesting points, nuggets, and resources
3 within this document, though it is admittedly lengthy.

4
5 Lastly, she also encouraged all TF member to listen to “Brave Little State” on NPR, Vermont. A recent
6 episode focused on housing and conservation and they also touched on why there are no halfway houses,
7 and the reasons why we are where we are today. While it was about Vermont, many similar things apply
8 here in Lebanon.

9

10 **4. OTHER BUSINESS:**

11

12

13 **5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

14

- 15 A. January 26: Planning Board Meeting: Master Plan Changes

16

17 **6. ADJOURNMENT:**

18

19 *Vice Chair Faunce MOVED for adjournment*
20 *Seconded by Mr. Dube*

21

22 **The MOTION was approved (5-0)*

23

24 **The meeting was adjourned at 9:52 AM**

25

26 Respectfully submitted,
27 Cinda Mersel
28 Recording Secretary