



**LEBANON HOUSING TASK FORCE
MAY 18, 2026 - 8:15 AM
MEETING ROOM 1, 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: 571 597 083#). If you have trouble accessing this meeting, please email [Catheryn Hembree](#).

2. Approval of Minutes

- A. May 4, 2026

3. Study Items

- A. Housing Master Plan Chapter Discussion

4. Old Business

5. New Business

6. Other Business

7. Future Agenda Items

8. Adjournment

The order of agenda items is subject to change.

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Any person with a disability who wishes to attend this public meeting and needs additional accommodation, please contact the ADA coordinator at City Hall by calling 603-448-4220 at least 72 hours in advance so that the City can make any necessary arrangements.

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
MEETING MINUTES
Remote Via Microsoft Teams
LebanonNH.gov/Live
Monday May 4, 2026
8:15AM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tim McNamara, Chair, Andrew Faunce, Vice Chair,
Ryan Dube, Ellen Smith Ahern

MEMBERS ABSENT: John D'Entremont, Dave Duncan (Alt.), Sarah Riley, Tia Winter

STAFF PRESENT: Nathan Reichert, Director, Planning & Development,
Cathryn Hembree, Associate Planner, Planning & Development

1 **1. CALL TO ORDER:**

2

3 Mr. Tim McNamara, Chair, started the meeting at 8:15AM.

4

5 Ms. Catheryn Hembree read the Preamble.

6

7 Ms. Jennifer Sargent, Director of Housing & Child Care, Dartmouth Medical Center, participated in this
8 meeting virtually.

9

10

11 **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

12 A. April 13, 2026

13

14 *Mr. Dube MOVED to approve the April 13, 2026 Minutes as amended*
15 *Seconded by Ms. Smith Ahern*

16

17 **The MOTION was approved (3-0), 1 abstained*

18

19 Amendment: Vice Chair Andrew Faunce was absent from the April 13, 2026 meeting.

20

21

22 **3. STUDY ITEMS:**

23

24 A. Housing Master Plan Chapter Discussion

25

26 Mr. Steve Whitman, Resilience Planning & Design started with some points about the first Draft that he
27 provided this Task Force (in advance of today's meeting), including that they reformatted the Chapter to
28 focus on the 7 key issues and then they used these same 7 under actions/ priorities as have been discussed
29 in prior meetings. Also, he said they did the best they could with the photos, but if anyone has others to
30 include, let him know.

1
2 Chair McNamara really likes the format and he also likes the pictures that Steve included. He provided
3 his input on some specific items within the Draft, and Mr. Whitman will incorporate these, along with a
4 Table of Contents and including an Appendix.

5
6 Chair McNamara went on to say that they want to emphasize the pathway to ownership which helps with
7 community stability and it helps to build wealth. The percentage of renters has been going up and is
8 currently at just over 50%. Related to this, when we talk about the “missing middle”, cottage homes and
9 even smaller homes on conventional lots are some pathways to ownership. He added that the majority of
10 older homes in Lebanon and West Lebanon are actual illustrations of our “pattern zoning”, that is homes
11 on smaller lots, e.g. 4,000 square feet.

12
13 Mr. Dube said that this Chapter needs to be clear that while there are thousands of people renting here,
14 and this is what has driven growth in this part of housing, there is not a lack of demand for family sized
15 housing and owning homes, rather people have chosen what is currently available, which is a majority of
16 1 and 2 bedroom rentals. This plan is for the next 10, 15, 20 years, so this Chapter needs to lay the
17 groundwork to be looking ahead for the anticipated market changes. Graphics will help tell the story for
18 much of this data.

19
20 Chair McNamara noted that family sizes are getting smaller and this will be referenced in the national and
21 regional demographic data.

22
23 It was agreed that the section outlining things that the City of Lebanon can and cannot do will be
24 informative for the public; it needs to provide concrete examples. Also including actual areas of
25 improvement and plans in the narrative can help emphasize that there has been much work already done,
26 and of course much still needed.

27
28 They will also place emphasis on the fact that land that is suitable for development is an increasingly
29 limited supply, which is a key feature in Lebanon, and therefore will put an emphasis on infill for much of
30 the new development here. This is a big factor and will become an even bigger one as we come closer and
31 closer to that limitation. Development here will involve infill rather than more greenfield development.
32 This Chapter should touch on the difference between these two. It is a key consideration in seeing what
33 gets built.

34
35 Ms. Smith Ahern suggested that they provide some “housing jargon”(a list of Definitions) for the
36 layperson to have a better understanding of this report, for example “neighborhoods”, “community
37 character”, “local values” workforce housing”, “rent burdened”, “walkability”, “infill”, and “green fill”.

38
39 She added that emphasizing the positive that comes from conserving land, and helping people to imagine
40 what that looks like would be useful, rather than just an image on a map. Mr. Dube stated that by
41 preserving, we get to maintain the natural character of rural areas in Lebanon, which most people here
42 really value. Chair McNamara agreed and said that they can have some definitions spelled out and also
43 that within the text itself, utilize layperson terms and language.

44
45 Mr. Reichert said that we all bring to the table a set of value assumptions that inform how we approach
46 this topic, such as that home ownership is a good thing, neighborhoods and communities help us to get to
47 know our neighbors, etc. He suggested they might want to include a value statement that by consensus we
48 agree on, to clearly articulate these values. Vice Chair Faunce added that much of what they’re talking
49 about as relates to values, conveniently fit the problem in front of us, which is that we need to house more
50 people, which is more density (infill), values of sociability, neighborliness, etc. And if these are not your

1
2 values, that is good too, since there are also big swaths of land and residential three, to fit other ways that
3 people want to live.

4
5 Mr. Dube would like to see the median monthly rents to be spelled out by size, one bedroom, two
6 bedroom, family size units. He also said that HUD came through recently with their final Lebanon median
7 income, which is too small so they used Grafton County, which is \$112,000. He offered some other
8 figures as well; he will resend them.

9
10 There was some discussion about taxes and incomes and home values increasing dramatically over the
11 past five years. There is a supply and demand imbalance and Vice Chair Faunce asked how they might
12 want to include this, *if* they do. Also, the singular organizing theme is how do we keep from becoming a
13 Hanover or Norwich? How do we address and arrest this? The current trends in Lebanon are making it so
14 that only people of means can live in Lebanon, which is not part of our character, our DNA, rather
15 Lebanon is a working town This Chapter needs to focus on what the actions are that the City can take,
16 what are the partnerships that the City can develop, to create and sustain housing suitable for a broad
17 swath of people, in other words, allow for socioeconomic diversity.

18
19 The City is taking the opportunity to support our character, with projects like Barrow Street, Muse
20 apartment buildings, and the redevelopment of the properties on Main Street in West Lebanon. We must
21 start doing this as a program, not just an initiative.

22
23 Taxes might be touched on to include the many outside factors that impact our taxes here. All Chapters
24 are impacted by taxes. Ms. Sargent suggested that Page 4 in the Draft might be an appropriate place to
25 add a brief narrative about taxes. She also said that the current rent for a studio apartment in Lebanon is
26 \$2,200, reinforcing what Mr. Dube said, that being that the rents stated in the Draft document are low. An
27 update prior to the final document is needed.

28
29 Also, it was agreed that a short explanation of how taxes work in New Hampshire must be included. State
30 the fact that the primary system of taxation in the State of New Hampshire is property taxes, and property
31 taxes figure prominently into affordability. And that they are regressive, meaning that they impact the
32 people that are least capable of paying them. We need to explain this while being non-judgmental.

33
34 Mill rates might be mentioned as well, and possibly adding mill rates in nearby areas, to help further
35 explain what goes into these.

36
37 Vice Chair Faunce recommended that they invite the City Manager to develop a two-pager that provides
38 the explanation of this taxation topic and how it works and have a durable and regularly updated
39 communication around this particular issue, since it is an ongoing issue. This would be outside of the
40 Housing Chapter.

41
42 Ms. Smith Ahern added that there needs to be some commentary about the fact that our current State
43 structure puts the burden of taxes solely on property owners. Because of the way they are structured,
44 larger towns that provide more services out of necessity, the tax burden increases dramatically for larger
45 towns.

46
47 Chair McNamara would like to site the 2021 NIFA information. Mr. Dube will get his that information
48 and he is confident that NIFA would allow this to be included in our Housing Chapter.

1 Mr. Reichert brought of the fact that the top 5 employers in Lebanon are the source of much of the need
2 for additional housing. It is a good thing but nevertheless exasperates the situation. It is a regional
3 situation, not just Lebanon.

4
5 It is expected for Lebanon to do their part, but it is also necessary for these employers to help create
6 solutions. We do care about social, economic diversity here, and hence the need for employers to
7 contribute to the solutions as well.

8
9 Chair McNamara said it is important for them to answer where Lebanon wants to be. He cited Claremont
10 and that they had made the actual statement that they want to be at 40,000 residents. Unlimited growth is
11 not an option; it was undecided if this should be in the new Housing Chapter.

12
13 Vice Chair Faunce added that this ties into Lebanon's capacity such as sewer and water. He thinks it
14 would be responsible for them to include this, possibly in the Vision. Mr. Reichert also asked: How long
15 does the landfill last? What is the maximum buildout capacity for Lebanon? What is the future growth
16 plan for DMC? More community dialog at this juncture is in order.

17
18 Somewhere in the Master Plan, it would be helpful to acknowledge where Lebanon wants to be. This can
19 serve as a guiding, organizing principle.

20
21 Mr. Dube added that the smaller employers are also negatively impacted. This topic will be handled in the
22 Economic Chapter.

23
24 To summarize, Mr. Whitman will focus on today's discussion and then get an updated Draft document
25 out to all TF members.

26
27 Ms. Smith Ahern added that they also need to focus on low to middle income people, including workers
28 as well as older people living on fixed incomes. Mr. Dube asked for Mr. Whitman to consider adding a
29 narrative of why the pressure is so high for those living on fixed incomes.

30
31 **4. OLD BUSINESS:**

32
33 **5. NEW ITEMS:**

34
35 **6. OTHER:**

36
37 **7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:**

38
39 **8. ADJOURNMENT:**

40
41 *Vice Chair Andrew Faunce MOVED for adjournment*
42 *Seconded by Mr. Ryan Dube*

43
44 **The MOTION was approved (4-0)*

45
46 **The meeting adjourned at 9:52AM.**

47
48 Respectfully submitted,
49 Cinda Mersel
50 Recording Secretary

Lebanon, NH Housing Chapter Editing Matrix						
Commenter's Name:	Page #:	Paragraph #:	Your comment or question:	Clear edit	Needs clarification	Endorsed by Task Force
Steve	1		Issues #7	X		
	1		Add Appendices	X		
Tim	4	Graphic	Add "Availability of Developable Land"	X		
Jennifer DHMC	4, 5		Add references to taxes and how they impact housing choice and availability on these pages	X		
Tim	8	Images	Update report images to remove "Draft"	X		
Andrew	9	Tenure Patterns	Examine and rework this text		X	
Ryan	9	Rent Graphic	Break this graphic down further by unit type		X	
Ryan	9	Median HH Income	Questions the number, and has thoughts on alternative numbers to use		X	
Ryan	10	2	Change 50% to 30%	X		
Ryan	12		Changes to text on one-two person households?		X	
Tim	12	Box under graphic	Change "us" to "is"		X	
Tim	15	Relevant Trends	\$1,800 - \$2,000 <u>per month</u> range.	X		
Andrew	22	Section headers for actions	Change wording to be more action oriented. "Address Persistent Supply and Demand Imbalance", etc.	X		
Tim			Emphasize a pathway to ownership as a way to build equity and help community stability. This should include smaller homes on small lots, and should recognize the Pattern Zoning.		X	
Ryan/Nate			Include the number of units by type constructed over the past 10 years, the units in the development pipeline, and reference the types of new units desired. Look at presentation by Mark Goodwin. Where and how to include this data?		X	

			<p>Identify housing jargon and replace or explain those words and phrases. Include definitions if necessary. Additional feedback provided: Let's define terms early on and illustrate them throughout the chapter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workforce housing: When we say workforce housing, we're referring to housing options that will accommodate folks working at all levels of employment in our local industries. In a DH context, as our largest local workplace, this means doctors, nurses, custodial staff, security guards, etc. It takes all of these folks to keep our local economy running, and we want them to be included in our housing planning. - Infill: When we say infill, we're describing housing options that emerge in currently developed spaces, focusing new growth in places that are already connected as walkable, vibrant neighborhoods. This kind of growth is an investment in shared green spaces (like Star Hill Woods, Colburn Park, the pedestrian rail trails, Storrs Hill) and existing infrastructure rather than sprawl that cuts into our surrounding wild lands and overextends our city budget and capacity for infrastructure. - Local character/values: By local character, we mean the look and feel of our Lebanon neighborhoods and green spaces. We're describing Lebanon's patchwork quilt of historic mill worker housing, single family and multi-family homes with wide porches, affordable housing in the town center that brings our older residents connected to the city's daily life, newer multi-family buildings, clusters of cottage housing and carefully-tended trailer homes surrounded by plantings and connected to local businesses, parks, libraries and public schools by safe pedestrian pathways, public transit and easily navigated roads. 		X	
Ellen						
Nate			Need a value statement. (Is this envisioned to be different than the Vision and Goals?)		X	
			I'd like to see our obligation to housing/sheltering residents reflected as a guiding principle or value - it is touched upon here and there in quiet references to transitional housing, etc. but concerns about shelter and a growing unhoused population were a thread throughout our community outreach, so that needs to be acknowledged more directly in this chapter.		X	
Ellen						
			Is there a singular organizing theme we can clarify related to socio-economic diversity? Additional Feedback: Socioeconomic diversity and inclusiveness is a key piece of Lebanon's historic and present character, community strength and resilience - it is why many of us have moved here and why more of us want to stay here. In order to sustain this socioeconomic diversity, Lebanon's housing goals must serve low and mid-income residents (including elders on fixed incomes), whose needs will not be met by simply "trusting the market".		X	
Andrew/ Ellen						
Ellen			Any ways to reference the tax issue and its impact on housing?		X	

Ryan			Referenced data from NH Housing and the potential to cite this additional data in the Chapter		X	
Nate			Show growth of the top five employers and connect this to the demand for housing and the need for regional solutions		X	
Ryan			New graphic idea - change of income vs. housing cost over time		X	