



**Council on Housing Stability  
February 14, 2024  
10:30 PM – 12:00 PM**

**MINUTES**

**Members in Attendance:**

Eric Adams

Patte Ardizzoni

Mayor Jim Bouley

George N. Copadis

Rob Dapice

Maria Devlin

Mayor George Hansel

Christina Dotson

Melissa Hatfield

Mayor Andrew Hosmer

Katy Easterly Martey

Warren Perry

Chris

Santaniello

Miles Whitner

Dominique

Rust

Andrew

Dorsett

Drew Holmes

Mandy

Lancaster

Maggie Pritchard

Rob Dapice

Robert Quinn

Senator James Gray

Rob Rodler

Anne Duncan Cooley

Robert Mack

**1. Approval of minutes from December 19, 2023, CHS meeting** – Christine Santaniello, Associate Commissioner Department of Health and Human Services

Chris Santaniello welcomed all Council members. The Council on Housing Stability's meeting

minutes from December 19, 2023, were unanimously approved.

## **2. 1915i Update:** Kristy MacDonald, Program Specialist, State of New Hampshire Bureau of Homeless Supports

Kristy provided Council members with an overview of the State's Medicaid amendment, which is on target for a July 1, 2024 implementation date. The amendment acts like a waiver, identifying a category of people and providing specific services to that population, including housing transition services, budget development, lease negotiation, helping clients transfer into housing and developing the skills to interact with landlords. The IT system that is needed at the state level to access the services is called New Heights.

Currently, they are planning to establish goals that will escort individuals through the program. The 1915i initiative will continue to be a regular CHS agenda item, including an overview of who the providers are for different services (Tenant Support Training)

**NEXT STEPS:** Establish 1915i as a regular CHS agenda item

## **3. Creating Housing Stability Through Lived Experience - Criminal Records and Re-entry Into Society - Update and Discussion:** Caroline Conlin, Consultant

Caroline Conlin provided the Council with an update on the Workgroup's recent efforts.

It was noted that Council member Kadja Mower's research has identified a number of states that have enacted the **Clean Slate Act**, allowing for the sealing of records after a period of time. Under this Act, the records still exist but can only be viewed under certain circumstances. This will not seal the records of individuals who are required to register as a sex offender or for anyone who has been convicted of a crime which a life sentence may be imposed.

### **Clean Slate Act commonalities identified across participating states include:**

1. The Act applies to **misdemeanors and felony** convictions (varies by state but roughly between 3-10 years after the last conviction)
2. The **Offender has to submit an application and pay a fee** (fee varies by state)
3. The offender has to have completed all sentence components, including;
  - a. Prison time
  - b. Parole and special parole
  - c. Probation
  - d. A current criminal history check
  - e. A complete hearing

### **Barriers to participation include the following:**

- a. Lack of knowledge of the process
- b. Challenges of navigating bureaucracy
- c. Lack of legal representation

- d. Court fees and fines need to be paid in full
- e. A lengthy waiting period

When individuals with a criminal history do participate in the Clean Slate Act, the state finds:

- a. Very **low rates of recidivism**
- b. Improved **employment outcomes**

→ Which can lead to increased housing stability

After our December 2023 meeting, it was proposed that the workgroup also consider the **Fair Housing Act**. Chris Schott, Director of the Fair Housing Project from NH Legal Assistance and an active workgroup member, provided the Council with an overview and his perspective on the Fair Housing Act.

### Fair Housing Act

- Please reference Chris Schott's presentation [linked here](#).
- It was noted that New Hampshire Housing, DHHS, and CDFA have created a Fair Housing Council (active council) that navigates housing discrimination identified through complaints.
- NH Employment and Security offered a Federal Bonding Program and a Re-Career Program - whose resources should coincide with this initiative by helping an individual maintain or keep their job.
- The Council will consider ensuring that people are **aware** of these available resources.
- Section 8/Federal funding is available for housing
  - Currently, a two to six-year wait
  - Need to be eligible for Federal Programs
  - A small number of housing spots (25) were funded through the Integrated Housing Program, which now serves 50 people (speaks to the demand and need for the service for people who would be excluded from the service)
- Homeless Courts
  - 19 jurisdictions around the country are homeless courts (pre-diversion)
  - Divert participants from getting a criminal charge
  - Boston and San Diego have a great model that will be launched in the next few months)
  - The workgroup will seek to identify best practices

**NEXT STEPS: Jay Ruais to present to the Council, identify best practices, and share them with other communities.**

- Should we include landlord/property owners in Clean Slate Discussions? Should we get their buy-in?
  - Maria/FIT: With landlord involvement and engagement - part of RRH initiatives.
- Katy noted that ProHousing resources will allow us to coordinate collaboration, ensure best practices, and identify needs as they come up.

Based upon his perspective, further research and input from the Council - we will continue to explore next steps and what aligns best with our work.

**NEXT STEPS:** Questions about access to Criminal Records and its impact on housing will be included in the upcoming survey that is facilitated by the Council.

#### **4. Legislative Update - Elissa Margolin, Director, Housing Action, New Hampshire**

Elissa Margolin of Housing Action New Hampshire reviewed upcoming relevant legislation (presentation linked above) supporting the following:

1. **Housing Production Financing**
2. **Housing Stability**
3. **Homeless and Homeless Prevention Services**
4. **Improved Zoning**

#### **5. 2024 Council Goals:** Katherine Easterly Martey, Executive Director, Community Development Finance Authority

##### **1. Strategic Plan Update: 2024 (current strategic plan ends in 2024)**

Katey noted that the current 2021- 2024 strategic plan ends after 2024. The sustainability of the Council will depend upon additional financing. Council leadership would like to secure additional funding to support the Council's work beyond 2024 and provide a dedicated housing planner

##### **2. Regional Leadership and Coordination Workgroup**

The RL&C workgroup continues to focus its work on removing regulatory barriers to affordable housing and reviewed the following priorities for 2024:

- Septic Standards (Legislatively addressed in 2024)
- Accessory Dwelling Units (Legislatively addressed in 2024)
- Fourplexes (Duplexes legislatively addressed in 2024)
- Parking (Legislatively addressed in 2024)
- Additional funding to provide a housing planner
- Alternative housing solutions: PODs, tiny houses, etc.
- Manufactured Housing (Legislatively addressed in 2024)
- Mixed Use (Legislatively addressed in 2024)
- Multi-Family
- Small-scale Residential Development of fewer than 20 units

The workgroup's more immediate work will focus on the following:

1. Exploring alternative solutions to housing, such as tiny houses, pod living, CrossMod Homes, etc.
  - Best practices
  - Regulatory considerations
    - Available resources
    - Short-term strategies for consideration
  - Barriers

2. Housing Development Trainings and Support for New Developers of Under 20 Units
  - Preliminary discussions have begun focused on getting smaller developers through the zoning process

The workgroup also identified other priorities likely to arise in 2025, including:

1. Infill development
2. Sprinkler requirements
3. NHH Toolbox - has (20) different models for twenty different zoning strategies. Continue to educate and make sure that those resources are available.
4. Density-related solutions: Creating flexibility within regulation.
5. Pre-permitting: Soliciting model plans for multi-family development that can be approved—pre-approved plans with the architects attached to them. This process is currently underway in Oregon.

The following will be considered when measuring success and impact:

- Quantifying the new number of units created over time
- Measuring renter or owner-occupied housing

It was noted that measuring change from policy changes is hard to capture on the planning and zoning side. It will take decades to see if that impact is achieved.

### 3. Housing and Homelessness Workgroup

The workgroup reviewed the workplan they identified for 2024 and beyond.

## Looking Ahead – 2024 and Beyond!

