

**Sheffield Housing Commission**  
**Minutes of meeting**  
**April 18<sup>th</sup> 2012**

The Sheffield Housing Commission met at the Sheffield Town Hall on April 18<sup>th</sup> 2012 at 7:30 pm

Members present were: Marilyn Wightman, Kathy Orlando, Christine Ludwiszewski and Paul O'Brien.

**Call to order:** Marilyn Wightman brought the meeting to order at 7:45 pm.

**Approval of minutes:** The minutes of March 21<sup>st</sup> 2012 were approved with changes

**Unfinished business :** Marilyn Wightman (Chairman Citrin was absent ) opened the "working meeting" by asking members to exchange any data they had pertinent to the Commission's discussions concerning housing needs in Sheffield. This data included the 2010 US Census data (the demographic profile data for Sheffield) , Berkshire County Data profile-Means of travel to work for workers aged 16 and over-from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, The Future of Housing in the United States Connecticut-18<sup>th</sup> Gallivan Conference, and Connecticut's Changing Socioeconomics-18<sup>th</sup> Gallivan Conference ( <http://www.law.uconn.edu/event/2012/02/24/18th-gallivan-conference> ).

Christine Ludwiszewski attended the 18<sup>th</sup> Gallivan conference and summarized the presentations for the Commission. The data for Connecticut points to an aging population who own substantial property , as this population moves on, their homes will be for sale. The aging population will be replaced by less well trained or skilled workers who are receiving lower paying jobs, and thus will be unable to afford many of the homes that will be for sale. The conversation centered around that notion, that homes will be available, but few people will be able to afford them, how should communities deal with that issue ? The Commission's attention was then placed on how does this apply to Sheffield and the Berkshires, are we going to experience the same thing and if so what will our response be and how will it affect housing needs in Sheffield? Christine Ludwiszewski contacted Orland Rodriguez to see if he would be interested in helping the Commission plan a similar presentation (like the one at the 18<sup>th</sup> Gallivan Conference) for Sheffield and the Berkshires to get the conversation started. Please see Orland Rodriguez profile at <http://www.ctvoices.org/about/staff/orlando-rodriguez-ma>

The Commission members agreed that the Commission should gather all relevant housing data (from the previously referenced and other sources to be determined). In addition, it was agreed that the Commission should carefully craft a survey (to be sent to all homes and businesses in town) that asks questions about citizens housing needs. Christine Ludwiszewski agreed to contact the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation asking them if that had a survey that could fill our need.

The Commission discussed the rental units data from the US Census, questioning the number of 325 rental units in the town. This number surprised the Commission, there was no breakdown in the data that would better define the number, farm workers rentals, private school rentals etc.

Once surveys have been crafted, delivered , collected and analyzed the Commission will have a better idea of where to focus their attention. The use of technology was suggested as a way to match up people looking for housing with those people who have housing available, including rental and or sales. Lack of public transportation also plays a role in Sheffield's housing picture, since the cost of transportation must be considered by people who would choose to live in Sheffield, it will cost them more to live in Sheffield because of a lack of public transportation.

**Adjourn :** The meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm, Next meeting will be held on 5/ 16 /2012

Respectfully submitted Paul O'Brien