

## Town of Richmond Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: March 27, 2024

Time Started: 5:31p

Time Ended: 7:00p

Keith Osborne, Host, Town Planner

Present: Virginia Clarke, Mark Hall (Chair), Andrew Mannix, Matt Parisi, Connie van Eeghen

Guest: (none)

Absent: (none)

Committee is approved at 5 members, 2 alternates (5/16/22); quorum is 3

1. Welcome and troubleshooting
2. Adjustments to Agenda - none
3. Approval of the February 27, 2024 meeting minutes
  - a. Accepted as written
4. In progress projects:
  - a. Town meeting debrief/Handout effectiveness
    - i. A little learning:
      1. A handout related to an agenda item may not be handed out in the meeting space, although handing out in the hallway is ok
      2. There were some consistent “no” voices, especially when voting on charities
      3. The paper balloting process, early in the day, tired people out from discussions – and was confusing
    - ii. No responses on “interest form”
    - iii. Extra flyers are in the Town Center, Planning and Zoning Office
  - b. Housing Summit Ideation
    - i. CvE: like Speakers’ Events on Housing to create a local picture of what is important about housing in Richmond
    - ii. Mark: What is our objective
    - iii. Lisa: SB does not have a single idea about a Housing Summit; we have a problem but we need an understanding that includes land available, state and local law, and other issues
    - iv. Matt: we are being reactive, not proactive; what we’re doing now is not enough. A 1.5 acre lot in the village residential district does not have the zoning density (7 units) to work for a developer
      1. Keith: the Town would have to be a Housing Manager to make it work, which is not a fit
      2. Andrew: managing the property is not the Town’s role; facilitating it is. How do we connect with people who say “no”
        - a. It’s hard to get water/sewer allocation in Richmond; make it easier. How did Essex figure out how to make this easier? The Town eats some of the cost. No developer wants to come here to set up housing; they are tagged as “bad” people in Richmond. Extending the W&S line could be key to building more housing at scale in Richmond.
        - b. Act 250 is an impediment also, but this will take time to sort out
        - c. Educate the public: what does a developer actually do? What do they need in order to move housing forward here? Make this part of the overall conversation.
        - d. Virginia: the anti-developer sentiment is very strong. The Planning Commission has been working on this. Is it part of the community identify? An educational campaign is one possibility.
        - e. Andrew: we need a longer Grand List in order to spread the cost of housing and the support needed for housing.



1. Matt: commercial lenders across the country are getting worried; the cost of building is too high for a positive return.
6. Affordable Housing definitions discussion
  - a. Keith has a worksheet on this definition – table for now; discuss next meeting
7. Other business, correspondence, and adjournment
  - a. Elections:
    - i. Chair: Virginia nominated Mark; Connie seconded
      1. Mark is willing to take this position for one more year
      2. Unanimously voted: Mark is Chair
    - ii. Clerk: Mark nominated Connie; Virginia seconded
      1. Connie is willing
      2. Unanimously voted: Connie is Clerk
    - iii. Vice Chair: Virginia nominated Matt; Connie seconded
      1. Matt is willing
      2. Unanimously voted: Matt is Vice Chair
  - b. Water/Sewer regulations: Matt suggested we need to understand better how to make changes in policy or update the infrastructure
    - i. Could be proposed at a W/S meeting
    - ii. Learn how it works first, for example, through conversations with Essex; invite to join us at a future meeting and perhaps join of their meetings; or talk to David Sanders, Chair of the W&S Commission – Andrew will follow up; Virginia will consider who from Richmond W/S system
    - iii. Continue at next meeting
  - c. Next meeting: April 24, 2024 at 5:30 (no Clerk; find a sub!)
  - d. Proposed agenda to include: Affordable Housing definitions; Water/Sewer regulations/policy; suggestions on Committee goals/work from Matt and Andrew
  - e. Agreed to adjourn at: 7:00

Recorded by Connie van Eeghen