

Town of Richmond Housing Committee Minutes

Date: **November 9, 2020**

Time Started: 7:32 pm

Time Ended: 8:44p

Ravi Venkataraman (Host)

Present: Virginia Clarke, Carole Furr, Mark Hall, Sarah Heim (Chair), Miranda Lescaze, Zachary Maia, Andrew Mannix, Ruth Miller, Connie van Eeghen

Guest: none

Absent: Jackie Pichette, Mark Fausel

Quorum is 5; 5 votes to pass any motion

This meeting was not recorded.

- 1) Welcome and troubleshooting
- 2) Adjustments to the Agenda - None
- 3) Approval of October 27, 2020 meeting minutes
 - a) Motion by Zachary Maia to approve the October 27, 2020 meeting minutes, seconded by Miranda Lescaze.
Voting: unanimous. Motion carried
- 4) Public comment on non-agenda items - none
- 5) Discussion of Outline for Housing Needs Assessment
 - a) Mark Hall, Miranda Lescaze, Andrew Mannix, and Zachary Maia met to discuss outline for housing needs assessment before the meeting and created a draft outline for the committee to review. The subcommittee reviewed housing needs assessments from other committees to craft outline.
 - b) Mark Hall highlighted main sections: Home ownership characteristics, housing stock, pipeline for new projects in town, affordability, rental housing outlook, consideration of impacts of COVID, and key findings. Hall asked if recommendations should be included in the report
 - c) Andrew Mannix: the outline is a template for the group. He encouraged committee members to add data or information under every section header.
 - d) Virginia Clarke: is data available for all the items?
 - e) Andrew Mannix: data is available for all items under section 2.
 - f) Virginia Clarke: How is this a housing needs assessment?
 - i) Miranda Lescaze: The structure is typical for a housing needs assessment, with a comprehensive review of existing conditions and an analysis of existing conditions to determine housing needs. Interpretation and analysis can be drawn out more in the outline.
 - ii) Mark Hall: Should experts be brought in to provide insight on housing data and review housing needs?
 - iii) Miranda Lescaze: Experts can be brought in once the data on present condition have been collated
 - g) Sarah Heim: Would members like to volunteer to take on sections? Or would the subcommittee like to take the first tack at addressing the sections?
 - h) Andrew Mannix: will address section 2 with the help from the town - Home Ownership Characteristics
 - i) Zachary Maia: will address section 1 - Richmond Demographics and Trends
 - j) Miranda Lescaze: will research renter needs for section "3" – Rental Housing
 - k) Andrew Mannix: is there a value in posting a FPF survey to collect data from the Town?
 - i) Who is our target? Current residents or those who don't live here but want to?
 - ii) Ruth Miller: consider a grass roots process, identifying the barriers, through interviews, targeting elderly housing and other sections of the Town for "3b" – Renter Characteristics
 - iii) Connie van Eeghen: consider FPF posts of the past year of those who were seeking housing in Richmond: what attracted them to Richmond and what were the barriers to coming here
 - iv) Virginia Clarke: business/employers – could be surveyed re: employees who cannot live in Richmond; Tim Monte, Western Slopes Bus Association president; Connie to follow up
 - v) Sarah Heim: will identify a resource for guidance on analyzing qualitative data
 - l) Virginia Clarke: can contact senior center for "2ei" – Senior options/owner demographics
 - i) Miranda Lescaze: Housingdata.org is a resource for many of our needs (from VFHA – housing needs assessment guide)

- m) Impact of Covid: partly as a disclaimer with respect to recent changes in housing values – possibility of skewed data; values may be affected by long term changes in work from home and other changes
 - i) More of an awareness issue; no firm data are likely at this in the middle of a pandemic
 - ii) Housingdata.org has some impact data to consider: “Pandemic Impact Indicators” – Mark Hall will review
 - n) Working group will continue to complete outline: Zachary Maia, Andrew Mannix, Mark Hall, Miranda Lescaze
 - o) Mark Hall: requested links to Town Plan and other resources to support the Needs Assessment
 - p) Discussion to continue at next meeting
- 6) Review committee goals
- a) Short term goals
 - i) Move item i (Density Bonus) to item iii as a short deliverable that falls later in the committee’s work – move timeframe to December 2021
 - ii) We are likely to add new short term goals as we proceed through the development of our Needs Assessment
 - b) Long term goals – relabel as “Objectives,” i.e. as ongoing goals
 - i) Modify: “availability of affordable housing” to “availability of housing, including affordable housing”
 - ii) Add: awareness building campaign with community / outreach; ongoing, as we develop needs assessment, planning recommendations, policy recommendations, to keep the community periodically informed (see similar language from purpose statement)
 - iii) Virginia Clarke noted that the Planning Committee has heard from renters that homeowners are typically more involved in town affairs, and that their voices are not always heard. They testified in favor of increasing rental housing. Consider a “renters only” outreach activity.
 - iv) Consider expanding the Needs Assessment with some of the issues in these goals, e.g. sustainability, special needs, renewable energy usage, etc.
- 7) Other Business, Correspondence, and Adjournment
- a) Next agenda: December 14, 7:30 – 9:30
 - i) Detailed review of Needs Assessment
 - ii) Discussion of how to collect data from those who are not easily able to find the housing they want in Richmond
 - iii) Review of revised Committee Goals
 - b) Future agenda item: Planning Committee’s plans/actions to date regarding housing (Virginia Clarke)
 - c) Chittenden County Housing Committee convening on Nov 30 at 6p: general invitation to join; please consider attending if available. Includes Municipal Roundtable will help us learn what others are doing. Ravi Venkataraman will send the formal agenda and a Zoom link when available.
 - d) Motion to adjourn: Carole Furr moved and Virginia Clarke seconded. Passed unanimously.

Recorded by Connie van Eeghen