

Town of Richmond Housing Committee Notes

Date: March 10, 2022

Time Started: 7:35p

Time Ended: 9:11p

Ravi Venkataraman (Host)

Present: Virginia Clarke, Sarah Heim (Chair), Connie van Eeghen, Kristen Hayden-West

Guest: (none)

Absent: Mark Hall

Quorum is 4; 4 votes to pass any motion

1. Welcome and troubleshooting
2. Approval of February 10, 2022 meeting minutes
 - a. Changes to page 2
 - i. 4BVI: "zooming" changed to "zoning"
 - ii. 4bviii: "no likely" changed to "not likely"
 - b. Moved to accept as amended: Kristen
 - c. Seconded: Sarah
 - d. Unanimously passed
3. Adjustments to Agenda – none made
4. Discussion on the Zoning for Affordable Housing study recommendations
 - a. No changes made to current version compared to that of last committee meeting
 - b. Recommendations:
 - i. Housing Committee
 1. We need to do outreach in order to get anything pro-housing done
 - a. Engagement
 - b. Advocacy
 - c. Presenting consequences of not having more housing
 - d. Relationships with developers
 2. We need to produce an annual report with metrics
 - a. Dwelling unit changes
 - b. Increase in housing lots
 - c. Demographics of the community (census,...)
 - d. Home ownership and market
 - e. Rental market
 - f. Applications for permits or development approvals
 - i. Much of these data exist but need to be assembled
 - ii. Ravi may be able to get an intern in the fall to work on this project
 3. Work with other groups: Planning Commission/Zoning Office, Climate Action, Land Trust, Champlain Housing Trust, Economic Development, Senior Center (or maybe not, if not willing to support an advocacy role?)
 - ii. Ravi may be able to get an intern in the fall to work on this project
 - c. Priorities to shape the Housing Committee's work for the next year
 - i. Data collection and organization to support the annual report with metrics
 - ii. Advocacy to community/community groups: publicity, presence at meetings to provide a pro-housing voice, gather opinions from other planning groups/agencies in Vermont; leverage other groups/residents towards advocacy; reach out to specific property owners for opportunities; reconsider the Town Budget/Capital Plan and the priorities represented there
 1. Create a one/two page overview of key points that represents Richmond's current status with housing and future implications (Virginia to draft);
 2. Share on FPF and Times Ink or other forums; self-market what the Housing Committee is and why it exists
 3. Develop talking points/pitch speech for talking with community members

- iii. Access the Selectboard, provide an update with actions/accomplishments to date, based on Brandy's report, technical memo, and interview results
 - 1. The Planning Commission will also report to the SB on its work, including Brandy's report
 - iv. As we develop specific actions to pursue as a Housing Committee, we can also market for new members interested in working on specific tasks
 - d. We need a final copy of Brandy's recommendations so we can share it with community groups and members
 - i. Ravi will follow up with Brandy
- 5. Discussion on housing allowances and equity
 - a. Previously, Mark discussed housing allowances
 - b. Sarah provided considerations for housing equity: a list of issues to consider adopting for reviewing new housing opportunities
 - i. Affordable housing
 - 1. Will new development include below market (affordable) housing
 - 2. How do we define affordable
 - 3. What percentage of units will be affordable (avoid segregating affordable housing)
 - 4. If done by private developers, how to encourage them to create affordable units (tax incentives)
 - ii. Accessibility to village center, work and schools
 - 1. Walking/biking distance of local services/village center
 - 2. Walkability
 - 3. Public transportation
 - 4. Public spaces
 - 5. People with disabilities
 - iii. Traffic issues
 - 1. Current traffic issues
 - 2. Effect of new development on traffic issues
 - iv. Environmental issues
 - 1. Natural areas
 - 2. Flooding/natural disasters
 - 3. Pollution
 - v. Other safety issues – check for other safety issues
 - vi. Infrastructure
 - 1. Infrastructure needs: what is in place, what needed, who pays?
 - vii. Sustainability
 - 1. Access to EV charges
 - 2. Use of alternative energy sources/green building practices – how to encourage
 - viii. Community impacts
 - 1. Impact on current residents and business
 - 2. Impact on others in Richmond
 - 3. Impact on future residents in the area
 - c. Operationalizing this list of considerations
 - i. Part of the zoning process for new development, either by the Planning Commission or the Housing Committee?
 - ii. Consider bringing list to Planning Commission as an aid to work through new development opportunities
 - 1. May require a conversation to understand fully how it might be used
 - iii. Next step: getting more input from an expert in this area
 - 1. As one example, "Sustainability" of alternative energy sources or use of an EV are choices that the privileged get to make. Another is that infrastructure, such as water/sewers, brings with it other costs, such as sidewalks, which has to be paid for by someone and could be a significant community impact.
 - 2. Not to be used as a score sheet or rubric: an enabler of discussions that allows better understanding of the equity issues

3. Climate Council worked on this last year as part of the Global Climate Solutions Act to address equity: it is difficult. They developed a rubric/scoring system to balance these issues. Maybe better to allow a more fluid understanding of whom we are affecting and how. For example: who will choose to live next to a highway (in the Gateway) and will we be further disadvantaging marginalized groups of people. We need tools to address context issues while in the process of addressing dire housing needs.
4. State Legislature is grappling with an equity policy (Keisha Ram Hinsdale)
6. Update on the Planning Commission and its work plan
7. Other business, correspondence, and adjournment
 - a. Next CCRPC meeting: Connie may be able to attend on March 28. OK to ask for resources to help with:
 - i. Equity considerations
 - ii. Advocacy generation
 - b. Membership renewal and recruitment
 - i. Call for renewals went out by email recently
 - ii. Deadline is April 13 (Wednesday)
 - iii. Consider marketing on FPF for new members
 1. Kristen will work on a draft for a job description and send to Virginia and Sarah
 2. Send back comments back to Kristen only (don't Reply All)
 - c. Next meeting: April 14, 2022 at 7:30p
 - d. Proposed agenda to include: TBD
 - i. Moved to adjourn: Connie
 - ii. Seconded: Sarah
 - iii. Unanimously passed

Recorded by Connie van Eeghen