

Town of Richmond Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: February 9, 2023

Time Started: 7:32p

Time Ended: 8:54p

Duncan Wardwell (Host – not present)

Present: Virginia Clarke, Mark Hall (Chair), Connie van Eeghen

Guest: Jay Furr, Gina Thayer as potential Housing Committee member from Richmond, Rachel Lohia also a potential future committee meeting (Borden St)

Absent: (none)

Quorum is 3; 3 votes to pass any motion

1. Welcome and troubleshooting
2. Approval of January 12 2023 meeting minutes
 - a. Accepted as written
3. Adjustments to Agenda
 - a. Jay: here as ARPA committee chair and water/sewer commission; added to item 4
4. Report back from Virginia on Richmond properties/ Future housing committee topics
 - a. Properties question: Planning Commission has the goal to increase affordable housing and supported senior housing (SASH) but these properties must be on public water/sewer and accessible to the town on foot or public transport. Possibilities for extending the infrastructure:
 - i. Gateway: REAP's owners (Willis') may be interested in adding housing but questions about water/sewer line extension need to be worked out (e.g. Land Trust easement); not much pedestrian access unless a path is built to School Street
 1. Water/sewer extension might include Mobil Gas Station but Mobil may pursue original plan of horizontal boring under I-89 to a septic field under the GMP solar array
 - ii. Farr Farm: the younger generation is willing to talk with the Planning Commission; very interested in retaining the farm as a working farm; there may be room around the rim of the property
 - iii. E Main Street (theoretical, would need more research)
 - iv. Cochran Rd (theoretical, would need more research)
 - b. Possibility for existing water/sewer: Browns Ct 4-acre ballfield near school; owned by Town
 - i. Surrounded by ravines owned by someone else
 - ii. Is it possible to have a park and some kind of supported housing?
 - iii. 30 units is the minimum for Cathedral Square or other group to manage
 - iv. Would the Town want to donate a piece of land for affordable housing?
 - c. Other town properties have barriers, e.g. Jolina Ct owners are not interested, resistance to increasing density in neighborhoods: Baker/Tilden and others although all conversations provide opportunities to reconsider
 - d. Richmond focus groups revealed a stronger level of support for supported senior housing than affordable housing
 - e. The Housing Committee will have the opportunity to present a list of housing options to the ARPA committee, including purchase of land to develop affordable housing
5. Recruit new committee members- brainstorm new potential members
 - a. What skills are needed: knowledge of affordable housing requirements, design skills...
 - b. Outreach: Virginia's contacts are not available
 - c. Current guests (Gina and Rachel are interested, and have potential to become members
6. Report out on CCRPC Housing Convening on 1/30/23
 - a. <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/our-work/economic-development/housing/> for educational materials
 - b. Convening includes members of town housing committees in the county
 - c. Two kinds of Chittenden County problems:
 - i. Burlington & S Burlington: code enforcement and huge projects
 - ii. Small towns: residents' resistance to new housing ideas

7. Update from the Planning Commission (included in the above: Selectboard Meetings coming up soon about recent zoning changes) – opportunity for Housing Committee to provide further support at SB hearings
8. Discuss adjustment of date/time for future meetings
 - a. Future meetings: start at 7:30p
9. Other business, correspondence, and adjournment
 - a. Next meeting: Thursday, March 9 at 7:30 via Zoom/remote
 - b. Proposed agenda to include: affordable housing/supported housing list of possible areas to consider, with pros and cons, people to talk to, what further information needed
 - c. Agreed to adjourn at: 8:54p

Recorded by Connie van Eeghen