

Town of Richmond Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

February 28, 2024

Date: February 28, 2024

Time Started: 5:32p

Time Ended: 7:02p

Keith Osborne, Host, Town Planner

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

Guests: Andrew Mannix, Lisa Miller

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 January 31, 2024 meeting minutes
 - a. Accepted as written
4. In progress projects:
 - a. Review and finalize the Flyer for Town Meeting Day – page 1
 - i. Matt: how to make this as an inclusive communication as possible without creating more divisions; he had difficulty with housing development in Winooski in a divisive environment
 1. Virginia: the statistics about homeownership equity is not about Richmond
 2. Matt: the driver is lack of affordable housing; the best way to achieve affordability is by home ownership; to increase home ownership, we have to increase housing stock
 3. Andrew: consider what we want to focus on: the problem for people who are already here or the people that might live here in the future
 4. Consensus: change the 5th bullet point about racial equity to housing equity (the structure of available homes that are lower in cost)
 - ii. Matt: suggest removing the last sentence in the 4th fact “There is a strong consensus...” as being unrealistic
 1. Connie: the consensus statement helps identify what residents value, even if not achievable
 2. Agreed to keep as is
 - iii. Connie: suggest using the flyer to raise awareness and facilitate open conversations
 1. From Brandy’s report: “The number of mobile homes has been decreasing, likely due to replacements of older mobile homes with single-unit detached homes... Multi-unit and attached housing comprises a very small percentage of the housing stock. A lack of diverse housing options is another way in which Richmond is more similar to other rural Vermont towns outside Chittenden County than it is to its more urban and suburban neighbors.”
 2. Virginia: Change the fifth fact to one about diversity of housing structures available
 - iv. Lisa: where did the estimates for mortgage interest rates come from?
 1. Mark: interest rate used to calculate the statistics is based on the going market rate for mortgages
 - b. Flyer – page 2
 - i. Add an item, second to last, on the interest form: “Do you support having a town-wide conversation about housing in Richmond?” Yes/No response
 - ii. Updated: <https://forms.gle/qyUXYD5p6VrJmqYZ7> (looks different than link on flyer but goes to same place)
5. Review Housing Summit motion for Selectboard on Town Meeting Day
 - a. Keith: Bard Hill did not have a particular recommendation regarding a housing summit for Town Meeting
 - i. Alternatively, such a motion could be written up at the time of Town Meeting
 - b. Connie: “Shall the Richmond Housing Committee engage diverse members of the Richmond community in town-wide conversations about housing, to share both the needs and the options relevant to Richmond?”
 - i. Mark: Goal: hear from community
 - ii. Keith: prioritize community education (such as defining Affordable Housing)

6. Discuss education outreach on the differences and nuisances of Affordable, Subsidized, Supported, and Market Rate Housing
 - a. Keith: requested the Committee review the document that defines Affordable Housing as a draft; it will grow as we proceed with our committee goals
 - b. Virginia: all committees need to work on using the terms correctly
7. Other business, correspondence, and adjournment
 - a. Keith: Former Housing Committee Google drive has been lost to Ethernet; a new Internet drive for a central repository is in the making
 - b. Next meeting: March 27, 2024 @ 5:30p
 - c. Proposed agenda to include: Town Meeting Day outcomes
 - d. Agreed to adjourn at: 7:02p

Recorded by Connie van Eeghen