

Town of Richmond Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

July 24, 2024

Time Started: 5:34p

Time Ended: 6:57p

Keith Osborne, Host, Town Planner

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

Guest: Lisa Miller

Absent: Nick Blanchet, Virginia Clarke

1. Welcome and troubleshooting
 - a.
 - b. Sadvav
2. Revisions to agenda
 - a. None
3. Approval of June meeting minutes
 - a. Accepted
4. Bohlen/Avery 6-26 discussion debrief
 - a. Overall sentiment from Andrew and Matt was the combination of Ben and Carl as an excellent addition
 - b. Matt discussed the importance of streamlining development guidelines making it clear what can and cannot be done within zoning code
 - i. Where does our zoning code contradict itself?
 - c. Matt commented the challenges that can come up when a town committee does not meet due to the inability to field a quorum
 - i. Keith made sure to point out that increasing the size of a committee does not alleviate the challenge with quorum due to the half +1 requirement
 - d. Matt is interested in (along with the majority of the committee) in understanding more about inclusionary zoning and how it could be used in Richmond
 - i. Do developers care - sentiment from June roundtable was no
5. General updates and discussion
 - a. Committee focus and priorities through 2024 - define
 - i. Meeting discussion focused on the shared strategic doc
 - ii. Mark presented and reviewed the goals and concepts related to this working document and asked Where should our focus be?
 1. Community support and outreach
 - a. What are, or can we do, to educate and reach the community?
 2. Water and sewer expansion/regulations/etc
 - a. Andrew supports investigation into this field
 - b. Group discussion on limitations due to topography, river, railroad, wtc
 - c. How much time to dedicate to this?
 3. Richmond Housing funds

- a. Keith is a grant writer
 - b. Keith noted that the majority of the grants available will require Town match and in some scenarios employer matches
 - c. Long term goal
- 4. Zoning recommendations
 - a. Keith noted that the Select Board recognizes the challenges
 - b. Commercial space in this environment is not popular
 - i. Is this component of the zoning code not conducive in Richmond?
 - c. Matt commented the lack of density in Richmond contributes to the challenge
 - d. Act 47 and the impact on Richmond has opened more discussions
 - e. Virginia has been working with the Planning Commission going step by step through current zoning code to improve/comply with Act 47
 - f. Keith stated the next Town Plan is to be implemented in 2026
 - i. Excellent opportunity for the Housing Committee to provide feedback for the Town Plan
 - g. Change is hard for some to accept
 - i. How do we overcome this?
 - h. Continued conversation about needing a better plan before engaging with development concepts
 - i. Understand infrastructure which Andrew has expressed an interest in pursuing
 - i. Keith iterated that perhaps the 35 foot building height restrictions are something that could be looked at
- 5. Partnership Development and Project Advocacy
 - a. Determined that this section of the strategic doc is an outcome of the other actions/activity
 - b. Matt has expressed interest in outlining objectives
- 6. Tax abatement programs
 - a. Lack of committee power requires buy in with town and town budget
- 6. Other business, Correspondence, Adjournment
 - a. Housing definitions/Affordable housing
 - i. Committee to continue discussion and education on how the committee will define affordable housing
 - ii. Workforce vs. affordable housing
 - b. Other “mentor” options in the area
 - i. Lisa Miller mentions Alex Hagan

1. Alex previously attended housing committee meetings
 2. Discussion around not now, but in the future, re-engaging with him
 3. Effort to not be too Hinesburg centric, or in other words one town centric in our research
- c. What is the voting process for water and sewer expansion
 - i. Keith to send Andrew some details for review
 - d. Gateway corridor and discussion of future interstate ramp improvements which align with Town Plan 2026 development
 - i. Could this be a pathway to connect that corridor with the Village corridor?
7. Discussion ends
 - a. Meeting adjourns 6:56pm