

Town of Richmond Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: May 28, 2025

Time Started: 7:33 pm

Time Ended:

Present: Mark Hall (Chair), Andrew Mannix, Mairead O'Reilly, Connie van Eeghen

Guest:

Absent: Virginia Clarke, Nick Blanchet

Committee is approved at 5 members, 2 alternates (5/16/22); quorum is 3

1. Welcome and troubleshooting (0:00:00)
2. Adjustments to Agenda – adjustments made (0:00:15)
 - a. Discuss Future Land Use Map letter
 - b. Other business: letter from Steering Committee on Town plan
3. Approval of the May 12, 2025 meeting minutes (0:01:15)
 - a. Accepted as written
4. Tier 1B Status and Future Land Use Map: (0:01:30)
 - a. Future Land Use (0:03:00)
 - i. One lot was “aggressively reserved” for open space (lot near Sadler meadow); excluded
 - ii. Governor Peck Road parcel
 - iii. Farr Farm property
 - iv. Goal: focus on in-fill housing in short and mid-term, for the redevelopment of lots over time; positioning for future growth
 - v. All agreed with letter as written
 - vi. Mark will add his signature and date
 - vii. Andrew noted that he has no conflicts of interest and these letters do not provide him with a differential advantage
 - b. Tier 1B (0:10:45)
 - i. Reviewed PC Letter
 1. Rational to not opt-in is based on absence of applicable properties and nor will there likely be any by July 2027
 - ii. Review Draft Letter from RHC – we are submitting after the specified deadline to support opt-in
 1. Provides a significant advantage for particular housing scenarios, even though the space to use this designation does not yet exist. In the future, our housing structure will need to be replaced and we need the zoning in place for projects of 10-50 units.
 2. We are leaving money on the table by not opting in
 3. “Village” refers to the general area, not a specific zoning district, and is intended for the “Village Center” with public sewer water. Per Act 181, includes Downtown Center, Village Center, Planned Growth Area, and Village Area. Andrew will change “Village” to “village.”
 4. Andrew will revise (by Friday) with respect to July 2027 expiration and “leaving money on the table.” He will share the revision with Mark who will follow up with Keith Osborne. Mark will investigate presenting to the Selectboard in support of these recommendations.
5. General Updates and Discussion – Committee
 - a. Review Strategic Housing Plan Updates and finalize draft (0:30:35)
 - i. Waiting for community feedback; more next time
 - b. Finalize Town Plan items for Housing Committee (0:31:00)
 - i. https://richmondvt-my.sharepoint.com/:w:/g/personal/koborne_richmondvt_gov/Ecq23GpRSEdBITm2ygHWasUBhu_h0Xg1_M4A7jOCN_Vzmw?e=4T0poz&CID=737A987A-4C59-46C9-9A2B-F520D2997966&wdLOR=c33217967-0820-4E49-9E17-13C73650D8A6
 - ii. In 2018 Town Plan: 1 Goal; needed to include more information about Affordable Housing and alignment with Home Act; now included as Goal 2

- iii. Draft Goal 1: Strive to achieve the municipal housing targets established by the HOME Act and create diverse, resilient, and quality housing options for residents and potential residents from all walks of life throughout the Town
 - 1. Can the Housing Committee be empowered to do more? Are there specific tasks we can take on, explicitly referenced here? For example, sitting in on DRB process for affordable housing decisions. Consider adding examples to item 3, like creating a model housing policy or a plan/policy related to a housing fund.
 - 2. The Selectboard has asked the Housing Committee to create its purpose and responsibilities. We can add specific tasks as we think they will move our plan forward.
 - 3. Consider adding the Housing Strategic Plan to our actions. Mark added "Empower the development and execution of a strategic housing plan."
 - 4. There is value in not being overly prescriptive but inclusive of key actions that are needed.
 - iv. Goal 2: Support the creation of housing that is more affordable and attainable for low- and moderate-income households
 - 1. Importance of supporting the mobile home part and its needs.
 - 2. Consider adding more outreach activities to the Strategic Housing Plan; see for example: https://www.sevendaysvt.com/news/the-unrelenting-housing-crisis-inspires-creative-solutions-43629619?utm_source=Seven+Days+Email+Newsletters&utm_campaign=7f38667fb3-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_05_26_03_07&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-7f38667fb3-308410009
 - 3. Item 6 (partnering with housing organizations) does not have an exhaustive list of organizations; these are non-profits that work on affordable housing as for profit developers do not currently have working business models for affordable housing. Mark edited to make language more generic.
 - c. Next steps: update the narrative section of the Plan; Mairead will take the first round of edits
 - 6. Other business, correspondence, and adjournment
 - a. Steering Committee on Town plan (0:58:00)
 - i. Send current draft of Housing portion of Town Plan draft; narrative portion will be forthcoming
 - b. Discuss new meeting time (1:02:30)
 - i. Wednesdays at 5:30p is no longer ideal for current committee members
 - ii. Possible dates/times to consider:
 - 1. Preference for 7p or 7:30p start
 - 2. Not Mondays; prefers Tuesdays or Thursday or some Wednesdays (2nd or 4th)
 - 3. Copy Keith and reach out to Virginia and Nick
 - c. Next meeting: currently scheduled for Wed, June 25 at 5:30
 - i. No Andrew; likely busy all June
 - d. Proposed agenda to include: Town Plan – housing narrative; feedback on Strategic Housing Plan (1:09:45)
 - e. Agreed to adjourn at: 8:43p

Recorded by Connie van Eeghen