

Town of Richmond Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: January 15, 2026

Time Started: 12:04 noonish

Time Ended: 1:30pm

Present: Virginia Clarke, Andrew Mannix, Mairead O'Reilly, Connie van Eeghen

Guest:

Absent: Nick Blanchet

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

Summary: The meeting discussed the potential expansion of Richmond's water and sewer infrastructure to support housing development. Key points included the need for a new pump to handle 600 additional units, with practical estimates suggesting 80 units over 20 years. The discussion highlighted the importance of connecting new developments to the existing system and the potential costs involved. The committee also explored the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to fund infrastructure projects, emphasizing the need for a development partner and suitable land. The committee postponed prioritizing strategic plan items and recruiting new members, with Andrew Mannix acting as the interim chair. The meeting discussed strategies for recruitment, including strategic priorities (not yet developed) and the committee charge to elicit a response. The agenda for the next meeting will focus on strategic priorities and updates on the chip and water sewer projects. The group set its next meeting for Tuesday, February 17, at noon.

Action Items

- Andrew Mannix will serve as interim chair of the housing committee (attend meetings and act as the committee lead while recruitment continues)
- All will review the Water and Sewer engineering email/report (pump and build-out documents) related to Virginia's 5 questions
- Connie will draft and post a recruitment notice (using the committee charge) on Front Porch Forum to recruit additional housing committee members
- Mairead will follow up with the Water & Sewer Commission chair (Chair Wolaver) and request answers to the committee's questions about pump size/options/cost/timeline and share any documents and responses with the housing committee members for review
- Next housing committee meeting confirmed for Tuesday, February 17 at noon (Connie will send invite/meeting details to committee members)

Detailed minutes:

1. Welcome and troubleshooting (0:00:00)
2. Adjustments to Agenda – (0:01:00)
 - a. Virginia: added consider short term rental situation in Richmond – is it an important topic? Add to strategic plan discussion
 - b. Some concern expressed about Andrew's recent experience in getting accurate information about a potential subdivision development; Andrew to follow up with Zoning Administration regarding distinction between minor/major subdivisions
3. Approval of the Dec 9 2025 meeting minutes (0:04:00)
 - a. Accepted as written
4. Water Sewer Commission (Mairead) (0:05:00)
 - a. Mairead reached out to the chair of the commission, Morgan Wolaver, to ask questions about how the reserve capacity of the water/sewer system provides opportunities for housing development
 - i. New pump: current topic for the Water Sewer Commission, which may add capacity for an additional 600 units on the south side of the Winooski River. We are interested in specifics: why, when, how, how much.
 - b. Josh's email to Mairead: between 41-123 units could be expected from the new capacity provided by the new pump, per engineering report, around 97 units
 - i. Virginia: what are the expectations, e.g. how build out has to be scheduled
 - ii. Andrew: septic and well systems are not part of this plan; new units will tie into W/S system as a cheaper strategy to support new development

1. There are designated lots that must tie into the W/S system: potentially 25-30 parcels
2. They all have existing dwelling units but likely would not expand to the maximum provided by the "Available Units" table
- iii. Should the W/S Commission downsize the pump to meet likely projects for building, or overbuild to allow for future opportunities (e.g. Farr Farm). Potential for decades of use?
 1. This is a philosophical perspective we can share with the W/S Commission
- c. Next steps:
 - i. Collect more information from Chair Wolaver
 - ii. Committee member may read the "Richmond Bridge Street Pump Station" report (166 pages) in the context of Virginia's question: how do we rationalize a larger pump than currently needed:
 1. Where exactly would this territory begin and end?
 2. Would all new homes be required to hook up to the line?
 3. Cost difference between a new pump that serves just existing properties and one that would greatly expand homes served?
 4. Would any lines be put in with the new pump?
 5. What are the alternatives to the new pump, if any?
 - iii. Discuss at next meeting, with reflection on how this affects the Gateway section of Richmond
 - iv. Consider follow up meeting with W/S Commission in the future to support development in the Gateway, south of the bridge, and elsewhere in Richmond
5. CHIP webinars (Connie), (0:55:00)
 - a. Overview of Tax Increment Finance for Vermont Communities
 - i. May be a very complex process and require additional staffing/support
 - ii. Funds may be used for the staffing/consulting/support to create and support the process
 - iii. Project may have to have long term expansion of housing, which has limited opportunities here
 - b. Essential component: a developer partner starts the process after we have identified a candidate property, starting with a landowner to have a conversation
 - c. Next step: Connie and Mairead will complete the webinar series (3 hours)
6. Prioritize strategic plan items – postponed
 - a. Short term rentals – is this a priority? To be discussed next meeting.
7. Committee Chair – Andrew Mannix as interim
8. Recruitment – use Committee charge - Connie
9. Other business, correspondence, and adjournment(1:20:00)
 - a. Next meeting: Tuesday, Feb 17, 2026 12-1:30p
 - b. Proposed agenda to include: Strategic priorities
10. Adjournment: Agreed to adjourn at 1:26

Recorded by Connie van Eeghen