

Minutes from 7/14/2022 Housing Committee Meeting

Meeting called to order at 7:36 pm. Attendees: Mark Hall (chair), Virginia Clarke, Sarah Heim. Ravi Venkataranman also in attendance.

Approval of minutes from 6/9/2022:

- Sarah moved to approve minutes from 6/9/22 meeting. Virginia seconded.
- No comments or suggested edits.
- Committee voted in favor of adopting minutes.

Advocacy Talking Points and Communication PLan

- Looked at draft talking points
 - Mark suggested also looking at common arguments against more housing, so we'd have some counter-points for discussion. Could create a separate document with "Common NIMBY articles and counterpoints."
 - Recent articles in Digger and SevenDays about opposition to new housing
 - <https://vtdigger.org/2022/07/13/weathersfield-tried-to-reduce-its-lot-size-requirements-then-its-residents-spoke-up/>
 - Committee agreed that talking points look good.
- Communications plan
 - Mark drafted to give us a plan for advocating for new housing, when the time comes.
 - Reviewed contents of the communications plan
 - Contact Ariana Matthews-Salzman if interested in tabling at the Farmer's Market.
 - Add a short handout that we could give to folks at the table, explaining the proposed housing and why we support it.
 - Ravi has list of deadlines for submitting to the Times Ink, which we can consult.
- Thoughts on advocacy efforts over next few months:
 - Need to develop our NIMBY counterpoints. Virginia can work on this. Might also post summary on FPF.
 - Sarah to write an article to post on FPF, generally advocating for more housing and soliciting new members. Virginia agreed to review draft. Will circulate to committee ahead of next meeting.
 - Possibility of also doing two tables at the farmers market - once in mid to late Aug and once in Sept.
 - Possibly recruit someone to write an op-ed for either Times Ink or FPF. Miranda and Kristen might be willing to write something. Virginia volunteered to reach out to Racial Equity Committee and Climate Action Committee members.

Planning Commission Update

- Still working on zoning updates to two mixed use districts - the Gateway and the Village, which are residential/commercial districts, with similar uses allowed
- Current proposals:
 - 3-4 units will be a permitted use, in both Districts, which would only require approval by the zoning administrator.

- Multi-family dwellings with 5 or more units will be "conditional use," with a more extensive approval process.
- PC is still ironing out a few minor points. Hoping to approve the documents for public hearing in the near future.
- Once the documents are approved for public hearing, the housing committee could begin advocacy efforts. Hearing will likely occur about a month after the notice is issued.
 - We'd want a housing committee member to attend that public hearing before the Planning Commission.
 - After the public hearing, the PC has an opportunity to edit the proposal, and then forwards it to the Selectboard, which holds its own public hearing. Goal is to have all concerns addressed at the PC public hearing, so that the Selectboard can quickly adopt the new zoning regs.
- Incorporation of multi-family housing development standards
 - Would be added to zoning.
 - Goal is to address some popular misconceptions about multi-family housing.

Retention of committee members

- How do we retain members? We've had a high attrition rate.
- Virginia is going to reach out to some former members to get feedback.

Agenda for next meeting:

- Review advocacy materials
- Get update on PC's progress towards new zoning proposals.

Meeting adjourned at 8:42 pm

- Sarah moved to adjourn, Virginia seconded. All in favor.