

Town of Richmond
Special VCDP Loan Committee Meeting
Minutes of September 14, 2026

Members Present:

Bard Hill (Selectboard), Luther Kinney (Champlain Housing Trust), Amy Demetrowitz (Champlain Housing Trust), Connie van Eeghen (Housing Committee), Mairead O'Reilly (Housing Committee)

Absent: Adam Wood (Selectboard), Patrick Scheld (State of Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development)

Staff Present: Duncan Wardwell, Deputy Town Manager

Others Present: Cara LaBounty, Mary Houle, Trevor Brooks

MMCTV Video: https://youtu.be/n_iFOIFPus?si=SR4DYe4QPyWJFEhN

Call to Order: 7:00 PM

Welcome by: Hill

Public Comment: Houle stated that the Selectboard should ask how many late notices, late fees and shut off notices the Town is receiving. She had previously asked the Selectboard if they audited employee evaluations.

Additions, Deletions or Modifications to Agenda: None

Items for Presentation or Discussion with those present

Discussion of a formal request for a discharge of the VCDP loan on Richmond Village Housing

[SKing St Sc19062413250](#)

[Richmond VCDP Loan Request 08.2026](#)

[Current request for forgiveness](#)

[FranThomasEmailVCDP09-14-26](#)

Hill read the public comment from Fran Thomas who was a member of the Selectboard during these financial arrangements (see packet link [FranThomasEmailVCDP09-14-26](#))

Demetrowitz and Kinney of the Champlain Valley Trust presented the details of the their request to forgive the repayment (see packet link [Current request for forgiveness](#)).

Kinney stated that they budgeted \$24,000 for the Property Taxes so it will be in that vicinity. Kinney summarized how Vermont State law values properties that have permanent affordable covenants as there is a formula to create an assessment across the

State. Demetrowitz confirmed that the 60% median income is based on the Chittenden County statistical area. Demetrowitz stated that the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) defines the conditions for loan forgiveness specially into affordable housing. Hill stated that it would be useful to describe the impact of different costs like flood insurance and utility costs.

O'Reilly requested more information on the seven conditions of forgiveness. Demetrowitz reviewed each condition. Demetrowitz stated that the VCDP liaison (Scheld) could attend a future meeting to describe how they have made their determination.

LaBounty asked for the data of the maximum percentage of rent to be raised per year. LaBounty stated that the property needs capital improvements again and it is a 27-year-old project that suddenly does not have the capital to do the projects. LaBounty stated that they can switch cash flows around, increase rents to pay capital improvements/operating expenses, and still repay the loan. Demetrowitz stated that this was a federal grant through the State that came to the Town to support the creation of affordable housing in this community. LaBounty stated that there would be more affordable housing in our community if that loan was paid back overtime or all at once. LaBounty stated that she wants more affordable housing in our community, but she does not want them to be the only option for affordable housing. By forgiving the debt, those funds cannot be used for additional affordable housing in our community. Demetrowitz stated that the goal is to have affordable housing, Richmond Apartments is affordable housing. Demetrowitz summarized that they would have to raise the rents beyond what's affordable in order to pay the loan back to create more affordable housing. Hill summarized that many residents and The Regional Planning Commission think we need more affordable housing and look at the repayment money.

Kinney reviewed the life-cycle of the capital needs and the strategy with affordable housing. Demetrowitz summarized how vacancy rates and turnover costs were higher than anticipated when they increased rents. Demetrowitz illustrated how the cost of hooking up the natural gas line and Hurricane Irene identified them as having to pay flood insurance.

Hill observed the animus from Town citizens who thought they were getting Plan A and it turned out to be Plan Be where there is no money for the Town. Hill suggested a future meeting discussion where if the Town were to forgive the loan, what can be created, developed, and implemented for more affordable housing in Richmond. van Eeghen summarized how there is little usable land that could be developed for housing, but the Planning and Housing Committees are looking for strategies. LaBounty stated that Harrington's commercial property just went vacant and it is an ideal place for affordable housing. Demetrowitz stated that they generally do not lose more than 30 units due to the cash flow. Hill summarized that they agree upon wanting the current project to stay affordable

and to see more affordable housing in Richmond. It's heavily reliant on other sources of funding other than the Town. Hill commented on Brook's chat comments that the Harrington parcels are close to 5 acres.

Discuss Items for Next Agenda:

- Include State representative perspective
- Alternative financial options for loan forgiveness
- Harrington's property potential
- Information on share ownership program

Meeting adjourned at: 8:30 PM

Chat file from Zoom:

01:18:37 Trevor Brooks: Looks like Harringtons has two parcels 2.10 acres and 2.57 acres.

01:24:43 Trevor Brooks: The 2.57 acre parcel is mostly wooded and closer to the railroad tracks. The 2.10 acre parcel is where their structures are located.

01:33:05 Trevor Brooks: I've heard they haven't converted the basement units to residential yet.