

Town of Richmond Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 10/30/24

Time Started: 7:06p

Time Ended: 8:33p

Present: Nick Blanchet, Virginia Clarke, Mark Hall (Chair), Andrew Mannix, Connie van Eeghen

Guest: Eric Thomas (interested in the Committee and its work; just sitting in)

Absent: Keith Osborne, Host, Town Planner; Matt Parisi

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

<https://www.richmondvt.gov/calendar/meeting/housing-10-30-24>

1. Welcome and troubleshooting
2. Revisions to Agenda – do the PC update before we plan our next meeting/s
3. Approval of the September 25, 2024 meeting minutes
 - a. Accepted as written
4. General updates and discussion – Committee
 - a. Review 2018 Town Plan in preparation for upcoming Town Plan updates
 - i. Link: <https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Archive/2018/01/2018-Richmond-Town-Plan.pdf>
 - ii. Pages relevant to Housing: 29, 47, 61 and Land Use, 21
 - iii. Town Plan has to be re-adopted every 8 years, last revised in 2018 (which was a substantial update)
 1. There might not be many changes needed, due by 2026 at Town Meeting, or in the fall of 2026
 2. There will be suggestions of changes from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission, who eventually has to approve it
 3. If we don't get it approved by the Town, then it lapses, and certain funding sources and actions are not available to the Town
 - iv. Two years ago, the PC asked all Town Committees to report on progress to their goals; many have been done
 1. PC plans to send it out again, this fall
 - v. Next:
 1. PC meets with CCRPC when they are ready to evaluate
 - a. Act 47 ("Home Act") includes a lot about housing, zoning, and new elements
 - b. Will include a section that is a plan for people with low and moderate income
 - vi. Plans are general; actions are specific. We have 1 goal and 8 actions, some of which are the Planning Commission's responsibility
 1. Update action related to Housing Committee: identify its next actions needed
 - a. Andrew: Should the Housing Committee have a specific role in the development process? Such as the role described by Carl Bohlen (Chair of Hinesburg Affordable Housing Committee)
 - i. We can't control state legislation, but we can work on NIMBYism, even by going door to door – grassroots efforts – that focus on key individuals that affect the permitting process
 - ii. How to make the permitting process for developers more collaborative
 1. What makes it difficult
 2. How can we find out how to make it better
 - iii. Nick: definitive guide for developers working on projects in Richmond
 1. Note that developers in the process may be a little shy of talking about the issues
 - b. Communication support, e.g. a town wide forum on housing or affordable housing
 2. Update should be driven by the feedback from the CCRPC
 - a. Some requirements may be very difficult to accomplish for a small town
 3. Data updates on the database that Ravi created for the Housing Committee
 - a. Ask Keith if he has access to those files

- b. Richmond Planning Commission Update
 - i. Items to be reviewed/adopted by the Selectboard
 - 1. Village Residential Neighborhoods: we've included Act 47 requirements
 - a. Allow duplexes and 3-4 family unit buildings, regardless of density
 - b. Minimum lot size is .2 acres, implying up to 20 units/acre rather than 5
 - c. PC meets next week to allow these changes
 - 2. Flood Hazard: Parks Committee wants to move the playground and restroom up to the plateau where the bandshell is
 - a. There is controversy about this
 - b. No new structures
 - c. OK to replace the bandshell with a pavilion if that is the wish of the community
 - 3. Jolina Court
 - a. Planning 2nd building of 31 apartments; developer would like 15 more
 - b. No longer required to have commercial renters on first floor
 - c. Developer wants more density (more units); PC is willing to offer density bonuses:
 - i. More Affordable units (1 perpetually AF unit to 4 market rate units)
 - ii. More adaptable units (an inexpensive option) (2 adaptable unit to 1 market rate)
 - iii. More public parking (5 spaces to 1 market rate)
 - d. It is uncertain whether the developer will continue with this project; they may not be willing to continue with the lengthy process
 - c. Review meeting schedule
 - i. Thursday, Nov 14 at 7p: Strategy section: water and sewer; review Housing charter for 2025 goals
 - ii. Thursday, Dec 12, 5:30:; Strategy section: Community Support; draft town plan goals related to Housing
 - iii. Jan 22: Strategy section: Zoning recommendations (Matt and Virginia)
 - iv. Feb 26: Finalize strategy document; review feedback from Regional Planning Commission
 - v. March 26: draft Town Plan Goals and Action Items for Town Plan
- 5. Other business, correspondence, and adjournment
 - a. Next meeting: Thursday, Nov 14 @ 7p
 - b. Proposed agenda to include: Strategy section: water and sewer; review Housing charter for 2025 goals
 - c. Agreed to adjourn at: 8:33p

Recorded by Connie van Eeghen