

Islesboro Housing Committee
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 25, 2022
In-Person Meeting at 5:00 PM, Town Office

APPROVED
1/24/23

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chair Mike Nelson called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM.

2. Establishment of a Quorum

Quorum was established with 5 members present

Members Present: Mike Nelson, Rick Rogers, Tom Tutor, Ginnie Hess, and Melissa Burns, Ex Officio.

Members Absent: Michael Hutcherson, Dave Dyer, John Kauer

Others Present: Lauren Bruce

3. Approval of minutes of July 19, 2022

Motion: To approve Minutes of July 19, 2022, as written, R. Rogers, seconded by T. Tutor.

Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

4. Status of "Housing Resource Guide"

- Melissa reported that several members had emailed in items to include.
- Melissa and Lauren need to get together to start working on the website.
- Lauren has a website plan. They want to include many sections, but may want to keep it simple to start. Potential sections include: Housing resources, Banking resources, Credit resources, Maine MLS listings, Rental listings.
- Melissa sent members an article from the Bangor Daily News about what Belfast is doing, which may be helpful. She would like to include an archived tab for News, and possibly Legislation, something condensed and easy.
- Tom suggested that we can also link to resources rather than write up info.
- Ginny said that there is a new listing source called "Rental Beast," which will be the equivalent of MLS for long-term rentals (over 30 days) in the State of Maine.
- Tom stated that IESC will be looking for a renter for the Island Market house soon. Sky and Marianne will move into it in about a year. Lead testing has been done, awaiting results. They would love to rent to a local essential worker. It's all been repainted inside, with new flooring and a new furnace. 4+ bedrooms, 2 baths.
- Tom spoke with Tina about how to link with the Town website, and she said Page is the one who can coordinate that.

5. Open discussion:

- a. Setting specific (and realistic) goals
 - Mike talked about how the trades would like to see more housing for employees.
 - Some larger municipalities are helping to fund workforce housing.

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- Some municipalities have initiatives on their ballots to keep non-residents from renting out properties seasonally. Mike isn't sure that solves the problem, as people who don't meet the criteria will sell their homes to those who will probably just use them as summer homes, and not getting them to people in need of housing.
- Tom stated that VRBO and AirBnB don't seem to be a problem on Islesboro, as most are done with seasonal properties, primarily in the summer months.
- Melissa added that we don't have an ordinance or permits for short-term rentals, so we wouldn't be able to limit those anyway. Plus, some of our residents pick up work helping with the short-term rentals in the summertime, and we don't want to take opportunities away from them.
- Mike suggested maybe setting up a meeting with the island employers to see if they want to partake in an effort, and perhaps even fund something that would help get employees here.
- Rick stated that this was discussed at the very first Housing Committee meeting. Perhaps the Town could help.
- Tom heard a radio program that talked about how the State is trying to provide resources and urging people with money in every community to build houses for workforce housing.
- Discussion about a recent local effort that got held up (J. T.'s apartments).
- Rick stated that IAP doesn't get a lot of interest from workers. He's hoping that in about 9 – 18 months he'll have a couple more houses, but that's not enough. They have enough property for one more, plus maybe ADUs, but it's very expensive right now.
- Ginnie asked Rick to look at 313 & 315 Pendleton Point Road, both are under \$400,000, and people have been living in them. Rick stated in his experience, to bring older houses up to standard for IAP to rent out, it's very expensive, and they could spend the same amount of money for something brand new. Ginnie feels they would be good if they were sold together for affordable housing. They are in decent shape. Rick agreed to look at them, though he's not sure if IAP could buy them now, as their resources are limited.
- Mike brought up the Town perspective. Is the Town willing to take a step to do something about housing? Does the Town put money up? Or does the Town do something to attract a developer (on a scale that would be acceptable to the Town)?
- Melissa stated that the Select Board tasked this committee with finding out the best course of action, or feasible options, for the Town. Do we want to create a tax incentive for development? Would it be approved by the Planning Board? It's the Housing Committee's to suss out what the Town can do. The Town is not interested in becoming a realtor or a landlord because of liability issues.
- Lauren added that LD 2003 is being studied by the Planning Board, and a draft to the Town Ordinance is being considered. Things are starting to move.

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- Tom stated that there should be some examples in the public domain of what towns have done, either by tax incentive, or matching funds, etc. to encourage workforce housing.
- Lauren stated she sent some info to Mike. Lauren has made a contact with the chair of Chebeague's Planning Board and the woman who does their affordable housing. There's also someone that the Island Institute has had at some sessions on housing. The contacts on Chebeague seem helpful.
- Rick stated that we should try to find out what happened with J.T.'s situation; why it stalled and what the issues were. Lauren and others tried to help, but he decided to give up. Melissa believes he intends use the apartments for family. Mike thought it would be good to take a temperature on that, and would like to know what caused him to back away. Tom offered to speak with him and find out where the project stands now.
- Mike will do some research on what other small towns are doing.
- Melissa offered to speak with the new Island Institute Fellow, Liv, who did something with housing as a personal project. She may have some insights.
- Tom asked Rick about his expertise on what other municipalities are doing. Rick stated that if Mike sends an email with a specific question, he probably knows someone who can answer.
- Melissa and Lauren will get together to work on the website.

6. Other business.

- None

7. Comments from visitors.

None

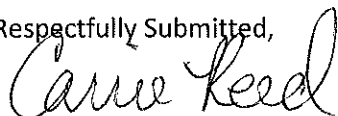
8. Set next meeting date

- Next meeting December 13, 5:00

9. Adjourn

Motion by M. Burns, seconded by R. Rogers, to adjourn at 5:45. Motion passed, 5 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary

