

Islesboro Housing Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, December 19, 2023  
In-Person Meeting at 5:00 PM, Town Office

APPROVED

1/23/24

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chair Mike Nelson called the meeting to order at 5:05 PM.

2. Establishment of a Quorum

Quorum was established with 4 members present

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

Members Absent: Michael Hutcherson, John Kauer.

Others Present: Lauren Bruce. Via Zoom: Charlotte Nutt and Adi Philson of Midcoast Council of Governments (MCOG)

3. Approval of minutes of October 24, 2023

**Motion: To approve Minutes of October 24, 2023, as written, T. Tutor, seconded by M. Burns. Roll Call. Motion passed, 3 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

4. Status of "Housing Resource Guide" website and Update on discussion with Island Institute Fellow (Melissa)

- Melissa reported that Alex is our contact from the Island Institute. They are working very closely with MDI, and during the recent big housing meeting they had with midcoast and islands, they discussed what would be the best resource. We can put ads on a website for realtors, etc. Melissa will send meeting notes to the group.
- Melissa asked if the committee thinks the website should be geared towards housing organizations or individuals. There are places on the island that are available word-of-mouth short term. Should we provide a list on the website? Tom stated his understanding was that our goal was to provide a website for individuals looking to build or purchase a house, with links for financing, tables, etc. Mike added it should be a resource guide for buyers.
- The Island Institute is trying to build housing and make sure there is housing stock.
- Tom added that it's correct that this committee is not interested in owning housing or being landlords; we are more about facilitating that build-out and those purchases, and helping individuals find those resources.
- The next Island Institute meeting is January 19, 2024

5. MCOG Study & Housing Working Group (Mike).

- Mike stated that there was a document that came out where MCOG was looking for letters of support for a grant, which he did write. The group did get the grant and is looking to put together a working group.

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- Adi stated that MCOG has been approved to begin work Housing Opportunity Program.
- There are three areas of study, and Adi is leading Waldo County portion. Charlotte, the data GIS specialist, has put together a housing study in the meantime.
- It will be an in-depth data study combined with working groups. The working groups are to think about next steps given the data. Hoping to have at least one representative from each of Waldo County's 17 towns.
- The study will try to determine a potential organizational structure, whether a housing trust, a land bank, or something else.
- Adi suggested resources for Islesboro's housing website: MCOG, Genesis Fund.
- Charlotte gave a Power Point Presentation on data and statistics for housing over the last five years, including income levels, renters, owners, affordability, etc. in the midcoast region.
- Long-term rentals have decreased 2016-2021. Population has increased, and year-round households have increased, and seasonal units have decreased. Data is from the American Community Survey (ACS).
- For Islesboro, short-term rentals (units that are on AirBnb and VRBO) are at 9%, which is high compared to mainland towns.
- In 2016, houses on Islesboro were very affordable, now very unaffordable.
- There is a need for housing in the missing-middle income level.
- Islesboro is projected to grow 8.6% from 2020-2030.
- [www.midcoastcog.com/story-maps](http://www.midcoastcog.com/story-maps)
- Mike asked to be kept in the loop regarding the working group.
- Tom and Melissa will send local surveys that were done on the island regarding housing. Mike will forward to MCOG.
- Ginny asked for MCOG to share Power Point slides. Charlotte said she would send them and the story maps.

6. Town Centers (Tom)

- Tom has been to several Planning Board LD 2003 workshops, and has been pushing for the Town to expand the Town Centers and add an Up-Island Town Center. The Planning Board is going to adjust the boundaries of the existing Town Centers so they follow property lines.
- When the Town Centers were first discussed, there were two proposed areas up island. The one around the Transfer Station and the Sporting Club received a lot of push-back.
- Tom is asking the Planning Board to reconsider adding a Town Center around Durkee's General Store. The store is for sale now, and that property has 17 acres that could be used to develop workforce housing.
- Tom printed out the discussed Durkee's Town Center of 2017-2018. He provided a tax map for reference.
- The intent is to provide the possibility for increased population density and some workforce/affordable housing.

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- The group looked at the proposed boundaries and discussed the lots that should be included. The group felt that it would be beneficial to include large lots that could be sited for a number of dwellings.
- There will be at least two informational meetings needed for the Ordinance and Town Center changes. It will eventually go to the Town for a vote.
- Discussion about potential concerns with landowners and neighbors.
- The Planning Board has asked the Housing Committee to spearhead the effort of the Up-Island Town Center. Members of the Committee are happy to be a part of it.
- Ginnie asked about any properties that might be in conservation easements.
- At a later point in the process, every property owner in the proposed Town Center and every abutter needs a letter sent notifying them of this proposal.
- Melissa asked if all properties in the Town Center need to connect. Tom answered that it needs to have geometric coherence.
- Tom asked the committee if they accept this task to designate a new Town Center, including drawing the map, delineating the boundaries, articulating the reasons, and coordinating with the Planning Board for public meetings and notification of landowners and abutters.

**Motion by T. Tutor, seconded by M. Burns, that the Housing Committee will undertake the development of a new Up-Island Town Center. Roll Call. Motion passed, 3 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

7. Committee Membership

- Mike stated that this committee has shrunk. Rick and Dave have both resigned. John hasn't been for a while. We need two or three new members. All should recruit.
- Carrie can send a Constant Contact if a member writes something up.

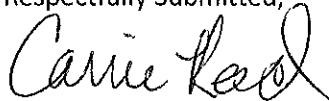
8. Next meeting date

- Next meeting Tuesday, January 23, 5:00 PM

9. Adjourn

**Motion by T. Tutor, seconded by M. Burns, to adjourn at 6:23 PM. Roll Call. Motion passed, 3 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary

