

Islesboro Housing Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, June 7, 2022  
In-Person Meeting at 5:00 PM, Town Office

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chair Lauren Bruce called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

2. Establishment of a Quorum

Quorum was established with 6 voting members present

Members Present: Lauren Bruce, Rick Rogers, Mike Nelson, Dave Dyer, Tom Tutor (5:25) John Kauer (5:25). Alternates: Melissa Burns, and Ginny Hess.

Members Absent: Michael Hutcherson

Others Present: Rachel Rolerson Smith and Carter Jerman

3. Approval of minutes of May 3, 2022

**Motion: To approve Minutes of April 4, 2022, as written, R. Rogers, seconded by M. Nelson.**

**Motion passed, 4 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

4. Update from Rick Rogers regarding new Legislative Initiatives.

- R. Rogers briefly spoke about LD 2003 to the Planning Board and Select Board
- Town lawyer said that in order to put an ADU on a property, the owner needs to be a resident owner, living on the property. Therefore, IAP cannot put an ADU on any of its properties.
- Throughout time that LD 2003 was being developed, R. Rogers reached out to people working on affordable housing on other islands, and people at Genesis (who write a lot of legislation), and had several meetings. One Zoom meeting was with Maine House Speaker Ryan Fecteau. Rick lobbied him to allow for Affordable Housing Initiatives to put ADUs on their properties without being the resident owner. That ended up in the bill, because it doesn't say anything about needing to be a resident owner.
- In Rick's view, the law says anyone who owns a piece of property can have a house and an ADU, or two units.
- M. Nelson stated the law states that properties in a Town Center, as defined by the Town, can put in up to 4 units, depending on other restrictions.
- D. Dyer asked if individual municipalities are allowed to be stricter than State law. R. Rogers believes that that is not how the law reads.
- R. Rogers stated there are resources through the state to help municipalities change their Ordinances and such to accommodate the new law.
- Discussion about legal challenges with the State vs. Towns.
- R. Rogers stated the money for Maine Housing has been funded. You can get a maximum grant of \$210,00 per unit, with a two unit minimum and a maximum of \$840,000 if you are to build 4 units. Some can be used for renovation (with acquisition) as long as renovation is at least \$50,000. These have been 15-year forgivable loans. The new rule is houses must be maintained in Affordable Housing Inventory for at least 45

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years. IAP will likely build two houses and do a renovation. There is enough money for all habitable islands to build two units.

- M. Nelson found a bill on tiny houses, LD-1530, which basically says that a tiny house should be approached exactly the same as any other structure, no separate rules and/or codes. Discussion about how a tiny house may be defined, town by town.
- L. Bruce stated that there is still some shuffling in Augusta, where they want to get more of their ducks in a row before Planning Boards come to them for info and advice. It may be August before we have ability to get help from the State.

5. Distribution of final, committee approved Mission Statement

**The Mission of the Islesboro Housing Committee is to facilitate finding or building housing for current and future year-round residents of Islesboro.**

6. New Business:

a. Real Estate Update from Ginny Hess

- There are 12 residential listings on the island, two of those are pending, and two are less than \$400,000. The others are close to \$1 million or up to \$5 million.
- There are 8 land listings, most of them are waterfront. Not a lot of large tracts.
- There is a big chunk on Trim Lane. It's a complicated piece. It's about 48 acres, some in conservation, with a small cottage with wood stove as its only heat source. It's been listed for over a year.
- Of the smaller properties, there are two that are right next to each other, both single family homes, built in the 1970s, 3-BR each, both 1.6 acres, under \$400,000. Could get creative with these two together, with ADUs possibly.
- R. Rogers stated that for IAP, to purchase the property and bring it up to today's standards, it's usually cheaper to buy a modular house and put it on a piece of property. These could be eligible for renovation money.
- Page Clason's seasonal cottage is from the 1900s. It would be a big undertaking to get it winterized, up to modern standards. There is also an easement issue, access is through someone else's property. Not really a good candidate for affordable housing goals.
- Durkee's. Richard is not willing to separate store from the land. It's a package.

b. Committee Chair transition

- Lauren Bruce is stepping down from the committee but will attend meetings, and work with new Chair to make sure the transition goes well.

**Motion: To nominate Mike Nelson as new Chair of the Housing Committee, T. Tutor, seconded by R. Rogers. No discussion. Motion passed, 6 yes, 0 no, Unanimous.**

7. Other Business

- John Kauer brought members up to date on the project the Sustainable Housing and Development Foundation (SHADP) is doing up island.

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- Chloe and Gabe are going to buy the house, and they will rent out their current house to CMP.
- Shooting for mid-August to finish house, and end of Sept for the closing.
- It's an experimental house, net-zero, insulated with industrial hemp, thick walls, super-efficient, but not tight.
- Started planning the next one. Talked with two other parties. Changed the model a little bit. We're going to make deals with people to participate in this sustainable housing process, let them come up with the money, and then we will build for them. Still trying to get people to buy into the idea and contribute to the foundation, which would then facilitate general housing. All houses will have different designs.
- G. Hess asked if it's possible to get tour of Gabe and Chloe's new house to be. J. Kauer answered yes, and he will be back on island full-time after June 25. Todd Congdon and Sarah Oliver are there almost every day.
- Carter Jerman asked about the target market for this project. J. Kauer answered that it is for people whose income is just above what would allow them to qualify for IAP affordable housing, yet having trouble getting loans from banks.
- Hoping that the SHADP might be a way to raise money in non-profit context that could be used for other kinds of housing as well.
- 96 acres on this plot just past the corner of Bluff Rd. and Main Rd. Plan is to have no more than 5 houses. We've been talking with Vern about how to do this in a way that it isn't characterized as a development. Land that's not developed will go into conservation with IIT, and there will be a park-like path wandering among the houses, down to the shore to Ryder Cove. All South-facing. We will build the houses so they're oriented for solar, with appropriately pitched roofs. Wood is milled on site, including cedar clapboards.
- Carter asked if, between SHADP and IAP, have they talked with anyone who assists people who are on the margins for financing. Are there organizations or State programs, etc.? This Committee has spent a lot of time talking about workers on the island, and the vast majority of these people can't afford a house on this island. R. Rogers answered that the IAP has not been in the selling market for the last 10 years. We have sold one house and are thinking about selling another, but typically to people who have been renters for a long time. Maine Housing website has first-time home-buyers program. Many banks have programs, too. J. Kauer answered that his foundation's homes are not permitted to be flipped. In the deeds, there will be covenants that say the foundation gets the right of first refusal, and if you sell it, there is a limit to how much equity you can accrue. This will be a sort of parallel market that doesn't put us back into the market that's precluding people from participating.

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- Carter Jerman stated that it seems the Committee is not about being developers, which means that some rules need to be established, or an outline, in terms of how to curate a transaction or a structure.
  - R. Rogers stated that this committee needs to do something different from what IAP and SHADP are doing. We've identified other segments of the population, let's get on with that part. In over a year, we've accomplished creating a mission statement.
  - L. Bruce stated that one of the next steps would be to work with the Planning Board on the ADUs and any other pieces of the Ordinance that we can help with. The problem is funding anything. The Town does not have the ability to finance properties. One idea is to have businesses that want housing for their employees come together and pitch some money towards this goal. We are now clearly between what IAP and SHADP are doing.
  - R. Rogers stated there needs to be coordination of effort. The next step is to define who it is we're servicing and how to go about it.

8. Comments from visitors and members.

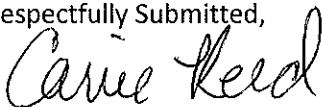
- Carter Jerman stated that the more important thing for the committee would be to develop model under which housing could be developed. Establish an outline that the community can refer to so it doesn't become a "not-in-my-backyard" situation. Most people agree that we don't want this to become like the Vineyard with gentrification.
- L. Bruce stated we have real challenge finding a Town solution to housing on the island, in terms of buildable land, as well as funding. Let's continue to hammer away and find a solution. We desperately need some help in terms of housing for workers and other young families who'd like to stay on the island, rentals, for instance.
- M. Burns stated that if we develop a model of sustainability, the first step is to draft a statement to present to the Planning Board that the Housing Committee supports LD 2003 and that we would like to see Islesboro adopt it. It would show that we have people in the room right now that are actively trying to provide rental housing. An official statement from the Committee with our signatures would be noted and workable. We can also then take it to the Select Board.

9. Set next meeting date

- July 19, 5:00pm.

10. Adjourned at 6:04pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carrie Reed, Secretary