

St. Johnsbury Rental Housing Improvement Grant Program Advisory Meeting

November 17th, 2021, Draft

Present, Members: Patricia Janssen, Ron Steen, Patrick Shattuck, Irene Nagle, Alice Kitchel

Advisor: Joe Kasprzak, Assistant Town Manager

The minutes from the previous meeting, October 27, 2021 were accepted as written.

The Committee reviewed and evaluated the applications of three rental properties seeking approval for grant funds, 161 River Rd. Apt #1, 161 River Rd. Apt. #2, and 139 Central St. Apt. #2. All three had submitted proper paperwork. Projects met universal design principles. The committee moved, seconded, and voted unanimously to recommend that the select board approve the three applications to receive grants.

There was discussion on when and whether invoices are necessary to score items in the applications, for example, the total cost of a project. Also, there was discussion about the criteria to score the discretionary item, bonus points for following universal design principles.

Joe Kasprzak brought up questions and comments from applicants for the committee to consider.

- If an owner is also a contractor, can they be reimbursed for their own work on the property?
- If an owner received a grant, then sold the property, is it okay that they added value to the property for resale?
- What if this property is then no longer a rental property?

Another question raised,

- If the owner lives in one of the units of a property, could they receive a grant for improving the unit they are living in?

Joe Kasprzak also asked the committee to consider the process of receiving and awarding applications. He proposed an open program, start accepting applications April 1, end accepting them April 30th, announce the awards July 1. Or, have two rounds, depending on funds, but with one date all work needed to be completed. Perhaps there are other processes to consider.

Action Item

Joe Kasprzak will arrange for the inclusion of the recommendations of the RHIGP for Round Two applications on the agenda of the next select board meeting November 22nd, 2021.

Adjourned at 1:00 pm. Respectfully submitted, Alice S. Kitchel