

Housing Committee Meeting Minutes: 12:30 pm July 10th, 2020 via Zoom

Attendees: Alicia Armstrong, Joe K., Pam Dearborn, Patrick Shattuck, Irene Nagle, Patricia Janssen, Betty Keller,

Committee Mission: "To support economic growth by improving the overall quality of residential and commercial properties in St. Johnsbury."

Rental Housing Improvement Incentive Program Update

The group discussed applications received and the follow-up efforts by the town grant administrator (Joe). Joe mentioned that applicants need more assistance with the grant process. It may be a good idea to form a small group of committee members to provide technical assistance with the grant application process in the future. The Rental Housing Improvement Review Committee agreed to meet on July 16th to review all applications with expectations of presenting at the July 27th Select Board meeting.

There was a brief discussion about what we could do better in the future to solicit more participation. All agreed that COVID-19 has made it very difficult to roll out the program.

COVID-19 & Housing Stimulus Funding

Patrick S. provided an update on the housing stimulus program that is being developed by the legislature. Rural Edge is involved with the program development and will be the program administrator. The program will likely include \$30K grants to landlords who rehab vacant, blighted, and sub-standard rental housing. These units are required to be available to house the homeless. There is a very short window as all housing stimulus funds must be obligated by Dec. 31, 2020 – details to follow.

The group discussed the remaining RHIGP funds and whether Rural Edge could add those to the housing stimulus funds. This would deploy the remainder of our funds and get them into the hands of St. Johnsbury landlords. The group will discuss this option with Rural Edge once the housing stimulus program details are finalized.

Other Business

Irene informed the group that NVDA was working on a Housing Forum to discuss net-positive energy efficiency housing. The group briefly discussed some potential sites for regenerative housing projects and look forward to hearing more about net-positive energy efficient housing. Irene will send out invites to the Housing Committee when the forum is scheduled.

Joe informed the group that the 2020 Rental Housing Registration packets went out and registrations are being received.

Meeting adjourned at 1:45pm. Minutes submitted by JK.

Next meeting- August 14, 2020 at 12:30pm via Zoom.