

Approved as written
Jamestown Affordable Housing Committee Minutes
July 19, 2023
5:15pm
Small Conference Room
93 Narragansett Avenue
Jamestown, RI 02835

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:17pm and the following members were present: Bob Plain, Dave Pritchard, Quaker Case, Fred Pease, Lisa Bryer

Also present: Carrie Kolb, Julie Brunner, OPAL, the Orcas Island Community Land Trust (by zoom)

Not present: Job Toll, Wayne Moore, Mary Meagher and Joe Cannon

II. Approval of Minutes

1. May 17, 2023 - review, discussion and/or action and/or vote
2. June 21 2023 - review, discussion and/or action and/or vote

A motion to approve the minutes from the May 17, 2023 meeting as written was moved by Pritchard and seconded by Case. All in favor

A motion to approve the minutes from the June 21, 2023 meeting as amended was moved by Pease and seconded by Bryer. All in favor.

III. Community Land Trust/Jamestown Sustainable Resident Program- review, discussion and/or action and/or vote

- a. Zoom with Julie Brunner of OPAL, the Orcas Island Community Land Trust

The committee had a Zoom meeting with Julie Brunner of OPAL, the Orcas Island Community Land Trust. Brunner described that OPAL's mission is to maintain the character, vibrancy and diversity of Orcas Island community by answering the ongoing need for permanently affordable housing. They have created 110 homeownership units and OPAL owns 90 rental units. Orcas Island has a population of 5,000 people and the incomes are not low, but the wages are low. She said to get units (built) now and hit the ground running.

Plain asked how they acquired property. Brunner said that they buy it. Plain said that Jamestown is looking into the Town buying the land like a reverse mortgage, and the resident's maintain ownership of the house. The municipality will get the affordable housing credit with the State. Brunner said that she discourages a municipality from owning without a spin-off plan because politics and policies of the town can change. She also gave the optics that the town is buying land out from under seniors.

Case asked about OPAL's funding. Brunner said that they are a local small non-profit that does fundraising and doesn't generally use federal funds, but get some funds from state housing trust. They ask local people for money directly and do not have events. They do not have real estate transfer tax. Their CLT is a community-controlled entity, anyone can be a member and 1/3 of their board are OPAL homeowners. Plain asked how they approach property owners? Brunner said that they call them up, sell the program and appeal to their best selves.

Plain asked Brunner if she knew of any municipally owned programs? She said that Salt Lake City didn't finish their project.

Brunner suggested that our committee also look at Minneapolis' Project Sustained Legacy as an example of another community land trust. Vail, CO is another community that came up with 10 good ideas.

Brunner said that she likes the town's idea but to think bigger. She said to think that it is possible. She said that deals take a long time and each one is different. She said to get our hands on properties now. She said to do an analysis to see how big the problem is. She said to have a meeting with target population in the room and those who are struggling to find housing.

IV. Funding Mechanisms of Affordable Housing - review, discussion and/or action and/or vote

a. Discussion on permanent source of funding for affordable housing in Jamestown
Not discussed at this meeting

V. Jamestown Senior Center - review, discussion and/or action and/or vote (5 min)
Not discussed at this meeting

VI. Tools and Techniques for Creating Affordable Housing in Jamestown - review, discussion and/or action and/or vote
Not discussed at this meeting

VII. Member Reports
Not discussed at this meeting

VIII. Future Meetings and agenda items of Affordable housing Committee - review, discussion and/or action and/or vote
The next meeting will be on August 16, 2023 at 5:15pm.

IX. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn at 6:20pm was moved by Case and seconded by Pease. All in favor.