

Minutes VMICC Affordable Housing Committee

20 May 2021, 7-8 pm

The committee met by Zoom Present were: Jean Berholzheimer, Sheila Doane, Erin Durett, Sarah Eden, Josh Priest, Franny Allen, Armen Yousoufian, David Kimmett, Claire Neuman, Kyle Britz, Coco Carson-Rohe, Tanya Roberts, Michaela Oliverri, Terry Sullivan, David Vogel and Rita Schenck

The minutes and agenda were approved with minor changes.

There was an extensive discussion of the scope of the committee and the expected demeanor of the members, led by David Vogel. Here are the major points made.

- The committee's role is to provide advice to the VMICC Board. It has no authority on its own. It can persuade but not direct.
- The committee must be inclusive so as to represent the views of the community
- The committee should be researching the issues of housing on the island, and there is no reason it cannot evaluate housing for the homeless, owners and renters. The committee should itself decide the issues it wants to take on and work with the board as necessary to clarify its scope.
- In support of including the wide community opinions, it is important that all members treat each other and community members with courtesy, kindness, respect, and professionalism, both in the meeting and outside it. (there were some complaints about the use of the chat function in the meeting, which disrespects speakers by creating a parallel conversation).
- When seeking a direct conversation with someone, that should be done "off line" not including the entire committee.
- It was suggested that we should set up google docs to allow real time interaction on the agenda and other matters.

David Kimmett of the King County Parks and Natural Resources explained his work and the county's intention in acquiring open land. That land is purchased using funds earmarked for open land acquisition for the benefit of the residents of the county. The land cannot be used for development. However, the county is working with non-profits developing low income housing to acquire open land accessible to those developments.

David stated that developing open land had never happened in his 35 years at the county, but there is nothing stopping an attempt to alter county rules to do so.

David said that he was working to make the connection to the individuals in the County responsible for affordable housing.

The committee agreed that weekly meetings were generally excessive, but that it would be prudent to do so until administrative issues had settled. Thursdays at 7:00 PM were the chosen times.