

Fair Housing Committee Minutes
9-13-2016
Mimi Hollister, Scribe and Chair

Present: Andrew Hare, Lou Meyi, Ben Carson, Ann Cohen, Mark Podgur, Don Davies, Jan Robinson, Mimi Hollister, Guest Don Gardner

The meeting followed a tribute party for Don Davies who is retiring from the committee after many years. The following are edited tributes from those present: Rev. Wendy Von Courter emailed a message of great appreciation for this remarkable man that Mimi read. Lou Meyi read from Don's memoir two parts that illustrated his gift to us of his staying power and the value of forging relationships that are not immediately imaginable. Paul Crosby spoke of Don's tireless advocacy, his detail orientation – sometimes too much so, never giving up on a focus and his optimism that change is possible.

Jan Robinson said he walks the walk and talks the talk. Hazel Grenham spoke of meeting him through education and church and theater. She also affirmed his optimism and his ability to see how connections work and thus his skill as a collaborator.

Andrew hare said he is kind and listens and is committed to larger social change.

Judy Jacobi saw him as a fellow teacher with commitment.

Ben Day was impressed that the fight is still in him as he ages.

Ann Cohen noted that his encouragement and focus has helped her when things don't happen readily. Don Gardner spoke of how important this committee is to the town and appreciated Don's focus on the importance of cooperating and collaborating to make things happen.

Mimi read a limerick lauding Don.

The party ended, most of the guests left, and we got on with the meeting: Following along with the minutes, which were approved, some changes were made in the follow-up approach to the Selectmen. We will meet with Becky Cutting and John McGinn before meeting with individual Selectmen, following Bret Murray's letter to us on behalf of the Selectmen that we work with John to create a plan forward.

The issue of taking on being a professional monitor for CHAPA was discussed. **Mark Podgur agreed to learn more about it**, see if a second person is needed, and pursue the idea of offering to help a professional monitor with local leg work. He will assess the extent of the work and report back to us. Lou agreed to get him the contact info for the realtor, Ari?, who oversees the Highlands resales.

It was agreed that a planning retreat like we used to have with Paul Crosby would be a good idea. Also agreed that we should recruit new people for the committee. Ideas for recruiting are to reach out to Alex Finigan's mother for a possible real estate person, after checking with Jim Viperman about his status. Also need a banker and a techy. Andrew will be in touch with the School of Social Work at Salem State for a possible internship with us and/or students that could get extra points by working with us. **Mimi will raise this with the Ministerial Assoc.** for

possible interested folks. The Selectmen might be another source because they know the town.

A letter of congratulations should be sent on our behalf to Andrew DeFranza at Harborlight for receiving the first Gomes Award given by Congressman Seth Moulton for extraordinary community service.

Next meeting: October 20th, 7 pm, Community Center.