

Finland Home Solutions Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 12, 2025, 5:30-7:00pm
Clair Nelson Community Center - Finland, MN

I. Rachel Clark calls March's Regular Meeting to order

- a. Welcome
- b. In attendance: 12 - Rachel Clark, Lise Abazs, Nancy Anselment Olson, Jonathan Beauchane, Colby Abazs, Meghan Mitchell, Sarah Mayer, Charlotte Hughes, Philip Brayley, David "Slim" Steffens, Tracy Meisterheim, Annie Trotta.
- c. Review agenda and discuss additions or changes in order

II. Approve Past Meeting Minutes

- a. February Regular Meeting (2/12):
 - i. Motion: Rachel Clark
 - ii. Second: Nancy Olson
 - iii. Passed by unanimous consent
- b. February Unofficial Meeting - Event Planning (2/19):
 - i. Motion: Rachel Clark
 - ii. Second: Nancy Olson
 - iii. Passed by unanimous consent
- c. February Meeting - Community Gathering Minutes (2/22):
 - i. Motion: Rachel Clark
 - ii. Second: Nancy Olson
 - iii. Passed by unanimous consent
- d. March Unofficial Meeting - Event Debrief (3/7):
 - i. Motion: Rachel Clark
 - ii. Second: Nancy Olson
 - iii. Passed by unanimous consent

III. County Meetings

- a. Lake County HRA meetings conflict with our regular FHS meetings. Discuss shifting our standing date and time for regular FHS meetings to allow attendance at Lake County HRA meetings.
 - i. To start building more relationships with county and regional entities, proposal is made to move monthly meeting of FHS to first Wednesday of each month 5:30-7:00pm beginning April 2, 2025.
 - ii. Motion: Lise Abazs
Second: Jonathan Beauchane
 - iv. Passed by unanimous consent
- b. Public Hearing on a request for an interim use permit - notice in Northshore Journal, 3/7:
 - i. Short term vacation rental home at 5758 Little Marais Road, Finland
 - ii. Monday 3/17, 5:45pm, Law Enforcement Center, TH (Planning Commission)
 - iii. Does this group want to send a representative?
 - 1. This is the Haveri Homestead. The property was just purchased and immediately requested an STV permit.
 - 2. FHS will prepare a statement expressing our concerns about the loss of this potential home for a permanent resident in the community for Rachel Clark to present at the hearing for this STV permit.
 - a. Motion: Colby Abazs
 - b. Second: Rachel Clark
 - c. Passed by unanimous consent

- c. Should a representative from our group start attending other meetings?
- i. Board of Adjustment: adjusts property values so not necessary for FHS to be represented at this meeting.
 - ii. Board of Commissioners: almost everything is decided outside of the meeting so not a large impact from attending in person, media coverage is good and minutes are published, FHS should keep updated on the topics being discussed by reviewing agendas and minutes, attend strategically/as needed.
 - iii. Planning & Zoning: looking for additional volunteers with more county representation, meets once per month, reviews variances & conditional use permits, cannabis policies. Colby will be applying, and word should be spread for more volunteers, Rachel will watch agendas and plan to attend when there are relevant topics being discussed. Annie also offered to attend meetings.
 - iv. County Meeting calendar:

IV. Since most attendees of this meeting were not at the February Community meeting, Rachel reviewed the Finland Home Solutions poster and the conversations held at that meeting. The topics that had the most energy and enthusiasm were:

1. Addressing Septic & Well
 2. Expanding Existing Housing Capacity
 3. Community Land Trust - University has researched this and created a useful database of examples of rural land trusts that could be models for Finland.
- Question: What is the University doing now: The University will continue to provide research and capacity for moving things forward through the summer.
 - Question: How much money is left for this project? FHS coordination funding for current work under the Township will last through the end of 2025.
 - Question: What is the sustainability for maintaining this project when funding runs out? Rachel is a short-term coordinator. Need to make a plan.

V. What goals and priorities should FHS set for the near term, medium term, and long term?

- a. Near term (next 6-9 months; June 30 - coordinator funding and early fall - ESMC partnership).

IDEAS SUGGESTED:

- i. Plan in place for how work will continue
- ii. Identify local land and home owners who may be supportive and have property & resources to start a project.
- iii. Go to county planning committee
- iv. Grant writing
- v. Build relationships and put locals in seats of county level power
- vi. Cohousing design
- vii. Prioritize funding opportunities
- viii. Create proposal for multifamily housing suited to Finland
- ix. Rural graywater research
- x. Research alternative wastewater
- xi. Find a project and complete it (local contractor directory)
- xii. Create list of allowed septic alternatives
- xiii. More info from county agencies

- b. Medium term (1-3 years). IDEAS SUGGESTED:

- i. Create local CLT tailored to Finland/CBT
- ii. Collaborate with Land Access Alliance

- iii. Explore route to acquire tax forfeited land into land trust
 - iv. Public showers & laundry facilities
 - v. Building project (funded by Lake County HRA)
 - vi. Keep children in town
 - vii. Policy changes to allow additional dwellings
 - viii. Experiment with installing water and septic alternatives as trials
- c. Long term (3-20 years). IDEAS SUGGESTED:
- i. Revolution
 - ii. Self sufficient community
 - iii. Gardening, fruit trees
 - iv. Cluster housing/tiny homes
 - v. Multi family multi age housing cluster
 - vi. Resiliency land use planning & zoning
- d. How will we decide what to commit to? What are our values?
- i. Choose projects that have current champions in the community.
 - ii. Be strategic in utilizing current university resources while we have them.
 - iii. Prioritize projects that are feasible and solid to build momentum and show we did something (WE DID IT! feeling)
 - iv. Balance that with long term/vision projects that build the future we want to see.
- e. Setting Goals for next 6-9 months:
- 1. Make a plan for how the work will continue after current funding.
 - 2. Build relationships within County leadership.
 - 3. Engage University in septic research:
 - Alternative septic options and greywater systems.
 - Template for reducing barriers to ADUs.
 - 4. Finish a project to have something to show we've accomplished:
 - a. Create a list of area contractors, distribute to people who need housing adaptations. Jonathan, Annie, North Shore Area Partners.
 - b. Establish a rotating loan fund for septic expansions with IRRRB and Township. Rachel will work with Township.
 - 5. Convene topic-focused teams:
 - a. Septic Alternatives Team
 - b. Very Finland Home Solutions Dream Team
 - c. Community Land Trust Team
 - d. County Team
 - e. Momentum Team

SEPTIC ALTERNATIVES TEAM:

- Sarah, Ursula, Annie, Rachel, Charlotte, Slim (cc: Jonathan, Colby)
- 1. Work in partnership with the university to find or design a model for septic alternatives (such as greywater systems) that would work in the Finland area.
- 2. Make a plan for how that model could be implemented.
 - a. Consider: funding, site, timeline, willing property owners, approval from the county, potential partnership w. University to designate Finland as an experimental project
- 3. Create a plan or template to reduce septic-related barriers to ADUs.

VERY FINLAND HOME SOLUTIONS DREAM TEAM:

- Rachel, Colby, Nancy, Annie, Ursula
- Visualize & design a multifamily housing facility that would fit the Finland community

COMMUNITY LAND TRUST TEAM:

- Rachel, BJ, Lise, Meghan, Ursula, Ted, Land Access Alliance
- Identify rural land trust models and come up with a plan that could work in Finland/CBT/Lake County.

COUNTY TEAM:

- Rachel, Colby, Sarah, Annie, BJ, Joe Baltich
- Building relationships with County officials (admin, staff, and elected representation), understanding county processes and ordinances, building county support for FHS

MOMENTUM TEAM:

- Rachel, Meghan, Tracy
- Funding, people capacity, how will the work continue

GOAL before next meeting:

- Septic Team will meet to learn the landscape and put together a plan of action.
- All other groups will connect and decide how you want to work together (email, slack, regular meeting time, etc)
- Idea proposed to have the first half of regular monthly meeting be time for teams to meet. Challenge: many people are on more than one team.

VII. Adjourn 7:40 pm

Motion: Jonathan Beauchane

Second: Rachel Clark, Passed by unanimous consent

Rachel Clark date: 4/9/25
Rachel Clark - Finland Home Solutions Outreach Coordinator

Absent in person date:
Lise Abazs - Finland Home Solutions Secretary

Attested to this 9th day of April, 2025

Stacy Breden
Stacy Breden - Clerk of the Board

ORIGINAL