

Star of Hope Foundation Launches Community Process to Assist in Long-Term Planning Effort

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For More Information
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Vinalhaven, Maine The Star of Hope Foundation began a robust community outreach effort this week, in the island community of Vinalhaven, where preeminent American pop artist Robert Indiana lived for 40 years. The Foundation was created in 2016 by Robert Indiana.

Larry Sterrs, Chairman of the Foundation's Board commented. "The Star of Hope Foundation is moving forward with a number of important steps that are in keeping with its mission. We are enthusiastic about the upcoming process, which includes a series of community meetings and a survey, in order to gain the input and insights from the residents of Vinalhaven about their hopes and dreams for what opportunities might lie ahead." Sterrs remarked that the Foundation will not make any planning decisions without first hearing from community members. He and the other board members believe that participation in this process is something that is key to a successful long-term plan.

The community meetings, which will take place at the Vinalhaven Town Office are scheduled for August 27th at 4:30 p.m.; September 17th at 5:30 p.m.; October 17th at 5:30 p.m.; and November 19th at 5:30 p.m. The community-wide survey will be implemented in September and mailed to all households/mailboxes in Vinalhaven. Rockland resident Carole Martin, whose broad experience has helped other organizations engage in successful community-driven projects, will facilitate these meetings. Bruce Lockwood of Portland Research Group will implement the survey. He and his team have more than 25 years of experience working with organizations all over the country.

The mission of The Star of Hope Foundation is to promote education of the visual arts through various means including exhibitions, a museum, artist-in-residence program and other outreach endeavors. The Foundation and its Board of Directors will oversee the process to develop a long-term plan which will include opportunities for art education, partnerships and collaborations, and community development. The Foundation's Board consists of Larry Sterrs-Chair, Kris Davidson, Patricia King and Jamie Thomas. The Board is expected to include additional members in the future.

Beginning in August 2019, the Foundation began taking steps to stabilize the Star of Hope building which is a prominent landmark on Main Street in Vinalhaven, and which is in need of significant repair in order to be the avenue for community development and opportunity.

Sterrs commented: "We are pleased to have hired a number of local, Maine contactors to assist in the stabilization of this historic building. It is our intention to stabilize the Star of Hope building first and then assess the four properties owned by Robert Indiana, in order to include their best use in the long-term planning process. The community process includes much more than the real estate holdings as it will solicit ideas about art education, partnerships, and potential community benefits."

While the Robert Indiana estate has been in the news regarding a series of law suits, the Star of Hope Foundation is not a party to any law suit. Rather, the Foundation is focused on facilitating a productive discussion about how it can enhance the community, and open doors to future opportunity.

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