

EDEN PRAIRIE HOUSING TASK FORCE

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14, 2019

HTF MEMBERS: Chair Joan Howe-Pullis; Vice Chair Lyndon Moquist; Carol Bomben, Pedro Curry, Terry Farley, Marlene Fischer, Mohamed Nur, Joan Palmquist, Anne Peacock, Ken Robinson, Emily Seiple

STAFF: Housing and Community Services Manager Jonathan Stanley, Deputy City Clerk Kyle Salage

GUESTS: None

I. WELCOME & RECAP FROM LAST SESSION

Chair Howe-Pullis called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m. Absent were Housing Task Force Vice-Chair Moquist, and Members Curry and Nur.

Howe-Pullis welcomed the members and gave a recap of the previous Task Force meeting. She then provided an overview of the night's agenda. Stanley noted that the Task Force will need to make a recommendation to the City Council on an inclusionary housing policy at the September 17th Council Workshop. As such, members will need to become as knowledgeable as possible on the issue relatively quickly, through this presentation and provided materials.

II. REACTION TO/OPEN DISCUSSION OF/THOUGHTS ON ASPIRE

Palmquist asked for clarification as to whether the City is seeking to have a policy that requires units to be kept affordable in perpetuity. Stanley confirmed this is the City's hope, and he indicated there has been minimal resistance from developers thus far on this practice. Senior developments in particular have been open to it.

Howe-Pullis welcomed comments on the Aspire chapter on housing, but first asked Fischer to introduce herself upon late arrival. Fischer introduced herself and indicated her passion for the issue of affordable housing is particularly in relation to senior living. Howe-Pullis noted that senior housing is addressed in Aspire.

Stanley indicated human and staff time would be needed to complete the project. Some people have purchased Co-Star Data in order to work towards completing it. Palmquist asked how the Task Force can be of assistance with the City's affordable housing efforts. Stanley indicated that the Task Force can simply help by processing the information provided and providing comments and feedback. Howe-Pullis noted that it is important to pay attention to naturally-occurring affordability (and naturally occurring affordable housing, or NOAH), access to housing, tenant protection policies, and establishing relationships with developers that promote affordability. Seiple expressed a desire to make it possible for people to both work and live in the City, even when making lower incomes. She expressed excitement regarding the incoming transit-oriented developments. Howe-Pullis inquired as to whether the City has a vision for the affordability of the new transit-oriented developments. Stanley indicated that there are expectations set regarding their density and affordability. Howe-Pullis asked whether the City could have a zoning policy for transit-oriented developments in regard

to density and affordability.

Stanley indicated the City might consider implementing better incentives for developers to provide inclusionary housing. Farley added it should be understood how people are not only using transit to get to work, but also to amenities and services. Stanley indicated that the large NOAH regional fund is depleted, but they are now entering a second round of fundraising. Farley stated that renters' rights need to be better communicated to seniors. She commended last week's presentation from PROP and expressed interest in the work they are doing. Fischer added seniors are not interested in reading information online about their housing rights, so it becomes the responsibility of their children to become educated on these matters, especially since they often are the ones making these kinds of decisions. Robinson said the last meeting was insightful in giving an overview of where the City is at now, and the goals of the Task Force. He added that Minneapolis is proposing a very progressive inclusionary housing policy, though it has yet to be approved. Howe-Pullis asked for clarification as to what would be changed by a duplex conversion policy and wondered what such a policy would look like in Eden Prairie. Robinson indicated such a policy would greatly change the housing landscape.

III. INCLUSIONARY HOUSING STRATEGY – DEEPER DIVE

Stanley reiterated that an update on a proposed inclusionary housing policy is planned to be provided at the September 13th City Council Workshop. The City of Bloomington has an Opportunity Housing Ordinance. He noted inclusionary housing policies elsewhere have not always been successful or least have not yet been used. However, in EP they have been incorporated into several development agreements and Aspire. Farley asked for clarification as to what a "given share" is, and why rehabilitations were excluded from the City's draft policy. Stanley summarized the different policy options, and explained that developers prefer having choice. Howe inquired as to whether the new Elevate development has affordable units because it received TIF funding, and Stanley confirmed this. Palmquist inquired whether the City currently has a community land trust. Stanley indicated the City does not currently have its own, but it does work in conjunction with one in the area (West Hennepin Affordable Housing Land Trust). In response to a question from Palmquist, Stanley defined "density bonus" and described how the City handles subsidies such as TIF. However, he was not certain whether there would be any interest in incorporating tax abatement. Howe-Pullis asked for expansion on "growth control exemption". Stanley compared the policies of neighboring cities to the proposed policy for Eden Prairie. He explained that to his knowledge developers in Edina have typically paid all or part of the fee in lieu of offering affordable units. He added the City currently has an inclusionary housing practice, but it would be more desirable to have a definitive policy. He then summarized the staff proposal for a policy, and indicated that in discussions with developers about the proposals, reception has been mixed. He outlined the remaining questions regarding the proposed policy, and what still needs to be considered. Peacock asked whether there are any cities being particularly creative in their approach to generating affordability. Stanley indicated there is not much effort put towards creating affordability because generally it is assumed the gaps are too great to fill.

IV. INCLUSIONARY HOUSING DISCUSSION

Stanley then outlined expectations for the September 17th Council Workshop presentation of a policy recommendation, and encouraged Task Force members to leverage their thoughts

and opinions with his experience and knowledge of the City. He then opened the floor for discussion of the type of in lieu payment option offered by Edina, particularly as pertains owner-occupied housing. He prefaced this by indicating he advocates for the incorporation of an affordable housing trust fund, into which any such in lieu payments would go. He noted that Saint Louis Park created such a trust fund, and it was clearly defined what money in the trust fund could be used for. Farley suggested having different affordability thresholds depending on the size of the development. Robinson inquired as to whether such a payment option would attract developers, and expressed interest in incorporating tax abatement. Palmquist recommended the Task Force get a more in depth look at the Saint Louis Park policy, since that seems to closely mirror what is being looked at currently. Howe-Pullis expressed her support for requiring acceptance of housing vouchers. Stanley clarified all this would mean is landlords must recognize Section 8 as a legitimate form of payment. He added most properties in the City have rents above the threshold for use of Section 8 vouchers. He also noted Elevate is planning to accept Section 8 vouchers. Howe-Pullis said a final policy proposal can be decided on by the end of the next meeting, which will take place before the Council Workshop, and requested the policy proposals be put in the side-by-side chart with neighboring cities.

V. ADJOURN

Howe-Pullis adjourned the meeting at 7:30 p.m.