



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
501 North Anderson Street, Ellensburg WA 98926

MINUTES OF ELLENSBURG CITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION

Date and Time: Affordable Housing Commission meeting, February 3, 2021 - 4:30 p.m.

Place of Meeting: Remote meeting held via Zoom

Present: Bruce Tabb, Hannah Tower, Dolores Gonzalez, Charli Sorenson, John Perrie, Hangtao Dang

Absent: Sarah Bedsaul

Others Present: Planning Manager, Jamey Ayling; Community Development Director Kirsten Sackett; Area Director for Kittitas County Habitat for Humanity, Kelle Dvork Vandenberg

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tabb called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

Hangtao Dang was introduced as the newest member of the Commission. He currently works as a professor at CWU, and worked at Iowa State University prior to that. He has construction experience in a mix of industries, including bridge design, and hotel construction. The rest of the Commissioners and Staff members introduced themselves to Commissioner Dang.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Perrie made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Tower seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. December 2, 2020 Commissioner Sorenson moved to accept the December 2, 2020 minutes, Commissioner Tower seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Housing Action Plan Overview

Chair Tabb introduced this topic and said that the Housing Action Plan (HAP) would be one of the next critical items for the Commission to work on. Planning Manager Ayling shared his screen to display the Scope of Work for the HAP. He said that the City has been working with BERK to keep the housing dashboard updated on an annual basis but the HAP will be the next step in analyzing more of the details and creating strategies for increasing the housing stock. He said that the work will include involvement from both

the Affordable Housing Commission as well as the Planning Commission. He specifically pointed to Step 1.6 which refers to reviewing the effectiveness of the current policies. He said that the public engagement strategies were currently being developed by staff.

Ayling said that Step 3.1 is basically the main goal of the plan, as it refers to developing the actual strategies for increasing the housing supply. The City will work with BERK consulting to develop this housing action plan, as they conducted our 2017 Housing Needs Assessment and are very familiar with our community. We will take advantage of the Commission meetings to bring more information on each one of the steps and work with the Commission to address each of the steps. The goal is to complete the HAP by end of year.

Gonzalez asked if they should go through each step or if this is just a first showing to discuss. Ayling said that this was intended to be a broad overview, but if the Commission has any questions, they can raise them at this meeting. There was some discussion on the type of information that will be made available online to the community members. Tabb stated that information would be shared with the public, and Director Sackett also weighed in to explain that Staff was currently working with various companies to set up web demos on online community engagement platforms. She said that once the web page is set up, staff would be coming back to the Commission to discuss the types of engagement to use, and the questions to pose to the public.

Sorenson wanted to make sure that the City finds ways to reach out to the segments of the community that are in need of affordable housing. Tabb suggested that there could be a small subcommittee of the Commission that would be willing to work with Staff as this project evolves. Chair Tabb and Commissioner Dang volunteered to be part of that subcommittee and work with Staff on the work to be completed. Tabb said that if any questions arose from the Commission members, they could forward those questions to staff.

5. OLD BUSINESS

6. STAFF UPDATE/DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Affordable Housing Applications

Planning Manager Ayling provided an update on the affordable housing applications. For the approved Hopesource Addison Place project, the contract for the \$375,000 in funding has been approved. The applicant is currently working on selecting a contractor so they can submit plans for a pre-application meeting.

The Habitat for Humanity Water/Bender project went to Council for approval in December, and the City's legal counsel is currently in contract negotiations with Habitat's legal counsel. This project is different in scope because it involves not only funding, but the donation of land, as well as construction of single-family homes versus rentals.

Ayling stated that there was one additional application that was submitted through the online portal for the Community Garden property. That application is not considered complete and the applicant has not yet provided the additional necessary documentation.

b. Subdivisions

Ayling said he thought it would be helpful for the Commission to be aware of the new subdivision projects moving forward. He shared a GIS map that displayed locations of various subdivisions and multifamily projects currently in process in the City. All told there are about 1,731 single family lots and 117 multifamily units moving forward through the various stages of the approval process. Tabb commented that BERK had previously determined that we need to construct at least 300 homes per year in order accommodate the projected growth over the next 20 years.

7. CITIZEN COMMENT-

Vandenberg said that in regard to Step 1.1 of the Housing Action Plan, whenever we look at affordable housing, we also have to look at the job market and the challenge for community members to make a livable wage. Running parallel with the HAP should be consideration for building a trade program in the valley, particularly in the housing construction trades.

8. COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

Commissioner Tower said that she was reappointed to continue serving on the Commission. Tabb mentioned that the last Commission meeting had been cancelled because there was no content to share, but he wanted to find out if the Commission felt that was a reasonable approach, or if they still wanted to continue to meet. Tower thinks its okay not to meet and that it is okay to utilize email to share information. Tabb said they would continue to take the same approach, but that if anyone ever feels outside the loop to please check in with him or staff.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Perrie motioned to adjourn, Tower seconded. Chair Tabb adjourned the meeting at 5:28 pm.