



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
501 North Anderson Street, Ellensburg WA 98926

MINUTES OF ELLENSBURG CITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION

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

Place of Meeting: Remote meeting held via Zoom

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

Absent:

Others Present: Planning Manager, Jamey Ayling; Community Development Director Kirsten Sackett; Delano Palmer, Habitat for Humanity; Alia Reimer

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tabb called the meeting to order at 4:32 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES of February 3, 2020

Commissioner Gonzalez moved to accept the February 3, 2020 minutes. Commissioner Tower seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Housing Action Plan Timeline

Chair Tabb reminded the Commission that we had applied for the Housing Action Plan grant prior to the pandemic. We are now progressing on that project, and he wanted to discuss timeline and steps.

Planning Manager Ayling noted that the agenda packet had included the scope of work that had been developed with BERK. He said the aim was to have the work completed by November. There are several steps to complete between now and then, including a lot of public participation. He said that City Staff members have been viewing web demos from companies that provide that online community engagement services. Ayling said that City is looking for a program that can be utilized for many different programs and topics in the City. He said we have reviewed three web demos, with one left to

view, and that the new Public Information Officer will be involved in the selection process as well. With the selected engagement program, we will be going out to the community with questions about actual housing needs. Through the HAP work, the previous Housing Needs Assessment will be updated, and strategies will be identified.

Ayling said that as part of the HAP, we will be setting up a Stakeholders group to help advise the discussions. He said staff would be interested in having a member of the Affordable Housing Commission be part of the stakeholder group that can report back to the Commission.

Commissioner Gonzalez said that this is important work, and the extension of the work will be hugely helpful to get the appropriate community feedback. Commissioners Bedsaul and Dang think that the timeline is ambitious but doable. Bedsaul is excited to learn more about the strategies that come out of the plan. Chair Tabb talked about how the plan provides the framework for the work that needs to be accomplished. The sooner we complete the HAP, the sooner the Commission can talk about the next steps. This will help us determine the resources needed. After discussion, the Commissioners agreed that they would be willing to meet twice a month to make sure the work gets completed in a timely manner. Bedsaul said she is also willing to be an alternate for the subcommittee that was discussed in the last meeting. Tabb suggested that the subcommittee members act as the representatives for the HAP Stakeholder group.

5. OLD BUSINESS

6. STAFF UPDATE/DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Affordable Housing Applications

Planning Manager Ayling provided an update for each of the various affordable housing projects.

The Hopesource/Addison Place project is in the process of selecting bids from contractors to do the project. Once a contractor is in place, they will apply for a pre-application meeting.

Habitat for Humanity has completed their pre-app meeting, and they do have their subdivision guarantee in place. Habitat is ready to submit for SEPA and Critical Area, as soon as the contract with the City is finalized. The contract is currently under review by the Habitat attorneys and the City attorneys.

Ayling also noted that a revised application was submitted for the Community Garden site for 56 studio-unit apartment complex. The first application submitted by Matt Stalder was incomplete. This resubmittal is currently under review for completeness, and the updated request has been modified to request just the property and no City sales tax funding. Ayling is still trying to get clarity on whether the applicant's proposed funding sources will work or not. Once all the questions get answered, Ayling will bring it to the Commission.

Tabb asked about the idea of including a member of the Affordable Housing Commission to be part of the pre-application meeting. Bedsaul thought it would be useful for the applicant to learn more about the priorities of the AHC.

Gonzalez said that she did sit in on a previous pre-app, and it was very enlightening and a good opportunity to be part of that discussion. She thinks we created a really good application

and matrix, and that if an applicant meets all the points, they should do well and it will help set them up for success.

Bedsaul thought that as Commissioner members reach out to developers, etc., there may be some applicants who would be more in the know than others. Discussion ensued on the topic of when, who, and how often to include commission members on the discussions with the applicants. It was determined that all applicants should have the opportunity to include a commissioner member in all pre-apps, to ensure that there is a level playing field.

Dang thought it could be helpful to provide a checklist to all applicants, and Tabb responded that the application matrix was a good reflection and outline of the requirements and goals of the commission. Tabb provided additional clarity on the application review and vetting process to ensure applicants have the appropriate information.

b. Monthly Budget Report

Planning Manager Ayling referred to the January budget that was included in the packet. He said it simply shows that we are in the process of rebuilding the fund, after committing funding to the Habitat and Hopesource projects. Tabb called for questions on the financial information and there were none.

7. CITIZEN COMMENT

8. COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

Chair Tabb said that he has had conversations with Habitat Area Director Kelli Dvork Vandenberg about developing trade programs for the high school students. This is coming about because developers are challenged in finding local tradespeople. Tabb is part of a working group that includes the Habitat, the Homebuilders Association, and a County Commissioner.

Gonzalez said there is an engineering school outside of Kittitas that could provide training, and would be a good connection for the ad hoc group to connect with. Tabb also thought it would be useful to connect with CWU, and Dang said he would bring it up in his meeting with CWU faculty. Dang asked for clarification on which school district, and Tabb clarified that it would be available for the Ellensburg School District as a pilot program before expanding it into the County. Dang suggested that there could be a trade show / conference / career fair with exhibits, for the high school students. Tabb will keep the commission updated as this idea evolves, after they have discussions with the school district.

Dang also suggested that it would be helpful to seek state funding to help with a program of this nature. He said he could look into the Department of Labor and National _____ Program to see if they have any funding for a trade school. He will need to be connected with the committee that Bruce is working with to get the conversations going.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Tabb adjourned the meeting at 5:21 pm.