



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
501 North Anderson Street, Ellensburg WA 98926

MINUTES OF ELLENSBURG CITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION

Date and Time: Affordable Housing Commission meeting, May 5, 2021 - 4:30 p.m.

Place of Meeting: Remote meeting held via Zoom

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

Absent: Charlie Sorenson

Others Present: Planning Manager, Jamey Ayling; Community Development Director Kirsten Sackett

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

Perrie made a motion to excuse Sorenson's absence. Bedsaul seconded. All in favor; motion passed.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF APRIL 7, 2021

Commissioner Gonzalez moved to approve the April 7, 2021 minutes as presented. Commissioner Perrie seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

4. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Review Affordable Housing Application submitted by Matthew Stalder for the contribution of City owned property located at the corner of 1st street and Pine.

Mayor Tabb invited the applicant to present his proposed affordable housing project. Applicant Matt Stalder said that the project would be to utilize city-owned land to construct 57 studio apartments. Rent amounts would be set at 60% of AMI. It would maximize the existing zoning district allowances, and go to the highest height, and the maximum density. He said they would use a federal 221(d)4 loan to subsidize the project.

Tabb noted that the threshold required by the RCW when using surplus land is to provide for

80% AMI households, but the applicant is proposing a 60% AMI project which is a requirement of the federal loan package.

Commissioner Gonzalez had a question about the 3 ADA accessible unit. She asked how those would be allocated, and Stalder responded that each building would each have one ADA accessible unit.

Tabb told the commission that the subcommittee had met with the applicant this past Monday. The meeting included himself, Dang and Bedsaul, as well as Planning Manager Ayling and Director Sackett. Tabb said that the requirement for the HUD loan would be to keep the affordable rents for a period of 40 years. He noted that this was in conformance with the City's own retention requirements for affordable housing tied to the sales tax dollars.

Commissioner Bedsaul said that during the meeting on Monday she had asked about the property management piece and wanted to know if he had any new information. Stalder said they would want to work with Hopesource to do the screening. Bedsaul asked the applicant if he felt confident they would have the tools they need to meet the federal loan reporting requirements. Stalder said he is comfortable with it, because there are standard screening tools that are used everywhere, including the banks.

Gonzalez asked about his statement about rents. He has said that 1-bedroom apartments are going for \$1000 at market rate. She asked what he would be charging? He said between \$600 and \$675.

Tabb said most federal loan programs have specific requirements, with some of them like Section 8 only allow rent to be 30% of income. He also said that with Section 8 voucher programs, there are also requirements to keep the properties maintained. Tabb asked Stalder what other requirements were set when he accepted the loan terms for a 40-year HUD loan. Stalder said he is aware of the program requirements, and that the budget needed to demonstrate reserves that would build up over time to replace items such as appliances over time, and for the funding take care of other regular maintenance.

Gonzalez brought up the scoring matrix criteria specific to the community impact. She asked about the amount of space that the buildings take up. She wanted to know if there was any community space available for the tenants. Stalder said the design meets current City Code open space requirements of 10%. There is also a separate gathering area/meeting room, in each of the buildings that the tenants can utilize. In response to a question, he said the meeting space would be about 400 sq ft. Commissioner Dang said he looked at the plan again, and he wanted to know how Stalder came up with 57 units.

Stalder said each building was the same floor model. Each unit has 19 units, with 4 four units on the first floor, and 5 units on the other three levels.

Gonzalez asked about the ADA accessible studios. She wanted to know the difference in cost for ADA vs non-ADA studios. Stalder responded that there is not a negligible enough difference for them to track the cost differences. He described some of the differences in appliances, no-lip showers, etc.

Bedsaul asked the Commission how they felt about the addition of only 3 ADA units for the overall project, based on the needs of the community. She wanted to discuss if there was a strong enough need for additional accessible units. Stalder said the standard around town is 5% of units are made accessible. He thinks 3 would be adequate for the project. Tabb did note that the Housing Needs Assessment did identify a need for housing for disabled. Stalder

said the ADA construction was really about making the units accessible to wheelchairs. But there are other disabilities that don't need the same wheelchair accommodations.

There was some discussion about the fact that land contribution did not carry the same RCW requirements for meeting the needs of certain population groups. There was discussion that, even though those requirements don't exist, perhaps the screening tools for any affordable housing projects could begin tracking which of the population groups are being served.

Gonzalez asked if the difference in ADA construction was so negligible, whether it would be possible to just make all of the downstairs units accessible – to help with mobility issues beyond just wheelchairs. Stalder said they could easily do the easy things like walk-in showers, different appliances, etc., but the bigger challenge with ADA units are the requirements of the larger turning radius within the apartments. He could make some easier changes to the units, but would not want to officially label them as ADA units.

Tabb asked if there was overlap between universally accessible and ADA accessible. Stalder responded that there was not much difference. Tabb would like to see any of our new units to support Aging in Place. Gonzalez thinks that these types of accommodations should be considered for this project.

Planning Manager Ayling noted that even though Commissioner Sorenson could not make it to the meeting, she did forward her comments to Ayling. Her comments were that 57 studio apartments would be awesome, and she wanted to know where all the parking would be, and wanted to know if some of the units could be made available to seniors and veterans. She also wanted to know about laundry. Stalder said all units would have all the appliances necessary.

Stalder said that, as designed, the parking would meet City Code requirements of .7 spaces per unit, and there would be additional parking available on street.

Dang wanted clarification on the overall schedule for the project. Stalder said he has most of the interior and exterior finished, but it would take a month or two to design the civil plans. It would take 4-5 months to get ready for construction to commence. His recent 19-unit project took 12 months to finish up and he anticipates this one could take up to 18 months.

Gonzalez asked if the HUD loan calls for energy efficiency in the units. Stalder said that the loan doesn't carry those requirements, but that Washington State itself has high energy efficiency requirements, which were raised just this year. Gonzalez asked what that would mean for these units. Stalder said it would require better insulation, more efficient heating and cooling units, etc. The new requirements will become effective before his project will be constructed.

Bedsaul moved to have this proposal forwarded to Council for review. Tower seconded. There was discussion on the wording of the motion. Bedsaul withdrew her motion, with a second from Tower.

Bedsaul made a motion that the Affordable Housing Commission recommend that City Council review and approve the application for contribution of property at 1st and Pine to Matt Stalder. Tower seconded.

There was no discussion on the motion.

All in favor; motion passed.

Tabb thanked the applicant for his work on this project. Tabb also requested that the staff report to Council reflect the conversation about the capacity of the project to support aging in place with more accessible apartments. He would like City Council to be aware of the discussion and the idea of making more of the units livable, not just wheelchair ADA accessible standards.

5. OLD BUSINESS

6. STAFF UPDATE/DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Affordable Housing Project Status

Ayling said that there is not much new to report from the last meeting. The contract for the Habitat project is getting closer. There was a meeting of city staff and legal counsel to vet the last remaining items, and those comments will be forwarded on to Habitat's legal counsel.

At the same time, the SEPA for the project is getting wrapped up, and they will soon begin working on the long plat process for the project.

Ayling said that Addison Place did not receive any bids for contractors on their project. Tabb said that the RFP was extended.

b. Monthly Budget Report

Director Sackett shared the March 2021 budget on the screen, and Ayling talked through the status of the budget. Tabb pointed out that the sales tax numbers have not dipped as far as Council had thought they might because of the pandemic. The City is projecting an increased revenue over last year. There were no questions on the budget report.

c. Housing Action Plan

Ayling said that BERK is keeping us on a tight schedule. Our Public Engagement Plan has been finalized, and we are finalizing our Stakeholder Advisory Group and working on a survey to get questions out to the public. This will include a mailer that will go out in the utilities. There are a lot of moving parts. We are still hitting deadlines for timeframe to get this adopted by October. Bedsaul and Dang will be participating on the Stakeholder Advisory Group.

7. CITIZEN COMMENT

None.

8. COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Tabb adjourned the meeting at 5:32 pm.