



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
501 North Anderson Street, Ellensburg WA 98926

MINUTES OF ELLENSBURG CITY AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMISSION

Date and Time: Affordable Housing Commission meeting, September 1, 2021 - 4:30 p.m.

Place of Meeting: Remote meeting held via Zoom

Present (in-person): Bruce Tabb

Present (virtual): Sarah Bedsaul, John Perrie, Dolores Gonzalez, Hannah Tower, Hongtao Dang and Charli Sorenson

Absent:

Others Present: Planning Manager, Jamey Ayling;

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

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

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 18, 2021

Commissioner Perrie moved to approve the August 4, 2021 minutes with one correction. Commissioner Gonzalez seconded. **All in favor, motion passed.**

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review Final Draft Housing Action Plan

Planner Ayling discussed the status of the HAP. It is out for comment to the public as part of the SEPA process. When the comment period is over, it will go immediately to Council. The Executive Summary will be reworked a bit to address the 3 goals more completely. The strategies went from 12 to 17 and it has been narrowed down to 14 as some of them worked together to become part of another strategy. The next phase is to apply for the implementation grant to get started on about 4-5 strategies. Planner Ayling shared screen and scrolled to page 11-13 to look at the three goals. Goal one-add more housing stock is approved by the commission. Goal two-add more variety to the housing stock is approved by the commission. Goal three-preserve and create income restricted affordable housing units. Commissioner Bedsaul wanted to use the verbiage of preserving *existing* and take out *income-restricted* so that the goal reads as

“Preserve existing and create new affordable housing units” More discussion ensued about the meaning of cost burdened and the cost of housing in Ellensburg. The commission also wanted to change the third sentence to take out low, very low and extremely low out and change it to read “Residents who are cost burdened feel the effects of the rising costs of housing the hardest”. And make “The Needs Assessment” a new paragraph. Planner Ayling explained why the goals are separate instead of lumped together to help implementation later in the process. Discussion ensued regarding the 14 strategies to achieve those goals. One change suggested was to add “preserve and” to strategy #10- to read “Research and implement financial strategies that *preserve and* construct new affordable housing units”

b. Review Multi Family Tax Exemption Program

Planner Ayling reviewed the MFTE, a program that is trying to encourage the development of multi-family housing through the state. It is a designated area of our city and the city of Ellensburg targeted the CC zone. If the developer applies for and is approved for a MFTE the improvements are tax exempt for 8 to 12 years. There are 4 projects in the City of Ellensburg that have qualified so far and a 5th one is on the way. There is a reporting element to the state. Most of the developments throughout the state have not accessed the affordable portion of the program. The state is looking at how to encourage the affordable options. They are offering better incentives if affordability piece is added to new projects they could get a longer tax exemption. Unfortunately, it doesn't help the current projects. The CC zone is getting built out so we need to discuss the possibility of expanding our target areas from just the CC to the CC II zone to encourage more development with the addition of the expanded area. This would possibly offer more MFTE building. Does it only have to be the CC II area or can it be other zones? Planner Ayling will bring back the criteria that is required for the MFTE zones, which might limit where we could expand the incentive for multi-family projects. This will be added to the next meeting for more discussion.

5. OLD BUSINESS

Recommendation of the Stalder project at 1st and Pine is coming up at Council and any of the commission could be at that meeting to add any further comments.

6. CITIZEN COMMENT

7. STAFF UPDATE/DISCUSSION ITEMS

8. COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE UPDATE

None.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Tabb adjourned the meeting at 5:38 pm.