

Whittier Housing Issues Committee Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2019, 6:30-8:00pm
Black Forest Inn, 1 E 26th St.

Attendees: Ben Cowper, Matt Barthelemy, Nicole Weiler, Caroline Alkire, Nate Rastetter, Stormy Peterson, Shannon Dotson, Nancy Julia Hicks

Staff: Kaley Brown & Fartun Ismail

Speakers: D'Ana Pennington, Ward 10 Office

Meeting called to order at 6:31pm by Kaley Brown, Whittier Alliance Executive Director
Agenda & Code of Conduct are reviewed. October meeting minutes reviewed.

Motion to approve October meeting minutes. **Second. Motion carries.**

Motion to approve agenda. **Seconded. Approved.**

Introductions.

Updates from Council President Lisa Bender's Office - D'Ana Pennington

- The Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance went before the Planning Commission for a public hearing yesterday & they expect it to go before the full Council to be voted on in December.
- For rental units, new development projects would be subject to the following options OR an option to pay a fee in lieu of conforming to one of the following options.
 - Option 1: 8% of units affordable at 60% of Area Median Income (AMI); no City financial assistance; revisit after 18 months. • Option 2: 20% of units affordable at 50% of AMI; City financial assistance (Tax-Increment Financing) available. • Option 3: Half the 60% AMI requirement (4% of units) affordable at 30% of AMI; no City financial assistance.
- They also have been working with CPED to host two open houses on the Garfield Parking Lot development, and she wants to use this as an additional opportunity to collect ideas and feedback on priorities for this site.
 - Affordable Housing is important, but there is a need to remember that Whittier's annual median income (AMI) per household is about 30% or so of the Metro AMI, which is the figure the City uses to measure affordability. This is important to remember when hearing figures such as 60% AMI, etc, as that is still twice the amount the average current Whittier household can pay in rent each month.
 - Other ideas?
 - Open public space that could possibly be used for some kind of pop up farmers market or community outdoor programming
 - Question about how we could use this site to foster more creative, small commercial spaces along the alley ways or the pedestrian walkway connecting this site to Lyndale
 - Desire to incorporate public art by local artists into the site design with wall murals, sculpture, other ideas
 - They expect the RFP to be released to begin receiving developer proposals in late January.

Engagement Efforts on Neighborhood Development Projects

- Lupe Projects on Lake Street (Phases II and III)

- Project has been in a holding pattern to get a better idea in the coming months how the proposed Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance might impact the application they ultimately decide to submit for Phases 2 and 3.
- There is an online survey still open on [our website's development tracker page](#), so if folks haven't had a chance to weigh in on those projects as they were presented to this point, there is still an opportunity.
- Hornig Properties Project at 2540 Grand Ave (on hold)
 - No update
- Sabri Properties Projects at 2910 and 2940 Pillsbury Ave
 - Two separate buildings proposed near Karmel Mall to add new floors of commercial space and the other to add culturally-specific residential units. WA Staff and Ward 10 Office plan to reach out to City planner to learn more in the near term.
- City-owned Garfield Parking Lot
 - (Already discussed)
- [Development tracker page on WA website](#) for ongoing updates

Neighborhood Housing/Livability Survey

- So far we have received about 250 survey responses, so we are about a quarter of the way to our goal of 1,000 direct engagements; we will continue this process through the new year and working to find new ways to connect with people face to face. Thank you to all those who have been involved in this process so far!
 - U of M Neighborhood Revitalization student work
 - We have two student groups supporting this Committee via their semester project in the Master in Urban Planning Program; they are planning to present their project results to this committee during our December 17th meeting.
 - CURA strategy support / survey goals
 - The team at CURA is going to work with us to evaluate our strategies thus for connecting with residents through the survey and help us to fine tune our work for more efficiency and impact.
- Ways to support project in November and December
 - Remaining door-knocking, engagement ideas
 - Mint Properties apartment building door-knocking is an option & they also sent out a link to all their email-using residents in Whittier buildings (thanks, Stormy!)
 - Fair Oaks Apts - Shannon has helped us reach her neighbors with flyers, and they maybe able to send out the email link to residents who do utilize that technology, as well.
 - Other ideas? We'd love to put them into action!
 - Multi-lingual / multi-cultural engagement plans
 - East African Engagement Updates - Fartun Ismail
 - Has organized multiple pop-up tables at Karmel Mall to coincide with Friday Prayer and other times of the day/week that typically see a lot of foot traffic. Anyone is welcome to partner with her on future tabling opportunities.
 - Latinx Engagement Updates - Dani Valero
 - Started as a temporary contractor to help us administer this survey last week; she has deep connections in Whittier, as she grew up here and went to Jefferson Elementary. She will be working on this project for the next 3 weeks.

4d Affordable Housing Program Workshop - Thursday, December 12, 2019

- A workshop for landlords in Minneapolis who might qualify to take advantage of the City's new 4d Affordable Housing Incentive Program but may not fully understand the program guidelines, reporting requirements, or eligibility. The City staff will present on the program, and Mint Properties' CEO will share his experience as a program participant for the past 2 years and any tips/advice he has for those considering enrollment.
- We have plenty of space in the MCAD Auditorium, so we encourage committee members to help us share this opportunity as widely as possible, including to renters who might be looking for a way to share information with their own landlord to encourage application.
- WA will need volunteers to help run the workshop and potentially provide some 1:1 support to landlords who would like assistance with an estimate on how their property taxes could be impacted.

Preview December Housing Issues Committee Meeting

- **Tues, Dec. 17th, 6:30--8:00 pm @ Black Forest Inn (1 E 26th St.)**
- U of M Student Group Presentations
- City of Lakes Commercial Land Trust - Preview of partnership with WA on 19 E 26th St property
 - They would like to receive community input on what types of businesses would be a good fit to recruit for the space, how we can get the word out about the opportunity particularly to BIPOC-owned businesses, and what other ideas the community has for ways the Commercial Land Trust could benefit the area. This is a brand new branch of the Community Land Trust, and they are still shaping how the process will look for properties they acquire.
- Volunteer Rental Credit program draft
 - Stephanie has been working on a first draft of this program that we can review and revise as a group at the next meeting.

Attendees break out into small working groups for the remainder of the meeting time to determine next steps on the following projects:

- Neighborhood livability survey project
- 4d Affordable Housing Workshop

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.

Minutes submitted by Kaley Brown.