

Whittier Housing Issues Committee Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2020, 6:30-8:00pm
Black Forest Inn, 1 E 26th St.

Attendees: Morgan Appleberry, Harrell Mathieu, Wendy Darst, Nancy Hicks, Brigid Higgins, Bruce Brunner, Abigail Speller, Cyndi Hovey, Nicole Weiler, Erin West, Nate Broadbridge, Matt Barthelemy, Stephanie Brown, Nate Rastetter, Emma Sherman, Steve Horsfield, Jo Ann Musumeci, Ron Johnson, Joanna Krause-Johnson, Jesse Oyervides, Kevin Beaudin

Staff: Kaley Brown & Fartun Ismail

Speakers: Steve Horsfield, Elizabeth Loeffler, Christina Giese, & Wendy from Simpson Housing Services; Steve Minn, Aaron Diederich, Cameron Flakne, Justin Merkovich from Lupe Development; Gretchen Camp from ESG Architects

Meeting called to order at 6:35pm by Stephanie Brown, Housing Issues Committee Chair
Agenda & Code of Conduct are reviewed. December meeting minutes reviewed.

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

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

Introductions.

Lake Street Dwellings, Phase II and Phase III (Lupe)

- Housing Committee has door knocked, distributed a survey, and synthesized the community feedback for developer during a small group meeting; it is summarized in the comparison chart provided.
- This development “campus” had a Phase I that was approved at a Whittier meeting in 2017 or 2018; they presented at this committee on the 2nd and 3rd phases in the fall of 2019.
- Lupe says they are a “transit-oriented” developer and cites the City’s preference to see increased density on Lake Street; they are utilizing Opportunity Zone funding for this integrated proposal.
- Developer presentations on Phase II and Phase III buildings - separated into 2 separate votes
 - Phase II: 7-story building with 95 market-rate apartments, 1 retail space, and 44 parking spaces (one level below ground); goal to break ground in 2020
 - Phase III: 7-story building with 131 affordable apartments, 3 retail spaces, and 56 parking spaces (one level below ground); goal to break ground in 2021
 - They have made a deposit to the City as collateral to follow-through on this project after the market rate project is already in the ground.
- They do not have any retail or “public use” leases currently established for the commercial spaces in any of the three buildings.
- Large bike facilities onsite for both residents and guest bike parking
- They will have some enclosed at-grade parking and a shared underground parking facility between Phases 2 and 3 which would both be accessed off Garfield Ave.
- They added more setbacks to reduce the massing
- Using sustainable design features and added resident composting based on community feedback
- Based on community feedback, they changed the design/color/materials used to create more variation, rather than making the buildings “twins”

- **Community Discussion/Q&A**
 - The reason they flipped the market rate and the affordable buildings around is because they did not get the funding dollars they applied for through the City or State but did not want their Opportunity Zone dollars to expire
 - In Phase 3 they will utilize a new law called “income averaging” which allows them have a range of units priced at 30-80% of AMI which comes out to about 60% AMI or less on average
 - They will have 10 units set aside for the county to be filled by veterans experiencing homelessness
 - Desire from community members for developers to do more outreach with adjacent neighbors to ensure they are able to access their homes and businesses during the construction period; some have not received communications from them yet despite Lupe saying they have done outreach and not heard of issues.
 - Lupe says the reason they do not have units larger than 2 bedrooms is because the City did not believe this was a good place for family housing due to the proximity to a high frequency road and little space for a playground, green space
 - The buildings have a community room and business center that they could make available for neighborhood groups to access and utilize
 - Community discussion consensus begins to land on the idea that they would be willing to vote to approve Phase 2 (market rate) specifically because of Phase 3 (designated affordable).

Motion #1: To vote in support of the Phase 3 building and all applications / variances requested.

In favor: 21

Oppose: 0

Abstain: 1

Motion carries.

Motion #2: To vote in support of the Phase 2 building and all applications/variances requested conditional upon 1) approval of the Phase 3 building, 2) an agreement from the developer to work more closely with affected businesses and property owners to minimize construction disruption, and 3) that language be included in our final letter stressing the need for the City to require deeper levels of affordability into approved projects.

In favor: 12

Oppose: 0

Abstain (punt to the next meeting): 9

Motion carries.

Simpson Housing Services Project - 28th St. / 1st Ave - Steve Horsfield, Executive Director

- Simpson Housing Services was gifted the church in which their current shelter operations have been housed for over 40 years. They are working with nonprofit developer Project for Pride in Living (PPL) to build a new project that allows them to maintain the same shelter and meal service capacity and add supportive housing units to serve their clients in a dignified and functional manner.

- Simpson staff serve many Latinx clients and have many biracial and bilingual staff members serving them; they have successfully moved 62 people from shelter into stable housing since July 1, 2019.
- Their new project will have 11 ft. setbacks on each side which allows for more green space and public realm than exists now
- They will have the shelter on the first three stories and then 42 units of supportive housing on the top 2 stories; case management, regular programming, and 24 hour staff on duty which is an improvement from their current operations.
- They plan to use this scale and setup as a model for other organizations to be able to replicate in other areas.
- They will be able to provide more dignity in service - no more bunk beds and everyone will have their own space in a studio apartment, roughly 400 square feet.
- They provide a meal service every day, and a commercial kitchen + dining room space will be a part of that first floor operation. There will be a common area/lounge on each floor of the shelter space.
- They will be incorporating stained glass and some wood features from the existing church into the new design to pay homage to their long-time home.
- Simpson will be coming back and presenting more in-depth on their building designs and requesting a formal vote from the community at our February 18th meeting.

-Garfield Lot RFP has been released, and proposals are due on April 9, 2020.

-The Commercial Land Trust is still looking for advisory board members for anyone interested in helping to shape their governance model as a way to keep our community involved in what happens at 19 E 26th

St. Anyone interested can reach out to us and we can put them in touch with the Land Trust staff.

Meeting adjourned at 8:31 pm.

Minutes submitted by Kaley Brown.