

Whittier Housing Issues Committee Meeting Minutes
April 16th, 2019, 6:30-8:00pm
Black Forest Inn, 1 E 26th St.

Attendees: Anna Grelson, Eric Reich, Stormy Peterson, Willow Kreibich, Nate Rastetter, Shannon Dotson, Nancy Julia Hicks, Nate Broadbridge, Genevieve DeLeon, Matt Barthelemy, Alec Glass, Morgan Appleberry, Jeff Cowmeadow, Stewart Herman

Staff: Kaley Brown, Fartun Ismail

Speakers: Bryan Walters, Robb Lubenow (Yellow Tree), Sheldon Berg (DJR Architecture)

Meeting called to order at 6:37pm by Stephanie Brown, Housing Issues Committee Chair.
Agenda & Code of Conduct are reviewed.

March 2019 meeting minutes reviewed. **Minutes approved.**

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

Updates of on-going work and development projects

- Whittier received a grant to partner with CURA staff on anti-displacement work!
 - Looking to design a tool that identifies properties that vulnerable to sell and therefore displace for residents, particularly residents that are renting more affordable prices and figure out strategies proactively to get a head off that.
- Anticipate hearing back from CURA on community organizing grant in the next month
 - We also talking about neighborhood survey to develop and putting devices to get out to neighbors.
- Renters Fund has been created
 - Minneapolis Renters Coalition is providing emergency rent assistance up to \$500 per person by lottery system until funds are used up
- New design available for project a 28th & Garfield
 - Yellow Tree will provide a brief update on that following feedback at our March Housing meeting & Committee of the Whole

Development:

- Update on Yellow Tree Project at 28th and Garfield:
 - Moving forward with increased height and setbacks based on COW feedback
 - They'll be going back to COW again in 2.5 weeks with updated design incorporating our committee's feedback
 - Timeline: potentially late summer or early fall start; depending on a couple factors it could be early spring 2020
 - Q: How did they decide how on 44 parking spots? A: Have to balance space/cost for other building amenities while still keeping enough spaces to attract tenants; limitations since they are not digging underground parking.

- Q: What is being done to engage tenants who live there right now? A: They were able to move them to another property owned by Yellow Tree nearby in the same building class and at the same rent; were lucky they had high vacancy rates there. In the meantime they have also made some critical repairs and renovations to the existing building on this project site to make it livable.
- Yellow Tree Project at 26th St & Blaisdell:
 - Rough draft proposal - 5.5 stories with 146 units and 107 parking stalls (for comparison, The Whit is only 74 units)
 - Currently zoned as R5 (residential) and OR2 (office residential); would need variances here
 - Looking into possibility of including some small commercial uses on the ground level, and input was requested on whether Blaisdell Ave or 26th St. felt more appropriate for that use; results were mixed, but slight majority leaned toward 26th; slight majority also preferred just residential use rather than including commercial given parking limitations
 - Parking will be incredibly competitive regardless on Sundays with Calvary Baptist Church across the street
 - Q: What does the process look like for mitigating risk of damage to neighboring properties during the excavation and pile driver process to install underground components?
 - They do a 3rd party “pre-work survey” and continuous monitoring of vibrations; machinery automatically shuts off if it reaches a certain vibration threshold to avoid any damage being done; doing it when the soil is not frozen will also help a lot
 - Design & rent considerations
 - Incorporating walk-up units to maintain residential context
 - Including non-active green roof areas to help with stormwater management and energy efficiency + amenity decks
 - Using brick and stone materials with muted palette to match the area’s context
 - Mix of studio, micro one bedrooms, 1 bedrooms, and 2 bedrooms
 - Aiming to fill an “entry point market rate housing” niche by targeting those with an AMI ranging from the low \$30s to \$60k/yr
 - Q: Comment on how this development is likely to affect the existing N.O.A.H.; are they exploring Inclusionary Zoning within this project? A: That interim policy is in flux and will not be enforced until the end of next year; would require 10% of units be designated affordable
 - Note: This project just barely misses the size threshold to trigger this requirement
 - Rapid fire summary of issues committee members want Yellow Tree to pay attention to and incorporate:
 - Affordability & concerns of n’hood displacement
 - Stormwater management
 - Residents do not want this area to become “the next Uptown”
 - Make it more beautiful with public realm and building face features
 - Good spot to emphasize bike and public transportation in the n’hood

- Overview of Housing Issues Chair + WA Board Member responsibilities
- Call for nominations from the floor for the position
- Stephanie Brown is nominated for re-election; she accepts
- No other other nominations are put forth, and a **motion** is made and seconded to elect Stephanie Brown to the position by acclamation.
- **Motion passes unanimously.**

Project Group Work Time:

- Larger group breaks out into two groups -- next steps for reviewing existing design guidelines and how best to approach the process for updating & brainstorming ideas for what kinds of data points we would ideally want to yield from a neighborhood-wide survey

Meeting adjourned at 8:24 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Kaley Brown.