

Whittier Housing Issues Committee Meeting Minutes
June, 18, 2019, 6:30-8:00pm
Black Forest Inn, 1 E 26th St.

Attendees: Dave Ostlund, Nate Rastetter, Stormy Peterson, Chuck Macioselc, Noah Wagner, Ben Cowper, Christine Popowski, Brigid Higgins, Jen Kader, Kathy Staszak, Tom Tulien, Alex Smith, Greg Schmidt, Sadie Luetmer, Jesse Oyervides, Saralyn Romanishan, Stewart Herman, Aldona Martinka, Matt Barthelemy, Stephanie Brown, Morgan Appleberry

Staff: Kaley Brown, Fartun Ismail

Speakers: Stewart Herman

Meeting called to order at 6:34pm by Stephanie Brown, Housing Issues Committee Chair.
Agenda & Code of Conduct are reviewed.

May 2019 meeting minutes reviewed. **Motion** to approve May minutes. **Seconded. Approved.**

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

Solar easements discussion - (Stewart Herman)

- Idea would be to somehow protect access to solar energy for those who have invested in solar for their home or smaller multi-family building through policy
- The City's 2040 policy makes it clear that density will be supported in developments; they wouldn't pass something that would restrict new building heights adjacent to installed solar, but perhaps an option for raising up solar panels on rooftop poles, investment in solar array banking like there is for wetland banking
- The City wants to see more investment in solar, so it seems like an opportunity they would support if an idea seemed viable in an urban area
- Next steps: Stewart will begin to do more research on what other urban areas have done and what the 2040 Plan might suggest regarding this issue; Stewart welcomes assistance from other committee members to work on it together; the committee will continue the conversation in subsequent meetings based on what is learned

Tenant Screening & Security Deposit Ordinance Proposals by CP Bender and CM Ellison

- There's a debate emerging on these two draft ordinances
- Tenant Screening basics: Limits landlords ability to look back further than 5 years on felony convictions and 2 years on misdemeanor convictions (with some exceptions) as a barrier to providing rental housing
- Security Deposit basics: an attempt to limit the amount a landlord can charge for a security deposit to 2 or 2.5 x the monthly rent (a major barrier to rental housing for some)
- Discussion topic: Is this an issue where we want to formally engage? If so, what more do we need to learn and what are our next steps?
 - Voting members indicate by a show of hands 14-0 that they would like to continue this conversation with the goal of coming to a formalized Committee position on this issue

Development updates:

- Last month the committee voted to endorse all three development projects that were up for a vote with stipulations laid out in our official position letter, which will be submitted to the Planning Commission
- We need individual committee members to also write additional letters as residents for submission as a show of power and significance behind our collaboration work with developers - we need to prove that we matter and that we follow through on our end of agreements
 - Stephanie will hold a letter-writing happy hour on the evening of Tuesday the 25th & we will send details out to the full list
 - We will also provide a letter template and talking points that align with the official committee position for folks to write and submit their own
- We also need volunteers to step up and help lead on partnership aspects for the 26th & Blaisdell project
 - Co-designing the ground level community space
 - Developing parameters around the volunteer rental rebate program

Preview of the July Meeting

- We will have a presentation on a City-owned parking lot at Garfield and Lake for which a developer RFP is currently being formed; this is an opportunity for Whittier residents to voice what they want to see included in that RFP, and ultimately the actual project once completed

Debrief and finalize developer engagement process

- Attendees count off and move into 4 smaller groups to discuss and make recommended edits to the first draft of our committee's developer questionnaire
- The idea behind the questionnaire being that our committee cannot make an informed vote on a project 30 minutes after a developer approaches us for the first time to present
 - The expectation we are working to set is that they must come present at least twice and as early on in the design process as possible
 - They complete the questionnaire before the first presentation with enough time for members to review their responses and ask thoughtful questions and provide constructive, specific feedback for the developers to then incorporate into the plans
 - The second presentation is a demonstration of how that feedback was incorporated & formal vote on the project
 - Other n'hood organizations are using tools such as an equitable development scorecard, which functions similarly to the questionnaire but also communicates n'hood vision & a uniform scoring system

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.

Minutes submitted by Kaley Brown.