

Whittier Housing Issues Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 24, 6:30-8:00pm
Black Forest Inn, 1 E 26th St.

Attendees: Jesse Oyervides, Christine Popowski, Michael Perez, Erin Sjoquist, Ruth Zwick, Julian Ward, Abbie Speller, Paul Fudenberg, Michael Winn, Elbi Elm, Diane Richard, Torreano Rios, Adi Penugonda, Crystal Audi, Nate Broadbridge, Morgan Luzier, Shannon Dotson, Pamela R., Michelle Bruch

Guests: Dan Oberpriller- North Bay Companies, Scott Nelson- DJR Architecture, Dianna Pennington and Tina Erasmus - Policy Aides for Councilmember Bender's Office

Meeting called to order at 6:36pm by Stephanie Brown, Housing Issues Committee Chair.
Agenda & Code of Conduct are reviewed.

Motion to approve agenda with a small change to the order of discussion items. **Seconded. Approved.**

Proposed Development at 2645 1st Ave- North Bay Companies

Speakers- Dan Oberpriller- North Bay Companies, Scott Nelson- DJR Architecture

Dan attended Washburn High School and was raised in Minneapolis, considers himself a local guy. Has done around 17 development, however this is one of the first development under North Bay Companies.

The development would occupy two lots, one of which currently houses a single story office building zoned OR1 and a duplex zoned RB2. They are close to making a land use application with the City which would be reviewed at the **November 13th** Planning Commission meeting and are seeking comment, feedback and neighborhood approval on 5 aspects of their land use application.

- **Proposing to combine the OR1 lot and RB2 lot into a R5 zoned lot- which has been recommended by City staff**
- **Conditional use permit for 5 stories rather than 4**
- **Two variances on west and south side of building to reduce set back from 15ft to 10ft**
- **Variance to reduce parking requirement from 25 to 23 spaces**

Early building Specifications

- 51 unit, 5 story building
- All units will be studios at around 400 sq. ft.
- Large windows in units will help light factor in smaller units
- Units will be furnished
- Fitness room and large bike storage and repair room
- There will be landscaping and trellising on 27th st to hide surface parking lot
- Units will be 18.9ft in width with 9ft ceilings
- Have been working in partnership with Xcel Energy to exceed quota by 12-15%
 - These include low VOC (volatile organic component) windows and other organic materials
- Will have storm water management system

- 1 fully disability accessible “type A” unit and all other units will be “type B” meaning they can be retrofitted to accommodate
- \$1050-1250 per unit
- \$100 a month for parking

Goal of building is to increase housing stock in Whittier, building will likely be occupied by single occupant residents. North Bay will also apply to manage the building. Is unsure of any income requirements yet is adamant that rental criteria for other North Bay properties is available online. Housing Assistance programs will be accepted.

Concerns: There is concern that average Whittier resident could not afford to live in this development and that rental requirements or criteria could end up being prohibitive. Also concern that it may put a strain on the corner by adding that many units.

They are open to looking into solar on the roof.

Given the crowd seems split and may have more questions Stephanie calls for a community directional vote on the proposed variances all lumped together to convey in a letter the general feel of the committee.

In Favor- 4

Opposed- 6

Abstain- 7

Renters Protections

Dianna Pennington- Policy Aide for Council President Lisa Bender’s Office

The Councilmember’s Office has been exploring different renters’ protection policies. Have been working with Inquilinx Includxs (IX) and Homeline. Within this they are also seeking ways to support small landlords.

The Ward is 80% renter

They would like to hold a renter’s assembly sometime in Early November to explore and identify more problems and barriers to renting in Minneapolis.

Barriers that have been identified so far and will merit further discussion are

- Security Deposits- thinking about caps and limits
- Screening Criteria- What are prohibitive and best practices for landlords
- Repairs- in the event of bad or absentee landlord tenant funded repairs with compensation as opportunity to stay in home
- Notification prior to eviction- we have one of the fastest
- Informal evictions, what are appropriate resources for tenants who are being displaced. Including potential relocation benefits.

City would also like to support small landlords so that they can keep rents down. The 4d program awards tax credits who keep their units affordable.

Concerns voiced:

How much rent can be raised every year?

What kind of landlords fall under the 4d program? Whittier has large contingent of small duplex and triplex owners and it would be good to help them.

Is there a potential for condo owner to fall under some type of legislation? as they are also susceptible to valuation increases and displacement.

Majority vote **TO SUPPORT** a renter assembly in November. Exact date and time TBD.

Potential Land Assembly Test Case- Morgan Luzier

Morgan and partners acquired 5 Parcels in Whittier - 1 single family home, 2 duplexes, 1 triplex, 1 vacant lot - on the 2900 block of Harriet Ave.

Looking to possibly redevelop those parcels and is curious what people would like to see. Sees this as an opportunity for land owner and community group to work together. Not sure what form that takes but wants community input on what people would like to see in their neighborhood.

The Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan encourages 6 story buildings along that corridor. There are no families currently in the units.

There is concern over the decrease in nature with increased density.

What can we realistically advocate for and push for? This could be a good exercise in the possible and impossible. There is no specific timeline for the redevelopment of these parcels, but Morgan would like to start the conversation.

What would it need to look like to work?

In terms of returns Morgan is more concerned about finding investors that share agenda and align with the goals and vision of the community and would operate at smaller margins than typical developers/investors.

What are the goals? Diversity goals, height goals?

Need to articulate goals and this could be opportunity to tease them out.

Whittier has development guidelines in place that could be good starting point.

Strategic Plan Update- Kaley Brown

Steering committee has been shaping input from the community over the summer and is condensed into four large buckets

- Housing
- Business Support
- Organizational Sustainability
- Community Engagement

Attendees are asked to fill out a questionnaire to ensure we are on the right track with the high level goals. We will be asking at October 22nd HI meeting to identify strategies within the housing focus to meet the stated goals and potentially identify costs to align Whittier Alliance budget with the goals of the community.

Updates

LHENA Partnership surrounding affordability is still in the works, Stephanie is meeting with them this week.

Stephanie will also be meeting with City Planner Peter Crandall this week to talk about effective engagement and collaboration.

The East Phillips neighborhood is looking for awareness and support in their efforts to jointly re-develop a land parcel “the Roof Depot site” with the city of Minneapolis. Plan is for indoor farm and other green community initiatives along with affordable housing.

Motion to adjourn at 8:10pm. **Seconded. Carried unanimously.**
Minutes submitted by Marcus VanderSanden.