

WHITEFISH STRATEGIC HOUSING PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

July 9, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Present: Addie Brown-Testa, Wendy Compton-Ring, Ben Davis, Rhonda Fitzgerald, Bob Horne, Rebecca Norton, Dana Smith

Absent: Kevin Gartland, John Muhlfeld

Others: Dave Radatti

2. Approval of Minutes from the March 12, 2020 meeting:

Addie Brown-Testa/Rebecca Norton moved to approve the March 12, 2020 meeting minutes. Passed unanimously.

3. Accessory Dwelling Units Discussion:

Staff has no update on the ADUs and will bring back an update to the next meeting.

Rhonda – this hiatus has given us a chance to look at this holistically and do it right the first time

Dana – we have direction from the previous meeting and we will come back to a future meeting with more information

The Committee talked about short-term rentals, the City's plans for enforcement and its relationship with accessory apartments.

Ben – we don't want to spin our wheels on STR when we have other items to work on

Rebecca – suggested we let the City work on STR and report back

Dana – we'll bring it back in a few months

Bob – agree that STR is a separate, but very important topic

Rhonda – STR and ADU connection is important; we can't ignore it

Public Comment – Dave Radatti recapped some important take-aways from the meeting in March: 1) DESIGN: look at opportunities for single story units and 2) ABSENTEE

OWNERS: look at a way to have a registered local contact or property manager to address concerns

4. Cash In Lieu of Affordable Housing Update and Discussion:

The Committee reviewed the updated data for Area Median Income (AMI) released April 1, 2020 and market price of houses sold in 2019 numbers. These numbers dictate housing prices, rental prices and the fee in lieu of affordable housing. This update needs to go to the Council and adopted as a Resolution

Addie – pointed out the rental pricing and the challenges with renting out a 3-bedroom at 80%; it's too much and has posed challenges for filling these types of units and will be a challenge for future projects; she noted all her rentals are full of people from out of state

Rebecca – questions about the actual local income and the costs for housing versus the AMI %s in the Plan

Bob – have we ever got to look at Commercial Linkage? Then we would have a better idea of salaries in the community; he noted the American Community Survey has data for 2013-2018 that could update the Housing Needs Assessment

MOTION

Rhonda – move to approve the updated numbers as they are consistent with the calculations we've been using

Addie – 2nd

Unanimous – Rebecca abstained

Dana noted staff will also be bringing recommendations on the housing program to the Council including such things as making sure our housing policies match the WHA policies
Ben – it would be a helpful exercise to include a case study with the E 7th/E 8th Street project and what went wrong as part of the annual report to Council. We need to think about the negative consequences of the program and this project

Bob – maybe a CUP based on square footage would be a better option instead of number of buildings

NEXT STEPS:

1. Resolution to Council to update the fee schedule and housing costs
2. Annual Update to the City Council – include LIHTC, Snow Lot, Development proposals, other data, case study. Draft to the next HSC meeting and then the following Council meeting

5. Snow Lot Update and Discussion:

The property has been deeded to the WHA and a contract for development was signed; we have a final report from Homeword and will be getting the elevations to WHA. This will be a WHA directed project.

Addie – the WHA is working on the Snow Lot

6. Funding Update:

Watching for grants as we come out of the pandemic; WHA had a rental help during the pandemic that worked well

Resort Tax – there is no interest in adding affordable housing to the resort tax program; the Council is interested in keeping it similar to what it is currently instead of adding another category; it was suggested that the definitions could be changed that could help affordable housing such as changing the definition of 'infrastructure' that could add 'new infrastructure' instead of only rebuilding.

7. Other Topics:

Rebecca – wants to see Resort Tax Money go to two programs: 1) Historic Preservation, as way to preserve old houses when they are planned to be demolished to move them and bring them up to code. It is very expensive to move houses and thinks it could be a tool for affordable housing. Bob suggested researching what other communities do (Missoula, Great Falls, Bozeman) and how they fund their programs. 2) Open space – especially as we grow and add more density.

8. Public comment: none

9. Next Committee Meeting: September 10, 2020

10. Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.