

# **WHITEFISH STRATEGIC HOUSING PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, March 12, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.  
City Hall – City Council Conference Room**



## **AGENDA**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 13, 2020 MEETING**
- 3. DISCUSSION ON ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS**
- 4. CASH IN LIEU OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING FEE UPDATE**
- 5. SNOW LOT UPDATE AND DISCUSSION**
- 6. FUNDING UPDATE**
- 7. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- 8. NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING**
  - a. April 9, 2020
- 9. ADJOURN**

# WHITEFISH STRATEGIC HOUSING PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

## MINUTES

February 13, 2020 at 2:30 p.m.

### 1. Call to order:

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 p.m.

Present: Wendy Compton-Ring, Ben Davis, Rhonda Fitzgerald, Kevin Gartland, Melissa Hartman, Rebecca Norton, Dana Smith

Absent: Addie Brown-Testa, John Muhlfeld

Others: Angie Jacobson, Lori Collins, Marney McCleary

### 2. Approval of Minutes from the January 9, 2020 meeting:

Kevin Gartland/Rebecca Norton made a motion/second to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2020 meeting. Passed unanimously.

### 3. Snow Lot Update and Discussion:

Heather McMilan, Homeward, reviewed costs with the Committee to develop the Snow Lot into 100% permanently deed restricted 24 townhouses versus the previous development plan of townhouses and apartments. Options for saving money the Committee discussed included: using an owner's rep instead of a developer success of which also depends on a good working relationship with the architect and the contractor; a phased approach (building and sales model); and using a land trust model. Options for a developer/agreement and donation of the land to the WHA before the TIF expires were discussed and a look at using the 'fee in lieu' in order to reduce the gap. Staff has been directed by the Council to move forward with the project.

**NEXT STEPS:** Dana is comfortable with the financial analysis. The City Council will be having a work session on March 2<sup>nd</sup> to talk about the Snow Lot and its financial feasibility and design (site plan and building design – conceptual now and details later). The Committee agreed the design needs to be similar to what the neighborhood saw and approved. For the March 2<sup>nd</sup> work session, Dana requested the financials and a site plan. Architectural details will come later, but we will bring the charrette drawings and provide

an overview of that process. The site plan will be forwarded to the Committee before the work session.

#### **4. Update and Discussion on Funding Strategies:**

Marney handed out information on funding sources that might be used for development of the Snow Lot and Alpenglow, Phase II. Marney reviewed the list of options and described how they would work. Getting the land donated for the Snow Lot will be helpful as the project moves forward.

Ben – asked if it would make sense to change the financing options worksheets into an action plan (e.g., Snow Lot use certain funds).

Marney – need to prioritize funds for the project; what can we use/do? She indicated she and Lori Collins could meet with staff at the Housing Conference in Helena to discuss the different funds/grants.

Ben – Who should make the action plan?

Dana – It should be the WHA and the City. Dana, Lori Collins (WHA) and Marney McCleary should sit down and discuss. They need to continue to work with local lenders. Some of the local mortgage companies are already set up to help low income households and are a viable option.

Ben – asked about the Housing Trust Fund and the Coal money set aside for housing

Marney – state of Montana Housing Trust Fund is very difficult; Coal \$\$ good thing, but not much of it.

Wendy – asked what is the update from the WF Community Foundation?

Ben – the WHA will be a part of the Great Fish with a goal of \$20k; the website and the brochure for the Community Foundation are nearly updated; summer will be good timing in between the Snow Lot and Alpenglow Apartments

#### **5. Update and Discussion on Accessory Dwelling Units:** postponed until the next meeting

#### **6. Other Topics:** NMAR 2019 numbers handed out and their impact on the 'fee in lieu'. This number is not automatically updated but needs to be approved by the City Council by resolution. The Committee will think about these and possibly discuss at the next meeting.

Dana and Wendy met with Libby Starling, Federal Reserve Bank - Minneapolis, to discuss our Legacy Homes program

Wendy followed up with Madeline Forbis, Senator Tester's office, regarding money for state of Montana has been received and was already distributed. It was not very much.

**7. Public comment:** Dave Radatti, encouraged the Committee to implement the accessory apartment recommendations of the Strategic Housing Plan. By increasing the number of rentals, it will help decrease overall rental costs in town.

**8. Next Committee Meeting:**

March 12, 2020

**9. Adjourn:**

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

DRAFT

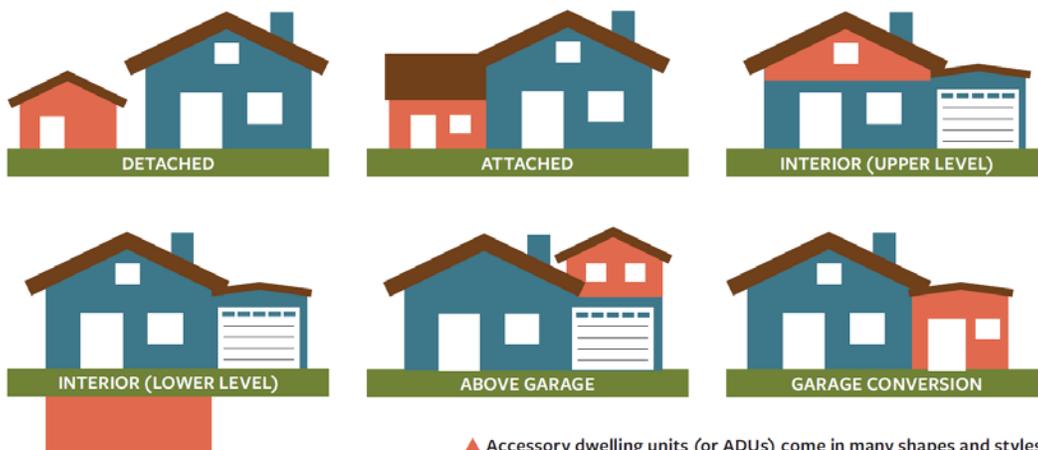


Date: March 5, 2020  
To: Housing Steering Committee  
From: Planning Department  
Subject: Accessory Dwelling Units – Tier 1 Strategy

---

An accessory apartment, also known as an accessory dwelling unit (ADU), is defined by the Whitefish City Code as: “ A room or rooms attached to a dwelling unit or garage and may be occupied by persons who are not members of the family. An accessory apartment may contain cooking facilities. Only one accessory apartment or guesthouse is permitted on a lot.” (§11-9-2, WCC)

An accessory apartment/ADU can take many forms, but is generally smaller than the primary residence – whether integrated as part of the home with a separate entrance or detached:



▲ Accessory dwelling units (or ADUs) come in many shapes and styles.

\* From an AARP guidebook on Accessory Apartments

**Background:**

The City of Whitefish requires a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for all accessory apartments. For an accessory apartment to be approved, it needs to go through the public hearing process (2-3-months) and meet all the development standards. Staff notifies property owners within 300-feet of the project (recently

expanded), posts a sign on the property (new requirement) and place a legal notice in the paper.

Current design standards include:

- The unit must be attached to a primary single-family home or attached to a garage located behind a primary single-family home
- Be located all on one level
- No greater than 600 square feet
- 1 parking space for the apartment (2 for the single-family home)
- Record a deed restriction or restrictive covenant prohibiting short-term rental and limiting long-term rental only if the owner maintains permanent residency in the primary dwelling
- No taller than 24-feet

As staff described at the December meeting, since Fall 2016, the City Council has permitted about 13 ADUs. This is not a large number of units and, as one the Planning Board members noted, we are not going to solve all of our affordable housing issues one ADU at a time. They are, of course, another form of housing to encourage for local workers. As described in the Strategic Housing Plan, currently, most accessory apartments are permitted to non-locals and are generally not part of the much-needed rental pool.

At the February meeting, a Committee member requested the data for the number of accessory apartments in town. We started requiring Conditional Use Permits in 2005, so the following information is from 2005 – current:

<b>TOTAL PERMITTED:</b>	<b>BUILT:</b>	<b>EXPIRED:</b>	<b>COUNTY:</b>
42	26	10	2

***2017 Whitefish Strategic Housing Plan:***

The 2017 Strategic Housing Plan identified Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as one of the many strategies to look at in order to increase opportunities for additional affordable housing in our community (page 31, WSHP).

The Strategic Housing Plan offered the following recommendations:

- Allow ADUs by right in WR-1, WR-2, WR-3 and WR-4, if deed restricted for local residents
- Lift the ‘owner occupancy’ requirement
- Eliminate the single-level requirement
- Allow detached units
- Encourage new subdivisions to incorporate ADUs
- Reimburse impact fees, if a revenue source can be identified
- Consider options for property management to encourage property owners to rent their ADUs long-term
- Create a compliance monitoring & complaint resolution process

***Housing Steering Committee Questions:***

1. Do we want to follow the Strategic Housing Plan and encourage ADUs to be part of the affordable housing stock?
2. Do we want to allow ADUs 'by right' in WR-1, WR-2, WR-3 and WR-4, if deed restricted for local residents? As recommended by the Strategic Housing Plan, this would not place an income or rental cap on the apartment, but simply could be for local residents.
3. In High Density zoning districts where one can build a duplex (or more) without a public process, why are we requiring a CUP for a smaller unit?
4. In High Density zoning district where one can build a duplex and rent out both units, why do we limit occupancy of an ADU? What public problem are we trying to solve?
5. The City rarely receives comments on ADU permit requests – why do we even require a CUP?
6. Would the Committee be amenable to some 'light' design standards such as size, height, privacy, and other design standards to better integrated into neighborhoods? In addition, the Strategic Housing Plan suggested a couple of other changes including, allowing units on two levels (vs. only on one level) and allowing the units to be detached (vs. only connected to the home or garage).

***Next Steps:***

Staff will gather comments/ideas and bring back a draft regulation to the next available meeting.