

# WHITEFISH COMMUNITY HOUSING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**April 24, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.**

## **1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at p.m. by Rhonda Fitzgerald

*Present:* Cameron Blake, Rhonda Fitzgerald, Leanette Galaz, Dwarne Hawkins, Roxann Gallagher, Carolyn Pitman, Jeff Raper

*Staff:* Dana Smith, City Manager; Wendy Compton-Ring, Senior Planner; Luke Sponable, Housing Coordinator/Long-Range Planner, Alan Tiefenbach, Planner II, Long Range

*Others:* Rebecca Norton

## **2. Communications from the Public:** None

## **3. Approval of Minutes from March 21, 2023, Meeting**

Motion by Caroline Pittman to approve as written. Seconded by Jeff Raper, no discussion

Vote: unanimous in favor.

## **4. Community Housing Development and Financing Plan**

Dana - No responses to RFP. Best way forward is to work on internally. Dana will have more time after May 15<sup>th</sup>. Maybe core working group with staff to create plan, meeting weekly, open to public. Daniel take lead on development side as it will be Housing Whitefish doing the development.

Jeff – Asked for clarity on who’s who of different groups working on housing.

Dana explained what the different groups on page 15 of the Housing Roadmap roles are. Asking all groups/entities to take lead where their strengths ie. If the lead role is “City” (staff) needs to lead for now – potentially Housing Whitefish will take that role down the road.

Rhonda suggested an organization chart.

Dana reviewed Core components.

Rhonda brought up Strategy 1 to look at/review.

Leanne – how to we get to details for this committee– what is our role.

Wendy – Per resolution from Council this committee was limited to City responsibilities on Roadmap.

Dana – who can be involved in finance and development plan. Views key players as WHA, and HW. Core is Dwarne and Daniel. Cameron, Ben, Roxanne available.

Meetings will be open to the Committee and noticed to the public as well.

## **5. Determine Next Priority Project for Committee**

Jeff No. 1 is most important – Growth Policy

Alan - Growth policy is underway won’t be done for years

Jeff – 80 acres of infill tied up. Public and private. Zoned industrial. Industrial not compatible with residential. What is happening with it? 18<sup>th</sup> street to Karrow area. Services and annexation needed.

Alan – City must decide if they want to give up remaining industrial – part of Growth Policy

Cameron – what can be done.

Rhonda – Committee didn't decide Strategy number 3, Ben put that out there – all those would take a lot of time – not getting done before - lets focus on a public private partnership. Been working on others for seven years – need project to make a difference. Did ADU. Return on investment for time is low.

Carolyn – Goguen has done things – why not try to create a partnership at old hospital site. Has money and land.

Rhonda – lots of options there. Could do all residential.

Alan – new State law reduces public input – Growth policy and zoning has to get it get it right first time.

Leanne – what does it take for public private partnership – need what motivates people – what does Goguen need? Positive pressure.

Dana – public/private - need developers/land owner to partner with under Strategy 1, number 2. Everyone more conservative under this economy – philanthropy a challenge. They are all looking at from a financial perspective.

Discussed how to interest philanthropic investor and Goguen property. Needs infrastructure. Cost to that.

Cameron – what's possible/attainable from staff perspective (to work on).

Dana – discussed Roadmap Strategy 3

Items:

1. Update Growth Plan underway.

2. short term rentals – Senate Bill 262 may not be able to require business license. Still have ability to track with resort tax collection. \$400 a year (\$150,000) for enforcement may be going away with new law - now would be property tax funded. Wait for State clarification. 528 taken off table and passed by senate ADU's by right – no impact fees, no parking. Think can still regulate STR on ADU's.

Rhonda – 200 units rented for short term illegally.

3. Annexation – Committee could work on. Development agreement. Staff can draft and this committee review City attorney can do light deed restriction requiring living in community.

7. Deed restriction light to be used in annexation policy- need 7 for 3. No requirement for pricing or income but could specify asset limits (checking). Primary residence - live in home for 10 months. Work in Whitefish? Staff would bring draft of annexation policy to Committee.

Petition to annex.

Alan discussed development agreement – this is what you are going to build if we annex – seems doable.

Annexation could be south, east, west, a little north.

Discussed STR's again – 170 illegal units. Illegal rentals drive prices up of houses and rental prices.

Dana – hard to move forward with STR's until a better idea of legislation, funding. If funding goes away (\$400 a rental) can't hire a new staff for enforcement. Meeting in May to see what can do. Can't start for a couple of months.

Leanne – what are we spending our time on then?

Dana – staff time limits what committee can do, when Luke on board will have more time.

Rhonda – maybe we don't need to determine a priority.

Committee - expressed desire to get something done.

Rhonda – maybe Number 7 – need affordable not just new units- maybe light deed is a solution.

**Jeff moves that the Committee identifies Number 7 – deed restriction light as the top priority for this committee. Rhonda seconded.**

Discussion: – Get summary of legislation limiting. We would review draft – make suggestions on improvement or additional items. Leanette asked to get draft ahead of meeting for feedback. Potentially for next meeting. Dana will try to get out Monday, likely Wednesday. Draft timing depends on Angie’s workload.

Rhonda - Would acquisition of deed restriction on market units go with this?

Wendy – Vail Indeed – not part of this.

**Vote: Motion passes, unanimous in favor.**

Jeff – What’s next – could we address Number 3 – annexation next? Or would need to look at other priorities – 4, 5 or 6.

Dana – yes after Number 7.

Rhonda – like no 5 – zoning for flexibility

Cameron – can we review 4 and 5 with time left.

Leanette – STR regs a priority, after legal questions answered.

Discussed incentives - Number 4 – ADU incentive hasn’t worked like hoped and now State legislation will take away the benefit.

Dana – maybe look at Strategy 4 number 1 next. Pay gap on short term rental – or long term. Daniel working on.

Rhonda – not reward bad behavior, reward affordable rentals.

Wendy – Daniel is working on.

Jeff -if Daniel is working on let him come up with language and let us know how we can help.

Dana – development and financing plan need to take priority,

Alan – staff will be scrambling to rewrite with legislative changes.

Rhonda – lets do number 2 next.

Dana – number 3 would need to be different priority – takes more staff resources. Maybe third priority.

Wendy pointed out that Montana law eliminates what many other states have utilized. Not Colorado.

Rhonda – but Wyoming, Utah.

Dana will include STR regs we have now in packet for next meeting as well as deed restrictions.

**Leanette makes a motion that our second priority is Item 2 – Short-term Rental Regulations. Cameron seconded.**

Discussion – Jeff – STR not subject to bed tax? Rhonda – supposed to but no way to regulate. AirBnB and VRBO pay the bed tax (even on illegal) – agreement with Dept of Revenue. Resort tax and Bed tax should track but don’t anymore.

**Vote: All in favor- unanimous.**

## **5. Montana Legislative Update Related to Housing**

Covered during discussions.

Dana, Housing Whitefish talking about building ADU’s and deed restricting.

528 - going to house floor and then back to senate. If it passes – we will see more ADU’s. SB245 – failed with amendments at Senate. Senate Bill 382 will change growth policy.

Wendy – she and Alan working on Bill Summaries.

Dana – appreciated support/rally around bills and response for call to action.

Wendy - ADU's haven't made a big difference – many not rented.

**6. Next Committee Meeting**

a. Monday, May 22nd at 4:00 p.m.

**7. Adjourned at 6 pm**