

WHITEFISH STRATEGIC HOUSING PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES

June 10, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m. by Dana Smith

Present: Lori Collins, Wendy Compton-Ring, Ben Davis (by phone), Rhonda Fitzgerald, Kevin Gartland, Bob Horne, Rebecca Norton, Dana Smith

Absent: John Muhlfeld

Others: Dave Taylor, Jerry Dunker

2. Public Comments:

Jerry Dunker, Trailview Subdivision, provided the Committee an update on his subdivision. There are 28 single family homes under contract and they are working with WHA – this has worked out well. 14 houses done and 2 per month are being completed. Costs are high and finding workers is also a challenge. Currently in Whitefish only 8 SFR for sale under a million and they are over \$700k. Nothing under \$500k.

Jerry wondered about the some of the other priorities in the Strategic Plan – such as impact fee waivers.

3. Approval of Minutes from the May 13, 2021 meetings:

Norton/Collins moved to approve the May 13, 2021, meeting minutes. Passed unanimously.

4. Accessory Dwelling Unit Draft Language Revisions:

Staff reviewed the memo on the survey and design standards. The survey was left open until June 10th and 14 people responded – a 34% response rate. Staff summarized the survey's findings.

Rhonda – wondered if we even want to encourage them; we should make ADUs serve for affordable housing

Bob – no reason to incentivize just to get more, but for local workforce housing – create incentives just for those people

Lori – incentive 'use by right'

Ben – how do we make sure what we are proposing is serving our interests

Bob – discussed options about how a tax abatement option could work

Rhonda – the Committee needs to take the long view, permanent deed restriction

Dana – went through the Strategic Housing Plan incentives

A. Review Process for a Local Workforce ADU

MOTION:

Kevin – move to approve the first bullet from the Strategic Housing Plan for ADUs with an amendment to include all zoning districts with an Administrative CUP for workforce housing ADUs; not for workforce housing, full CUP

Wendy – 2nd

DISCUSSION:

Committee discussion about community character

VOTE:

The motion passes (5-3, Horne, Norton, Fitzgerald voting in opposition)

Bob – concerned it violates equal protection

B. Definition of a Local Workforce ADU

MOTION:

Kevin moved to define the “Local Workforce ADU: An ADU permanently deed restricted for a local worker or primary resident with a term of no less than one year.”

Rhonda – 2nd

DISCUSSION:

Kevin – the program is intended for long-term workers

Rebecca – more realistic about the type of workers

Rhonda – doesn't want people coming and going

Bob – go back to the beginning; ADUs are a different type of unit than a regular rental

Lori – noted the Strategic Housing Plan identified it as both long and mid-term

Dana – good for life changes to have lower deed restrictions

Bob – 'not worried about the service workers' – not true; where are our service workers living?

Committee discussion about the length of the workers and how find the housing if they don't live here yet

Dana – concerned assigning a price; thinks the pricing will be controlled due to the size of the unit

Rhonda – don't think we should do a rent control

Ben – hard enough to pencil without the price limit

VOTE:

4-4, (Horne, Smith, Compton-Ring, Davis voting in opposition)

Motion fails

MOTION:

Wendy – move to define a Local Workforce ADU as **an ADU permanently deed restricted for a local worker or primary resident with a term of no less than 6 months.**

Rebecca – 2nd

The Committee discussed how long an ADU could be vacant.

Wendy – amended the motion – to include it cannot be vacant for more than 3 months

Rebecca – 2nd

DISCUSSION:

Bob – incentive even without the having it as a rental for 3 months

Rebecca – hard to tell people what to do

Bob – they are volunteering for this program

Kevin – we have to make the incentives good enough

Dana offered a friendly amendment that **it cannot be vacant for more than 2 months.**

The motion maker and the 2nd were OK with this change.

DISCUSSION:

Ben – primary resident is the main thing so we don't get 2nd homeowners

VOTE:

Motion passed (7-1, Norton voting in opposition)

C. Incentives: rental of both ADU & Primary Home

Rhonda – made a motion to not allow the primary home to be rented out and leave the standard as is

Rebecca – 2nd

DISCUSSION:

Rebecca – maintain the character of WF

Kevin – people that rent and pay the prices they have to pay treat them as their homes; we should allow them to rent them both out

Jerry – it's the only incentive that would cause him to want to rent out an ADU

Rebecca – speculative investors in our community, but we want people to care about where they live; make our town a real town

Bob – if we regulate who lives could be a violation of the Fair Housing

Ben – this is a tough one; the more time thinking about it – it’s the only incentive that is really an incentive; know a lot of people in town that are renters and are part of our community; it is a trade-off but it is important; will be voting against this motion

Dana – this is a program that will go through a public process

Rhona – concerned about the process once it moves forward

Bob – trust there will some legal review

VOTE:

Motion fails (2-6, Smith, Horne, Compton-Ring, Collins, Gartland, Davis voting in opposition)

MOTION:

Bob moved to permit one to be able to rent out both the ADU & primary resident to be in the Local Workforce ADU Program

Wendy – 2nd

DISCUSSION:

Bob – the owner could put the primary unit in the program, if they want to; the City is walking on thin based on who lives in the unit and this would solve this issue; cannot regulate land use by who lives there; constitutional issue of equal protection

Dana – this is one carrot that we need to help solve

VOTE:

The motion passes (6-2, Norton, Fitzgerald voting in opposition)

OTHER INCENTIVES:

Impact Fees – The Committee wants the Council to look at impact fees wholistically for ALL affordable homes/rentals, including ADUs

Bob – noted in McCall, ID they give someone \$10k/unit for an affordable housing (both ownership & rentals)

Jerry – Bozeman gives out \$20k/single family unit

Dana will be visiting with the City Council next week on this topic

Rhonda – funding for impact fee reimbursement is important

Committee was supportive of **providing building plans** of ADUs; it was suggested we offer a few options that will complement the homes in town (i.e., bungalow, etc.)

NEXT STEPS:

Review the design standards at the next meeting.

Staff will update the ADU regulations and bring back to the next meeting.

Staff to do some investigation into designing some building plans

5. Update from City Council work session regarding Legacy Homes Program

Very brief update, as it was 8PM and Committee members had other obligations.

Turning the Legacy Home program into a voluntary program with a reduced % of affordable housing – down to 10%. These text amendments need to be expedited and will be at the July Planning Board, August City Council

6. **Other Housing Updates:** none
7. **Next Committee Meeting:** July 8, 2021
8. **Adjourn:** The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.