

City of Wilmington/New Hanover County
Workforce/Affordable Housing Ad hoc Committee

October 25, 2016

Meeting Notes

Present: Elizabeth Dodson, Gloria Green, Phil Humphrey, Robert Rosenberg, Steve Spain, Dave Spetrino, Jody Wainio, Tilghman Herring, Linda Smith, Katrina Redmon, Katrina Knight,

Staff – Jennifer Rigby, NHC; Suzanne Rogers, City of Wilmington

Absent: Paul D’Angelo, Will Bland

Resigned: David Barnes, Carlos Braxton

Jody Wainio, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order and explained the continuation of work for the sub-committees using meeting notes from 10/11/16 meeting which identified barriers/gaps to affordable/workforce housing. Jody directed the sub-committee members to convene and brainstorm strategies, solutions, and best practices to address barriers. The small groups convened after lunch to report out as follows:

Rental Housing Group

A. Inclusionary Zoning

- De-concentration of poverty
- Needed focus on %
- Offer payment in lieu to support workforce housing elsewhere in community (how do we make this work for developers too?)
- Density, Square Footage, airspace, reduced parking, bonuses (rewards?)
- Confronts barriers of:
 - Inventory
 - Lack of incentives

Addresses the following barriers/gaps identified at 10/11/16 meeting

- *Lack of inventory of affordable housing (I)*
- *Lack of incentives for builders (D)*
- *Location of affordable land not ideal, for example location near transportation (I) (D)*
- *Funding/Limited Sources/ Restrictions (D)*
- *Lack of incentives to Landlords (L)*

B. “Micro Units”

- Caters to aging population
- Incentive to builders in terms of volume
- Must have zoning laws to support

Addresses the following barriers/gaps identified at 10/11/16 meeting

- *Size appropriate/matches subsidy (I)*

C. Set goals by jurisdiction

- Be prepared to incentivize those who work to achieve goals
- Active participation/concurrence of utility services, taxes, etc.

Addresses the following barriers/gaps identified at 10/11/16 meeting

- *Cost of construction (D)*
 - *Fees, etc*
 - *Cooperation among agencies (education)*
- *Insurance/taxes costs passed to consumer*
 - *17% increase taxes and insurance*
 - *CFPUA, Duke Energy cost increasing*

D. Education of public and elected officials

- Redefine “affordable” & “workforce” in a broad spectrum but also update monetary figures that that support this definition – affordable is not \$225K

Addresses the following barriers/gaps identified at 10/11/16 meeting

- *Lack of CDBG funds in NHC*
- *Fair market value taxes – tax assessment reflects value of property as owner-occupied not as rental property*

E. Mix multi-family w/single family residential and visa verse – tastefully & logically

Addresses the following barriers/gaps identified at 10/11/16 meeting

- *Size appropriate/matches subsidy (I)*

F. Accessory housing

Addresses the following barriers/gaps identified at 10/11/16 meeting

- VRBO Rental competition

Homeownership Group

Are you ready to be a Home Owner?

1. Is Homeownership part of your long-term personal goals?
2. Do you feel stable in our income/career?
3. Do you see yourself living in the area for 5 + years?
4. Have you paid rent on time, every month for the last 2 years?
5. Have you saved money for anything?

How's Your Credit?

1. Obtain your credit report
2. Credit Counseling:
 - A. low/cost/no cost access
 - B. Understand your report
3. No-No's / Do's & Don'ts
 - a) Don't co-sign for others
 - b) Don't add more debt
 - c) Pay bills on time- every time
 - d) Pay off /negotiate old debts
 - e) Debt snowballs
4. Avoid too much debt
 - a) Car Payments
 - b) Credit cards
 - c) Past due payments
 - d) Installments & pay day loans
5. Give Yourself Some Time:
 - a) 12 months
 - b) Start w/a plan, work your plan
 - c) Debt snowball
 - d) Good used cars – avoid costly payments and repairs

Let's Talk About Money

1. Down payment for home ownership - Save \$3,000 – start there
2. Work with existing programs:
 - HOP
 - USDA
Veterans Admin
3. Improve those programs:
 - Who's getting left out? Why? (Lower income need help)
4. Employer Benefit Programs – Are you taking advantage?

Permanent Supportive Housing /Subsidized Housing Group

- Planning-
 - Review existing zoning regulations to increase flexibility for affordable housing ..i.e. secondary structures/accessory dwellings, increased density, cohousing and other housing prototypes
 - Expedited review w/ City & NHC plan review process – saves \$, outlines expectations saves time... preliminary review before application fee paid
 - Limit Council/Commission discretion in affecting planning decisions in the approval process & adopting plans... administrative review only and by-right zoning for affordable housing
- Allow spreading of costs (tap fees) over time for affordable housing w/low or no interest
- Eliminate or waive development, permit, and utility fees on affordable housing projects
- City/NHC/CFPUA to finance fees
- City/NHC to encourage private investment in affordable housing
- Explore options of jurisdiction rebate of fees
- Educate City Council, County Commission and planning commission members re: fair housing law & commitment regarding affordable housing
- Explore creating a Housing Trust Fund a portion of which could be used to rehab existing unoccupied houses as affordable housing (deed restrictions to ensure affordability)
- Create a market-place for matching qualified elder home owners with qualified individuals or families to cohabitate