



CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT

**CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT &
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE**

c/o Community & Economic Development Office

Councilor Selene Colburn, Chair, East District

Councilor Tom Ayres Ward 7

Councilor Adam Roof, Ward 8

Meeting Minutes 9/15/2015

The meeting began at 6:50 p.m. and was called to order by Councilor/Chair Selene Colburn. Councilors Ayers and Roof were present. Staff present included Marcy Esbjerg, CEDO Assistant Director, Val Russell CEDO's Community Development Specialist, and Brian Lowe, Mayor's Office Chief of Staff. Other Councilors present included Sharon Bushor, Jane Knodell, and Joan Shannon.

Review Agenda:

Chair Colburn shared the agenda and asked for suggested additions from attendees.

A motion was made by Councilor Tom Ayres and seconded by Councilor Adam Roof to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

Public Forum:

Ibnar Abilik – Commented on the Housing Action Plan –

- He commented that there should not be housing allowed in the Enterprise District.
- He would like the Neighborhood Planning Committees to have input on Alternative Dwelling Units (ADU's), and suggests that they are targeted not only for seniors but a larger demographic.
- Section 2 item 3 – he has trouble with the language “adopt the form based code” and suggests using language that implies that form based code is being evaluated and not necessarily adopted.

Councilor Bushor – Commented on the Housing Action Plan -

- The language in the introduction such as “low income” and “seniors” does not indicate accommodations for families. She would like to see more of a commitment to 2-3 bedroom affordable family housing.
- Applauds energy efficiency goals.
- Suggests a charter change for the Housing Trust Fund (HTF).
- Suggests pursuing new strategies for housing college students. Does not support that new student housing be built downtown. Wants more proof that it will result in students leaving neighborhoods.

- Informed the committee that Champlain College historically needed city approval to build student housing and that expired in 2014.
- Suggests a review of planning and zoning as part of planBTV South End. She has heard from start-ups in the South End and is concerned with losing incubator space.

Council President Jane Knodell – Commented on the Housing Action Plan –

- Earlier drafts of the Housing Action Plan relied too heavily on making more housing to effect the market rate. The new plan includes intentional strategies to create affordable housing and she supports that.
- The plan has a specific target number for student beds but no targets for other types of housing. We need more market rate housing and more perpetually affordable housing, she suggests targets for these categories, and monitoring performance towards these goals.
- Language in Goal 1 suggests that the HTF may be used for anything other than low and moderate income residents, she suggested removing it.
- She suggests that the CDNR works with a consultant around Inclusionary Zoning.
- She suggests adding a tax rebate for home sharing.
- She notes that the regional focus is a great strategy and should include the Fair Housing Project? As a partner.
- President Knodell suggests not pre committing to form based code and parking minimums until City council debates.
- She does not support student housing (dorms) being built downtown, is concerned for downtown stakeholders.

Ted Wimpey – Commented on the Housing Action Plan

- Inclusionary zoning is an important part of creating affordable housing in an atmosphere where there is less federal and state funding for housing each year. He believes this draft is much improved in terms of Inclusionary Zoning, and doesn't want to see percentage requirements reduced.

Rita Markley – Commented on the Housing Action Plan

- Supports micro housing and has many staff members who would be interested in it.
- Does not support housing in enterprise zone because of negative effect on artists/entrepreneurs.
- Would like to see target numbers for housing units other than just student housing. Suggests building housing that could house many different groups – not dorms.
- Is concerned about inclusionary zoning regulations – can student income meet inclusionary zoning requirements?
- Suggests not limiting strategies that target housing for the homeless to only the chronically homeless population.

Maggie Stanley – Commented on the Housing Action Plan

- Is thrilled with the Mayor's statement that he does not support housing in the enterprise zone.

- Do we have a target number of how many housing units need to be built in total to meet demand?
Suggests the addition of a specific goal.
- Suggests increasing the Inclusionary Zoning requirements
- Suggests looking into building housing in South Burlington, specifically at the end of Pine St.

Erhard Mahnke – Commented on the Housing Action Plan

- Applauds the attention to preservation in the plan specifically long term affordable housing and attention to energy efficiency.
- Encourages clarification on what affordable housing means. Using HUD standards anything below 80% of MFI is considered low income.
- Concerned that language around the Housing Trust Fund (HTF) implies that the funding could be used for people who do not qualify for subsidies. Suggests it is rewritten to clarify that HTF funding can only be used for low income beneficiaries.
- Suggests using the categories of “cost burdened” (paying > 30% of household income for housing) and “severely cost burdened” (paying >50% of household income for housing) instead of using statistics such as the average percentage of income that renters pay in Burlington.
- Concerned about Inclusionary Zoning regulations, suggests not letting the percentage of low income units required to drop below 15%.
- Suggests changing the language describing the Housing First model to recognize that it is already being used by several nonprofits in Burlington.
- Notes that the history of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU’s) is controversial, suggests addressing regulations to prevent abuse.
- Suggests having specific targets for all types of housing. The state has a report with housing requirements for Chittenden County that may be a good resource.

Councilor Joan Shannon - Commented on the Housing Action Plan

- The term “affordable housing” is not defined clearly, suggests using another term such as “subsidized housing” to benefit public understanding of the plan.
- Would like confirmation of the statistic that Burlington has a 57% rental rate, and the number of undergraduates living in Burlington. Wonders why we are not counting the graduate students.
- Reported that getting rid of parking minimums and eliminating Downtown parking is not a popular idea in her ward.
- Would like the section about reducing inappropriately high zoning and permit fees to reflect that developers pay those fees, not taxpayers.
- Does not support housing in the enterprise zone.
- Concerned with the reality of monitoring ADU’s to make sure they are owner occupied.

Housing Action Plan – Brian Lowe, presenter:

Brian noted that because everyone in attendance was very familiar with the Housing Action plan he would only speak to the changes that had been made in this draft. The changes were largely structural and included; adding clear goals and timelines, energy efficiency considerations, new regional planning, and affordable housing preservation. He suggests pulling the section about housing in the South End out of the plan to maintain consistency with the Mayors recent statement concerning housing in the enterprise zone. Brian reminded the group that this is a framework document and that details will be filled in with the help of consultants after the RFP process.

Councilor Roof asked if existing timelines need to be taken into account for new edits, Brian said that the timelines have been pushed back to September so it shouldn't be a problem.

Public Comment

Councilor Colburn suggested going through the new Housing Action Plan draft section by section for any new public comment.

Introduction Comments

- Suggestion to confirm that the City is using the same definition of "affordable housing" as the State.
- Councilor Roof asked for clarification regarding who resources are available to and the intention of the language in the introduction.

Section 1 Comments

Goal 1

- Preservation of Affordable Housing – Are there specific goals and strategies? The CDNR committee would like to be part of that conversation.
- Erhard suggests finding a list of existing affordable housing that will need resources to remain affordable for the next five years. CEDO has that list and incorporates it into our Action Plan and funding decisions.

Goal 2

- HTF – the word "should" will be struck for clarification. It was suggested that the HTF become more transparent and that information is readily available on the website. Councilor Bushor asked whether the funding the City is providing is enough for a program dedicated to housing. She suggests incorporating HTF funding into the plan.
- Suggestion that workforce housing be considered in Inclusionary Zoning for people who are not low income but can't afford market rate housing. Councilor Colburn proposed that these details be discussed later with a consultant and that CDNR participate in the process.

Goal 3

- Energy Efficiency – We have an existing time of sale ordinance, these standards should be strengthened and updated. The rehab code should strike a balance between historic preservation and energy efficiency.

Goal 4

- The goal needs more substance. Councilor Colburn suggests a higher commitment to and incentives for home sharing. Councilor Ayers would like to see more metrics for home sharing.

Brian Lowe, Councilor Colburn, and Councilor Ayers reminded the group that this is a framework document and that no policies are being created with this document.

Section 2 Comments

Goal 1

- It is very important that Burlington leads the region on a commitment to affordable housing. CVOEO would like to be part of the conversation regarding transportation corridors and suggests including the AARP – they are conducting a study on transportation and housing for seniors.
- The CCTA has reviewed this portion of the Housing Action Plan and is comfortable with it.
- Suggestions to also include the Burlington Sustainability Project, VHFA, and other partners.

Goals 2&3

- Goal statements should reflect the evaluative process for parking minimums and form based code.

Goal 4

- Suggestion to increase funding for housing replacement, and include housing replacement in this section.
- A two word language change is suggested to include energy efficiency.
- Further discussion of housing replacement specifically near the airport. Councilor Colburn suggested making a resolution instead of adding in a new section about housing replacement. Councilor Roof supports adding language that will include the topic in the scope of work. All councilors agree.

Goal 7

- Discussion about whether this section should be removed from the document. Ends with a proposal to clarify the language around housing, so it is clear that the proposed housing will not be in the enterprise zone. Councilor Colburn suggested stronger anti gentrification language.

Section 3 Comments

Goal 1

- Several attendees want clarity about purpose built student housing and do not support building “dorms” or buildings that could not house other groups. Brian Lowe shared that purpose built housing has been successful in other similar college towns, some councilors and attendees do not think this would work as well in Burlington.

Section 4 Comments

Goal 1

- Discussion occurred addressing who should be the priority for this funding/housing. Some organizations are using the Housing First approach. The City is supporting the Continuum of Care's system wide approach to triage and house the most vulnerable populations, and others would like to serve those who could be assisted before becoming chronically homeless. Councilor Bushor would like the language to reflect more of a commitment to house children and families. It was suggested that a few attendees discuss this section further.

Section 5 Comments

Goal 1

- Councilor Ayers encourages expansion of accessory units to include new construction (examples - micro apartment buildings or condo units). Councilor Colburn supports expanding the language to be inclusive of these possibilities.
- Further discussion of accessory units, Councilor Bushor is concerned about abuse, suggests using parking requirements to limit abuse.

Councilor Colburn proposed to see a new draft and to work with Brian Lowe on areas that need substantial editing, followed by a review by council members, and if there are no objections to the edits, move the housing Action plan forward to City Council.

Councilor Roof moved to recommend that the revised Housing Action Plan moves to City Council, given the discussions are captured, with the option to reject. Councilor Ayers seconded this motion. All councilors in favor.

Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) - Marcy Esbjerg, presenter

The CAPER is up for public review and can be found on the CEDO website or at the CEDO office.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 PM by Councilor Ayers and seconded by Councilor Colburn. Motion approved and meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Val Russell

Community Development Specialist

CEDO