



CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT
CITY COUNCIL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT &
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION COMMITTEE
c/o Community & Economic Development Office
City Hall, Room 32 • 149 Church Street • Burlington, VT 05401
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Councilor Selene Colburn, Chair, East District
Councilor Tom Ayres, Ward 7
Councilor Adam Roof, Ward 8

Tuesday, April 26, 2016
6:00 – 7:45 PM
Fletcher Free Library
Community Room

Draft Minutes

Chair Selene Colburn called the meeting to order at 6:00PM. She started the meeting by asking for introductions. Committee members are listed above. Other attendees include: Ibnar Avilex, Karen Long, Sarah Giannoni – Councilor, Keith Pillsbury, CiCi – student, Alex Brang – student, Joe Speidel, UVM, Marcy Esbjerg - staff, Gillian Nanton – staff, Todd Rawlings , staff

1. Review Agenda

Chair Colburn reviewed the agenda. She stated the agenda includes both a time for public comment and also invited public comment around the table during specific topics. Tonight would feature initial discussions on the Neighborhood Stabilization Program and also Tiny Homes.

Councilor Ayres moved to accept the agenda. Councilor Roof seconded. Motion carried.

2. Public Forum

Karen Long spoke about the four unrelated ordinance. She stated the City must be more consistent with its enforcement. If the City enforced the ordinance it would make housing more affordable. She noted that the ordinance was changed in 2000 but in her opinion, still not enforced. Renting by the bedroom to college students makes housing unaffordable for a family. She mentioned that the Pearl Street new apartments, tenants are paying \$1500 for a one bedroom.

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contact Marcy Esbjerg at mesbjerg@burlingtonvt.gov

Councilor Roof – He is looking to the Neighborhood Stabilization Program as a way to recapture our neighborhoods; creating new opportunities for places to live; price points won't change overnight. He hopes to incorporate more home ownerships.

Chair Colburn – We will devote an entire meeting to this ordinance. We will get an update on what has been done so far, what still needs to be done and how to strategize.

Keith Pillsbury referenced the previous meeting when representatives from the colleges were talking about how good they are doing. Keith emphasized that it was not about student behavior. It is about being responsible to house their students. Colleges say it's too expensive but still pay high salaries to athletics.

Councilor Ayers asked if he sees a difference with purpose built student housing.

Mr. Pillsbury said that he objects that students are displacing families and young professionals.

Ms. Long said her point is about affordability. Some houses are considered as ghetto; students are living in dumps. She thinks the housing stock is being destroyed.

Ms. Brang noted that students will tolerate things that other residents won't. It's too expensive to live in the dorm (\$1300) per month.

Joe Speidel from UVM noted that landlords are making more money on housing. He feels that the problem is more that few houses have been built in the last 20 years. He does not agree with categorizing communities as 'ghetto' and the colleges are doing some community policing. The number of students living off campus has gone down. The University is trying to make more beds available and trying to be a good community partner.

Chair Colburn asked what are the actionable items for CDNR? We will have a meeting on the 4 unrelated ordinance. We will ask UVM about their role in housing their students re: MOU with City. For the May meeting, we will follow up with UVM on campus housing.

3. Approval of Minutes – Councilor Ayres made a motion to approve the minutes from March 2016. Councilor Roof made a second. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Introduction to Neighborhood Revitalization(Stabilization) Plan– Gillian Nanton

Ms. Nanton introduced the Neighborhood Stabilization Plan as one of 22 Housing Action Plan initiatives. She explained it was part of the settlement agreement that required the local colleges to come together to develop an RFP for hiring a consultant. The scope of work will look at examples of successful student housing in other communities. The first step in the process will be to bring together key players along with councilors to discuss what is happening and gather input that will help to inform the development of the RFP. That meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 27. The following topics will be investigated: 1. What are the most important neighborhood quality of life concerns? 2. What is being done or can be done to expand student housing? 3. Geographic areas – where is the focus? 4. What are the wide range of strategic and financial commitments? Is it homeownership or other goals? The timeline for the process includes fall of 2016 with the scope of work and RFP; winter 2016 – hire the consultant team – winter 2017 – tool kit and strategies.

Mr. Speidel suggested bringing in young professionals like those at dealer.com and asking is the need for more housing?

Chair Colburn reminded the group that this one strategy in the Housing Action Plan is specific to students and then reconvert housing stock to non-student/residential use.

Mr. Pillsbury referred to Mr. Speidel's statement being advised that UVM has been told by consultants students don't want to be housed on campus for more than two years. Mr. Pillsbury believes that is a faulty business plan and it is not generating our economy.

Chair Colburn noted that this plan will seek to find ways to get students out of neighborhood housing and then renovate the houses for conversion. She would like to discuss grants for owner occupied duplex.

Staff member Todd Rawlings explained that CEDO does have a grant program for owner occupied duplexes.

However, it requires a second, no interest mortgage and that has become difficult to execute after 2008 with changes in banking industry.

Ms. Long expressed her opinion that she is not sure hiring a consultant is the way to go. She thinks that if we enforce the laws we already have that would solve the problem.

Councilor Giannoni likes the idea of bringing your professionals who are working in Burlington to be a part of the discussion and also suggested that designated agencies (who employ people in the social service field) be invited as well. She suggested to invite not just those who make money; she also suggested we find ways to promote condo conversions.

Mr. Avilix stressed the importance of good facilitation and conversation. It is important that all voices are being heard. How will the plan ensure public participation?

Mr. Pillsbury noted other communities have homes that are divided up into condos or quality apartments. Students won't have a commitment as they leave after 2 years.

5. Review CDBG Advisory Board Recommendations

Marcy Esbjerg presented the CDBG Advisory Board recommendations. She explained the funding of the Community Development Block Grant and how applications and projects are sought through an RFP process. The Advisory Board reviews the proposals and makes recommendations. There is funding leftover from 2015 because of a cancelled project and funding leftover from this year because the requests were limited. She explained that the next step is to complete the HUD Action Plan and then present these recommendations to both BOF and City Council. There will be a public hearing on May 16th and will ask Council for approval on June 6. Will the CDNR committee like to sponsor the resolution for approval?

Councilor Ayres asked if applicants are given feedback as to why they don't get funded. Ms. Esbjerg said there were comments to that effect in the minutes.

Councilors were concerned about other funding that was not used with the depth of need in the opiate crisis; there was surprise that the HowardCenter project was not funded. Ms. Esbjerg explained that the Advisory Board did have a backup plan to fully fund the highest scoring projects. She also noted that the administration of grants is fairly complicated.

6. Tiny Homes Discussion

Chair Colburn began a presentation of the idea of tiny homes to end homelessness by sharing a handout of resources, models/ projects around the country. She noted that she had been approached by local business owners who are very interested; costs range from \$5k to \$87500. She discovered mostly simple fundraising for the projects and some are on municipally owned land. Sometimes the villages are self-governing and others have case managers on site.

Councilor Ayres expressed that tiny homes are not just for homelessness but also for

affordable housing, micro apartments. The City of Burlington might need to redefine ancillary/accessory dwelling unit.

Councilor Roof expressed the Committee's commitment to address homelessness. He also mentioned housing in other countries that use shipping containers. Tiny homes might also impact senior housing.

Chair Colburn asked about zoning and said we will invite David White to a meeting to discuss the zoning challenges.

Ms. Esbjerg reminded the Committee that also the Continuum of Care would like to be a part of the conversation and also UVM Medical Center who is playing a key role in permanent supportive housing.

Councilor Roof believes that the best way to introduce concept is through the homeless lens and asked where to put it in the City on limited land.

Mr. Speidel likes the idea of neighborhoods including elder housing and services provided.

Mr. Avilix said there might be benefits to a homeowner with a tiny home in their backyard – tax benefits and homesharing possibilities.

Chair Colburn listed the following partners to include in a discussion: Continuum of Care, Vermont Interfaith Association, David White, and the business community. She also mentioned the idea of a forum or event that CDNR would sponsor on microhousing. Yestermorrow Design School was mentioned as a potential partner/presenter.

7. Next meeting – May 24, 2016 – Fletcher Free Library – is in conflict with upcoming City of Burlington budget meetings. After checking schedules, the Committee decided to change the next meeting to the date of May 31st at 6 pm. A meeting location will be found. Councilor Roof made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Councilor Ayres seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcy Esbjerg

Assistant Director

CEDO