CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

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Draft Minutes

Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Meeting

South Portland Community Center -2nd Floor Conference Room
Wednesday, May 16, 2018
6:00 PM

Attendees
Mike Duvernay  Joshua Reny               Tex Haeuser           Mike Hulsey
Bertrand Mizero  Sandy Warren   Leah Burns               Kara Auclair

Absent:
David Larki
Isaac Misiuk

1. Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Minutes - Motion by Bertrand and second by Tex, Move to approve the minutes of April 12, 2018 meeting. All in favor.

3. Inclusionary Zoning recommendations- Josh stated to the committee that over the last four weeks, he & Sandy met with several people in the local real estate and affordable housing industry. The intent was to take a deeper look into the concept of Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) and determine the strengths and shortcomings of such a policy. Both thought it would be best to look at this type of zoning policy at various stages of development, from feasibility and project financing, to lease up or unit sales, to management of rent-restricted units on an ongoing basis. See attached Memorandum for full notes. Josh surmised his meeting by saying, the main takeaway is that we, as a city, need to create a “toolbox” for housing developers to access as a means to incentivize the creation of more affordable unit. Thus would likely result in a greater number of affordable units being created. Josh & Sandy suggested that the committee begin by looking at the QAP and use it as a guide to create policy recommendations that would be most useful for developers. Examples include financial assistance in the form of a TIF, CDBG funding for land acquisition, and an affordable housing trust fund. Other ideas may include public infrastructure adjacent to proposed housing projects, and zoning incentives such as favorable parking standards, increased density, etc. Josh & Sandy suggested creating a list of the various forms of local assistance that could be brought to bear, and then ranking and prioritizing each of them. This framework could then be used to draft a new policy or ordinance.

4. As a group the committee discussed Josh & Sandy’s summary of findings. The group felt that the ideas Josh & Sandy suggested were a great starting points. Mike Hulsey spoke in favor of using the QAP to guide the committee in the policy making process. Mike
also stated the committee chair Isaac has experience with the QAP and could provide the group with a list of QAP recommendations that the city could use to assist developers in attaining higher points on their applications.

5. Mike Hulsey highlighted the importance of recognition by the council to support one affordable/ and or tax credit housing project year.

6. Josh also spoke about the possibility of acquiring city owned land and working with Habitat for humanity to repair and resale those properties to low income persons. Another idea that Josh spoke about was marrying affordable housing with the Land bank. The land bank is a fund currently held by the Open Space committee. This fund would be great to provide financial support to affordable housing developers or directly to low income families to assist them in purchasing homes. We should start by having a conversation with this group.

7. Tex spoke about creating a package to present to the council that would lay out of these thoughts and ideas, and put them into an ordinance.

8. Josh requested the committee members email Sandy with their suggestion on what should be in our “toolbox” for developers. Once we receive feedback from the committee, Josh, Sandy and Tex would met and create a draft to present to the committee at our next meeting.

9. Tex Haueser suggested the committee research Trust funds on a state level in terms of legislate movement. Tex would like the committee to research the idea of GA providing housing vouchers along with emergency assistance to local residents. Would this be possible?

10. Leah spoke about local housing co-operative in Lewiston, and suggested this as an area to look into and see if it is an option to pursue. Leah also spoke about giving seniors a priority. Bertrand also spoke about seniors and noted that over 60% of Mainers are over the age of 65yrs.

11. Bertrand asked the committee about providing information to residents about homeownership. Looking at program that do not require a lot of money down, or provide financial assistance. Leah spoke about Rural development. Sandy mentioned using housing choice vouchers to assist in purchasing homes. Bertrand would also like to look at the city creating a shelter or some place for families to go.

12. The committee discussed canceling our June 21, 2018 meeting at the Brown School, as it no longer pertains to the committee’s goals. The committee agreed to move this meeting back to the June 28, 2018 date and have that at the community center.


14. Roundtable. Josh spoke about O’Neil street, one project proposed by developers is to create 42 units both homes and condominiums, with lots of green space, a playground, community garden and soccer fields.

15. Public Comments- None

16. Adjournment - Motion by Mike D, seconded by Josh, all in favor, meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.