Minutes

Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Meeting

South Portland Planning Office, Planning Conference Room
Tuesday, October 23, 2018
5:00 PM

Attendees
Isaac Misiuk    Joshua Reny    Mike Hulsey    Justin Barker
Sandy Warren    Kara Auclair     Mike Duvernay

Absent:
Leah Bruns    Bertrand Mizero

Guest – Deqa Dhalac

1. Meeting was called order at 5:13pm

2. Adoption of meeting minutes for August 23, 2018. Motion by Kara and seconded Josh. No discussion, all in favor.

3. Developer Survey Discussion Presented by Isaac: Isaac spoke to the committee about the creation of a developer survey that he will be presenting to members of MERDA. The goal of the survey would be to find out what incentives need to be adopted by the City to promote development of Affordable housing South Portland. Josh stated to the group he felt this was a good idea and would like to see the questions be quantitative, and be limited to say 10 to promote survey completion. Justin also stressed the importance of measurable questions. Isaac agreed to draft the questions for the survey and he would then share them with the group. Isaac welcomes the groups feedback and encouraged members to email him and suggests or questions they would like to see be on the survey. Josh mentioned that it would be nice to gather information about what are the issues, what can the city do and have developers provide contact information so we might reach out to them for follow up. Isaac will work on the survey and hopefully have this ready for the next meeting in November.

4. Discuss & Review Draft Policy by Justin: Justin presented to the committee potential zoning changes. Taking a hybrid approach, Justin presented to the committee a transit overlay district. This approach combines many goals into one, and is based off of a model currently being used by the city of Los Angles. Justin further stated the TOD table provides base requirements and base incentives for developers, additional requirements and incentives will be offered to those developers including affordable units in their development. The model proposes three tiers. Tier 1 the Maine Mall are
and Mill Creek commercial center will have the most incentives for developers, Tier 2 would focus on mixed use Growth area and abutting parcels, this would have a moderate incentive base. Tier 3 found in the mixed use limited growth area and abutting parcels would have the least incentives. All of the tiers are based on the comprehensive plan designations. The numbers including AMI are arbitrary at this time and intended to represent the scale of incentive related to each Tier. The Base incentives would require transportation improvement but not an affordability piece. For example you would have to provide x number of bike spaces or a zip car placement and comply with design requirements. Isaac spoke to this and felt it should have an affordability piece to all of the incentives including the base, but overall thinks it is a great idea. Josh stated the reason behind the base incentives not including affordability is that those areas can have commercial uses and the project are not all going to be housing. Josh also mentioned that the benefits and incentives are larger for those with an affordability component. Kara would also like to see some affordable housing requirement in the base requirements but felt this model makes sense to go with. Deqa asked the group how we could mirror what was done with the Avesta Project West End apartments on future developments. Josh spoke to this stating what we are doing here tonight will hopefully result in policy creation and will help guide affordable housing like the Avesta Project Deqa referred too. Josh would like to see Art Handman the director of public transportation for South Portland come in and be a part of the discussion. Justin would like to review the developer survey result and then take from that any possible indicators to apply to the TOD.

5. Discuss & review draft policy by Josh: Josh briefly discussed with the committee a draft policy which addresses the creation of new affordable housing in the City of South Portland through various tools and financial incentives. The policy would establish an affordable housing trust fund, and recommend the City support at least one LIHTC project per year. Additionally it would provide support in the form of TIF, grants, low-interest loans and credit enhancement agreements through affordable housing tax increment financing programs. Public safety improvements and conditional zoning. The group widely received the policy and look forward to reviewing the information and providing more detail at the next meeting.

6. Round Table-
   1. Mike Hulsey provided the group with an update on the 611 Main Street project. Mike was pleased to announce that the SPHDC is very likely to be award Tax Credits this year.
   2. Mike Duvernay asked if the O’Neil street property was moving forward with any Habitat homes. Isaac spoke to this stating that it is too early to know what is going to happen.
   3. Isaac mentioned to the group that the SPHDC is working with Habitat and would like to have them purchase a lot owned by the SPHDC at Sunset Avenue so habitat can build seven homes that will become affordable. Currently the land is zoned for five homes and Habitat needs seven for development to be feasible. Isaac is working with the planning office to get a zoning change.

7. Next meeting scheduled for November 28, 2018 5:00-7:00PM at the planning office.

8. Motion by Kara and seconded by Mike Hulsey meeting adjourned at 6:42pm