



**NEWBERG AFFORDABLE HOUSING
AD HOC COMMITTEE**

Thursday, November 6, 2008

7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Newberg City Hall

Permit Center Conference Room

414 E. First Street, Newberg, OR

I. OPEN MEETING: Chair Philip Smith opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL:

Present:	Bob Larson	Philip Smith	Kevin Winbush
	Mike Willcuts	Rick Rogers	Charles Harris
	Mike Gougler		

Absent:	Dennis Russell (excused)	Bob Ficker (excused)
	Joel Perez (excused)	

Staff Present:	David Beam, Economic Development Coordinator/Planner
	Barton Brierley, Planning and Building Director
	Dawn Karen Bevell, Recording Secretary

Others Present:	Councilor-Elect Denise Bacon
	Leonard Rydell

III. MEETING MINUTES:

MOTION #1: Larson/Gougler moved to approve the minutes from the October 16, 2008 meeting. Motion passed by voice vote.

Chair Smith reviewed discussions based on the staff memo included in the September 18, 2008 meeting packet (pp. 9 – 11) regarding the proposed policies 5, 6, and 7 of the list, which provides the give/take exchange between developers and the City that is intended to encourage affordable housing. He also referred to the staff memo in the current meeting packet.

IV. PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND DEVELOPMENT CODE CHANGES:

Question 1: Should the City create a flexible/affordable/design track?

David Beam explained that as proposed, the developer would get flexibility on the project development layout, which in turn would allow more units to be built, offering a higher profit

margin. In return, the City would ask the developer to provide affordable housing units with higher design standards.

Chair Smith asked if the development standard strategy can be made attractive enough for a developer to want to contribute to affordable housing.

Mike Willcuts replied if walking paths, parks, etc., are required, it will take away from the affordability of the development.

Chair Smith stated the idea is to be flexible for the developer.

David Beam explained there are proposed general guidelines for design listed in the November 6, 2008 meeting packet (P13).

Chair Smith stated the Committee's general feeling so far has been that the burden of affordable housing shouldn't be placed on the new home buyers and asked what could be offered to the developer to encourage participation.

Mike Gougler replied tax credits for certain types of energy conservation are offered, although they can be costly. The credits can be calculated quickly and cost-wise, it comes out as a wash.

Chair Smith stated that tax credits is a different approach than the proposed plan.

Charles Harris stated the building code has certain requirements, which are becoming stricter as time goes by.

Rick Rogers is concerned with the lack of high density land. Unless land is going to be zoned R-3, he doesn't see how the density can be obtained.

Mike Gougler stated the Oregonian addressed this subject a week ago. The land use laws in Oregon can discourage this kind of development.

Chair Smith summarized two approaches: A strong-armed approach with requirements from the developer or the City can provide attractive options that will encourage developers to provide affordable housing. He then asked the committee if there is a third option.

Mike Willcuts would like to see design standards such as in R-2. To build affordable housing, the densities need to be increased and other restrictive requirements should be eliminated. A points system isn't a problem, as long as it's a straight, easy path to follow and affordable to the developer.

Mike Gougler stated that planning applications to the City and the current process are already a lot of work for the developers. If there is a whole other layer of complex review added to the process, it will be avoided by developers.

Rick Rogers likes the idea of flexibility and simplicity, but again, he still feels that the lack of high density lands is of highest importance.

Chair Smith again brought up the idea of expedited annexations for affordable housing.

Mike Gougler stated the whether a project will work or not will depend on its economics. The issues of availability of land and annexations should be a separate discussion.

Chair Smith stated the expedited annexation idea may work. However, the voters will not approve the idea if the City Council doesn't support it.

Kevin Winbush asked the Committee how seriousness they are about affordable housing. The developers have been asked how that can be accomplished and what will be needed for this to work. A demonstration project needs to be done to help test the ideas being put forth.

Mike Gougler encouraged the committee to walk through the Third Street project by the Airport which is being developed by Mike Willcuts. The project is innovative and a good example of how a project can be made affordable.

Bob Larson stated he would like to see the City reduce fees for developers. He would be willing to vote for a reduction in fees as a member of the City Council.

Mike Willcuts stated the fees are 20% of a project's cost.

Question 2: To what extent should this flexible/affordable track should be optional or required?

Chair Smith believes that in light of past discussions, perhaps it should be optional.

Charles Harris stated it depends on R-2 zoning development. Affordable housing isn't happening because these developments aren't being built to significant densities. The existing codes need to be changed.

Mike Gougler explained the R-2 is being developed in a manner that meets market demands. There are a number of families who'd like to have usable backyards. This is one of the few communities in the Portland area where you can have that. Markets for those same neighborhoods ask for public walkways, playgrounds, picnic areas, gazebos, etc., as amenities. As that R-2 is being developed to the market, to require higher densities is counter to the mainstream R-2 market.

Mike Willcuts stated every development he's done is built as dense as physically possible and code allows. The Willcuts' properties do not typically have big backyards but yet meet the demand for the market.

Leonard Rydell was asked by Chair Smith to give his opinion of this issue as a concerned citizen. Mr. Rydell has lived in Newberg for 34 years. With the population growth, Newberg will double in size in the future. 50% of the population is now single. Options of affordable housing should be everywhere. It seems that condos are the only way to go for affordability. Newberg has many code restrictions and many forms of development that encourage affordability aren't allowed here. High density can be part of mixed use instead of singular, non-sustainable developments. The tragedies of land use are because of restrictions and regulations. The market will dictate what the people want. Mr. Rydell also asked the committee to look at the over-requirement of parking spaces.

Question 2.1: Should some of these situations not be on the list? Should other situations be added? One option that has been discussed by the committee is an "expedited annexation."

Chair Smith believes this question has already been answered.

Question 3: If flexible development standards are created, what should they be?

Barton Brierley stated curb-side sidewalks, street widths, right-of-way width, and sidewalks on one side of the street are some standards that have been mentioned in the discussion tonight.

David Beam suggested looking at the standards listed in the November 6, 2008 meeting packet (P11). The subdivision lot design flexible standards (B) Items 1 – 5 were found favorable among the committee.

Questions 3.1: Should some of these flexible development standards not be on the list? Should other standards be added?

Charles Harris asked if there are any of these items that have been found to be unfavorable among developers.

Barton Brierley replied there have been a couple of projects where the developer has bought a set of plans for a duplex and then showed the plans to staff. Staff would then tell them that some changes would need to be made and the developer would not be pleased.

Rick Rogers agreed that at times, a proposed plan is better than what is allowed by the codes. He's seen this happen in projects for Habitat for Humanity.

Question 4: Should the design of a project using the flexible track be judged based on a point system, or on a discretionary architectural review?

Mike Gougler preferred the idea of having a committee of neutral, out-of-town consultants review proposed plans as long as it is in conjunction with a quick approval process.

Chair Smith stated that more flexibility may be preferable, but doing so may involve a public hearing which slows the process down.

Question 4.1: If an architectural review is used, who should do the review?

Mike Willcuts feels that if the proposed project meets the established standards, then city staff should have the power to approve the plan. If not, then the proposed plan could be reviewed by an outside party/group.

Charles Harris stated he believes having an outside party will slow the process down. It would be a step back rather than forward.

Rick Rogers believes having another quasi-review board may run the risk of not complying with the public meeting laws that are in place.

David Beam stated the design review party could be formed in a way to help increase the quality of a development.

Charles Harris believes an architectural review board could periodically (annually?) review the standards being used for projects and look at the kind of projects being developed under those standards. If these projects have design flaws, the board could suggest changes to the standards to improve them.

Chair Smith suggested continuing questions 5 – 5.3 (pp. 13 – 15) at the next scheduled meeting. This would allow the Committee time to discuss some proposed parking standard changes going before the Planning Commission next week.

PROPOSED PARKING STANDARD CHANGES:

Barton Brierley explained the proposed changes. The genesis of this action came from concerns voiced by the Newberg City Council regarding access standards for multiple single family dwellings on a single lot and for multifamily dwellings. The staff report handed out will be presented to the Newberg Planning Commission, November 13, 2008, File No: DCA-07-003, Resolution No. 2007-247.

Chair Smith asked for comments from the Committee. He will then forward them on to the Planning Commission.

Mike Willcuts stated staff did an excellent job in preparing the report. The changes in parking standards are good. However, allowing for increased coverage also needs to be addressed.

Rick Rogers stated giving credit for the use of pervious material should also be considered.

Leonard Rydell suggested looking at the recent infill development on Illinois Street as an example of poor access planning.

Mike Gougler clarified that the requirement should not be to restrict the number of units that can be served by a private drive, but to assure the development has adequate parking

Chair Smith agreed and stated a crucial feature is the provision of unassigned parking spaces, which should be built into a plan.

Mike Gougler agrees this is a high quality proposal by staff, but he hopes the Planning Commission doesn't consider any further modifications beyond what staff recommends.

Chair Smith's noted the long standing concern of the Planning Commission against private streets. The issue of gated private streets was recently addressed by the Planning Commission.

Mike Willcuts stated it's a great idea having street parking count towards a developer's parking requirements, when available.

V. OTHER BUSINESS:

Chair Smith gave an update concerning the current status of consumer education taught at the high school. He read a detailed follow-up letter and course syllabus he received from the School Board. Chair Smith welcomed the committee to review it. Bob Larson stated he will review the letter and information.

Bob Larson received a postcard from the Yamhill County Board of Commissioners. It provided notice of an upcoming open house on the proposed Homelessness Plan for Yamhill County that will be held at the Newberg Senior Center on November 13, 2008 from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Commissioner George is heading this committee.

David Beam asked about the status of the report from the sub-committee concerning fees.

Charlie Harris stated that Dennis Russell has been out of town a lot lately.

VI. NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled for November 20, 2008 at 7:00 p.m.

VII. ADJOURN: Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 9:00 p.m.

Approved by the Ad Hoc Committee this 20th day of November 2008.

AYES:

7

NO:

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ABSTAIN:
(list names)

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ABSENT: 3

Harris
Rogers
Wibbush

Dawn Karen Beville
Ad Hoc Committee Recording Secretary

Philip D Smith
Ad Hoc Committee Chair

Date

11/20/08