



CITY OF
TOPEKA

MINUTES

TOPEKA PLANNING COMMISSION

Monday, April 20, 2020

6:00PM via Video Conference

Members present: Brian Armstrong (Chair), Corey Dehn, Marc Fried, Wiley Kannarr, Jim Kaup, Corliss Lawson, Ariane Messina, Katrina Ringler, Matt Werner (9)

Members Absent: (0)

Staff Present: Bill Fiander, Planning & Development Director; Dan Warner, Comprehensive Planning Manager; Kris Wagers, Administrative Officer

Roll Call – Chairman Brian Armstrong called the meeting to order with nine members present / logged in for a quorum.

Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2020

Motion to approve by Mr. Fried, **second** by Mr. Kaup. **APPROVED** (8-0-1 with Ms. Lawson abstaining)

Presentation and discussion on the draft Citywide Housing Market Study and Strategy for the City of Topeka

Mr. Fiander gave a brief introduction regarding the study and introduced consultants Andy Pfister and Justin Carney, both from Development Strategies.

Mr. Pfister presented using PowerPoint presentation that was viewable by all. Mr. Carney also provided information and both took questions from commissioners as they arose.

Development Strategies had requested and received public input and from that shared that the goals of the public seemed to be:

- 1 – Leverage housing (re)-investment to stabilize Topeka's core neighborhoods.
- 2 - Improve housing stability for Topeka's vulnerable residents – house as opportunity
- 3 – Support new housing development, particularly affordable and moderate-income options
- 4 – Address problem landlords, absentee owners, and vacant properties
- 5 – Expand the housing ecosystem by building new partnerships to fund the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and create a new CDC network.

Questions/discussion included how the study can be used specifically related to inform land use planning and policy decisions. It was noted that much of Topeka's supply of "affordable" housing is in poor condition. There is unmet demand for high-end, more expensive housing for both homeowners and renters and employer feedback indicates a desire for high end housing options as they seek to fill high-paying jobs. It was suggested that the study could be used by developers in making decisions about projects.

The "relevant recommendations" of the consultants were:

- 1 – Support infill development
- 2 - Support downtown development
- 3 – Diversify housing stock

APPROVED

4 - Recruit developers to fill undeveloped lots.

Communications to the Commission

Mr. Fiander stated that there are 3 cases scheduled for the May meeting and it is uncertain at this point whether the meeting will be held "in person" or via video conference.

Mr. Fiander referred to information provided by City attorney Mary Feighny via email regarding ex parte communications, what they are, and the need to divulge those prior to hearing a case. It remains up to individuals as to whether or not they wish to discuss items with the public.

With no further agenda items, meeting was adjourned at 7:28PM.