

CUSP

Housing and Transportation Subcommittee Meeting

Minutes – January 22, 2020

Chair Stephanie Rose called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm

Members Present: Stephanie Rose, Chair; Barbara Dahl, Secretary; Todd DeVries, Rebecca Long Piper, Chad Murdock, Julene Haworth, Amy Place, Lexie French

Absent: Anne Johnson

Discussion Items

Presentation by Brad Cramer, Director of Community Development, City of Idaho Falls: Zoning, Building Codes and Housing.

Community Development Services role in livable neighborhoods, quality affordable housing and transportation.

- The planning/zoning division oversees current and long-range planning. Code Enforcement addresses property maintenance - exterior only. City follows International Property Maintenance Code, but interior habitability addressed only with tenant complaint. No routine health/safety inspections for residential, even rental business.
- The Building Division oversees new builds and permitted remodels. The state adopts the International Building Code and then the city adopts and reviews at least annually.
- City is required by Idaho law to have a comprehensive plan. The plan is not legally binding - just a guideline. It incorporates parts of the Bonneville Metropolitan Planning Organization's (BMPO) transportation and access management plans.
- CD administers the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) \$300-400K/year from Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Distributed in the community to promote decent living conditions especially for low to moderate income residents/areas - housing and infrastructure improvement, slum and blight elimination, economic opportunities. Partners with community organizations including Habitat for Humanity and CLUB, Inc.
- A city representative participates on the Housing Coalition of East Idaho.

Planning Process

Citizen input valued. CD promotes interest and understanding through meetings, listening posts, hearings, surveys. The city has robust citizen participation. Planning Commission made up of citizen volunteers.

Zoning

Big effect on housing stock. Euclidian Zoning - community is divided into areas by land use (i.e.residential vs. manufacturing). Began in 1920's Euclid, Ohio. Rooted largely in racial segregation but presented as healthy and safety issue. Upheld by the Supreme Court, after which zoning ordinances exploded across the country and a universal term emerged: "public welfare goals" meaning for the purpose of protecting the general welfare of the community. Extended beyond land use to segregating types of housing (single-family detached, vs. multiplex/apartments) and continues today, creating longstanding economic segregation across communities.

Prior to 1920's, neighborhoods were mixed income, mixed housing stock, mixed use (example slide of Numbered Streets in IF). After Euclid - diverse housing stock declined and a system of richer and poorer neighborhoods emerged. Subdivisions of uniform single-family homes and separate/isolated large complexes of low-income housing has created a "missing middle housing" situation with shortage of modest-sized duplex, townhouse, and other multi-family dwellings compatible with the scale and mixed in with single-family homes.

Longstanding anti-apartment, anti-rental attitudes - significant role in Idaho Falls' struggles with a lack of affordable and multiple use dwellings. Planning profession is taking steps to break down regulatory barriers. Example: some older neighborhoods in IF recently changed back from land-use (R-1, R-2) to Traditional Neighborhood Zoning, recognizing the way historic neighborhoods were designed, once again allowing more density (accessory dwellings), mixture of small business and residential.

- New zoning techniques (away from land use to form-based)
- Development standards
- Fewer zones
- Incentive programs

Citizen's attitudes entrenched, fearing negative impacts. NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard) often witnessed at public hearings. Common concerns include lower property values, neighborhood condition issues with rentals - slum, blight, intrusion on family neighborhoods, too much traffic, too much parking on streets, insufficient snow removal.

Presentation/Slides: Zoning, Building Codes, and Housing

<https://www.dropbox.com/l/sci/AABfQPUDJmo21MY8N7hKh12Xv67bUX-rjBQ>

Other resources:

The missing Middle Housing model <https://missingmiddlehousing.com/about/characteristics>

Form-Based Zoning- <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/developing-under-a-form-based-code/>

In-fill zoning: <https://my.spokanecity.org/projects/infill-housing-strategies-infill-development/>

My Sidewalk: Reports can be generated per request. Contact Brad Cramer <https://www.idahofallsidaho.gov/>

The Bonneville: <https://www.idahohousing.com/blog/bonneville-hotel-idaho-falls/>

Presentation by Catherine Smith, Director, Idaho Falls Downtown Development Corporation (IFDDC).

Catherine presented an overview of what IFDDC is and how the organization works within the downtown area. She highlighted several recent and ongoing projects that aim to significantly beautify, clean up, create a sense of place, and improve safety and - with increasing downtown residences - enhance livability.

Projects: public art (benches, traffic boxes, murals), new lighting, infrastructure, flower baskets and landscaping, parking, historic preservation and facade improvements.

Marketing efforts: The Downtowner newsletter, “Get Downtown Idaho Falls” on Vimeo, social media/Facebook #BeADowntowner, Yellowstone reader board, multiple seasonal events and socials.

Business Improvement District (BID): Provides funding for improvements. Management agreement in place for 20 years. The Tax District generates \$90,000 annually. Other sources of revenue include parking fees, events, and grants.

Downtown housing has exploded with 745 units within the business district and defined adjacent residential areas north, east and south (map in presentation documents links.) Business core loft apartments above the Rogers Hotel and Happy’s Restaurant have been renovated, also along Park Avenue and elsewhere. Almost all residential properties downtown have been leased and there are waiting lists. On-street parking is free and unrestricted on weekends and

from 6 PM - 8 AM on weekdays. Residential parking is available behind Chesbros for \$50/yr. Yellow zones are free parking. See presentation slides for other parking details.

IFDDC Presentation/Slides:

<https://downtownidahofalls-my.sharepoint.com/:p:/p/csmith/EXmmjyeDySp-NjLCVgaADWQkBNBt7fV0cQfAmqC9ofA3wLA?e=vFEjU1>

State of Downtown <https://dashboards.mysidewalk.com/downtownidahofalls/housing>

2015 Downtown Housing Analysis by Leland Consulting: <https://www.idahofallsidaho.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1199/Idaho-Falls-Downtown-Housing-Study-PDF>

Meeting was adjourned at 8:39 pm.