

Montpelier Housing Committee

July 26, 2022

Minutes

Meeting Recording:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/rec/share/QB5xZgarTystoJ8x0N1CjKi2NZkWjJkN64xPw26Vg98v7Qjk5h04gAsx1YEIelwD.yjWN9JdGdX5qWPnG>

Committee Members Present: Jo Ann Troiano, Carol Moorman, Jessica Oparowski, Irene Mendez, Diane Sherman, Rebecca Copans, Stan Brinkerhoff, Sean Sheehan, Emma Zavez (via Zoom), Cary Brown (via Zoom) and Jack McCullough

Municipal Staff: Josh Jerome (Notetaker) & Carol Plante (Facilitator)

Public: Peter Kelman, Carolyn Ridpath

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Carol Plante at 6:02pm.

Introductions: Staff introduced themselves and their role for the meeting.

Member Introductions: Members of the committee introduced themselves and described one or more things they appreciate about the Montpelier community.

Housing Needs: Committee members described what they believed to be Montpelier's greatest housing needs which include: not enough rental housing, several mentioned they didn't believe we had enough housing across the board i.e. rental, single family, condos, affordable and market rate; some believed it was difficult to identify the biggest need without having an updated "needs assessment" as the one the Housing Task Force was operating off from was more than 10 years old.

Others described frustration with the permitting process and the ability for one person to hold up development, downsizers and their ability to match with individuals looking for housing, several described their belief in opportunities to "build up" in underutilized parking lots, there was mention of disincentivizing empty houses and office spaces and some questioned the role of STRs in the marketplace i.e. there is a belief that it is greater than what some people believe.

Goals and Objectives to Consider: Other than the Council's goal of "Create More Housing" some members mentioned they should ensure a diversity of housing, rent control, perpetual affordability, improving the community dialogue about what "affordable" housing is, updating the barriers to housing report created by the Housing Task Force, some mentioned opportunities in the Elks Club parcel, there was mention of looking at other countries as

models. Community engagement was noted by some as being not on the Council's Strategic Plan. Others mentioned that it should include: ensuring a diversity of housing and pricing as an overarching goal, better process of informing the community of developments and increased dialogue with neighbors to mitigate pushback, someone mentioned denser housing in the downtown as a goal, working with employers. It was suggested the committee develop the strategy of utilizing a "parking lot" to place issues for discussion.

Public Comment: Carolyn stated that communication is important from the beginning, from the developer and also suggested people are not fully aware of the zoning process. Peter suggested the committee use data to inform decision making, an activist committee and pro-active community and planning department. Suggested the zoning regulations have been improved, but the processes are stumbling blocks.

Election of Officers: There was a short conversation about what officer positions needed to be elected and it was generally agreed the members wanted to reflect on the responsibilities and vote at the next meeting.

It was agreed that the process and timeline should be discussed at the next meeting and that Josh would send out a Doodle poll to determine when the next meeting will take place.

Respectfully submitted by
Josh Jerome