

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AMES CITY COUNCIL

AMES, IOWA

JUNE 21, 2016

The Ames City Council met in special session at 6:01 p.m. on the 21st day of June 2016, in the City Council Chambers in City Hall, 515 Clark Avenue, pursuant to law with Mayor Ann Campbell presiding and the following Council members present: Gloria Betcher, Amber Corrieri, Tim Gartin, Peter Orazem, Chris Nelson, and Bronwyn Beatty-Hansen. *Ex officio* Member Sam Schulte was absent.

Planning and Housing Director Kelly Diekmann and Housing Coordinator Vanessa Baker-Latimer presented the workshop on the redevelopment of 321 State Avenue (Old Middle School Site). The City acquired the property with funds from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program with the intent to develop affordable housing. The lot is 10 acres and currently zoned as RL (Residential Low-Density). The workshop provided an overview of the site, affordable housing parameters, and issues related to development options.

Diekmann discussed several configurations to depict the amount and types of housing that could be provided on the lot. The types of housing included single-family detached units, townhomes, small lot single-family units, and small rental housing buildings. According to Diekmann, a minimum of 51% of the housing units must be affordable to meet federal requirements. The housing would be affordable to households earning less than 80% of median family income and could be ownership or rental.

The question arose of how the units would remain affordable housing several years later. Baker-Latimer said there are certain programs and a recapture provision that would capture the equity over a period of time. Some stipulations require the owner to sell to another first time homebuyer if selling in a certain time-frame from when originally purchased. Recapture provisions would last a varied amount of years and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) would recommend an affordability period. These negotiations would also be discussed with the developer.

PUBLIC FORUM: Ted Huiatt, Story County Community Housing Corporation, explained how a community land trust could help maintain the units as affordable housing. He mentioned that local non-profits have an interest and some alternatives available through community land trusts might be helpful in terms of maintaining HOA fees for smaller houses. Secondly, he suggested seeking advice from non-profits if the parcel will be single-family occupied because he is not sure it could be maintained as affordable with the various construction and land costs.

Matthew Youngs, 112 E. 2nd St., Ames, commented that with the City providing the land, some funds for infrastructure, and by building smaller homes, he thinks it would be possible to hit a \$170,000 price point without outside funds and still meet the affordable housing requirements. He feels that rentals would not be necessary.

Sharon Guber, 2931 Northwestern Ave., Ames, discussed her concerns for the parcel. She stated that the availability for affordable family housing is limited, and now families with school age

children are moving out of Ames for affordable housing which raises a concern for the school district. Guber noted the parcel was not intended for rental development, and proposed several other development options. In her opinion, there was not enough time spent with the neighborhood to gather opinions.

Julian Birch, 2925 Arbor St., Ames, said that for several years his neighborhood has campaigned to keep an out-of-town developer from developing the area. Birch mentioned that his neighborhood desires affordable, low-density, owner-occupied homes, and with very little notice, they learned that something other than that might be considered. He asked whom the City owes loyalty to— the developers or people who live here.

Joanne Pfeiffer, 3318 Morningside St., Ames, read a letter from Michael Petersen, 3302 Morningside St., Ames. In his letter, Petersen wrote he was under the impression that single-family housing would be developed, however it now appears the lot will allow condos, duplexes and other multiplexes. He strongly opposes this idea, and hopes the City resists the wishes to alter the original intent.

Pfeiffer does not want the neighborhood to have a bad reputation. She wants the quality of life and the health of the neighborhood to be positive, and believes there are too many apartments and rentals as is. Pfeiffer said she is leaning towards an owner-occupied neighborhood to bring together a sense of neighborhood.

Sarah Cady, 2812 Arbor St., Ames, showed her vision for the neighborhood in her own layout. Cady does not want a “cookie cutter” lot with identical housing of the same sizes. Her layout consisted of 3-plex units, row homes, and other various sized lots to allow for a total of 52 units with 25% being rental. Cady believes there is a demand for affordable rental housing in a neighborhood setting rather than a high-rise setting.

Marilyn Clem, 3306 Morningside St., Ames, declared she would like the area to be RL zoning and would like to see the Council uphold that.

Sharon Stewart, 437 Hilltop Rd., Ames, stated that diversity means having different kinds of people living in the same area. She feels that market value homes are also important along with shared green space and combining small house options.

Austin Stewart, 437 Hilltop Rd., Ames, said the lot is a great location for diverse housing. He discussed the importance to have decent affordable housing in the community, and believes it could be almost all owner-occupied units with a small percentage as rental. Stewart feels that if the lot remains zoned as RL, the developer will build inexpensive, identical housing.

Kathie Whattoff, 325 S. Wilmoth Ave., Ames, simply stated that she prefers owner-occupied units. She mentioned that there are too many rentals in the area and owner-occupied housing would be better for the neighborhood.

Jason Paull, 3310 Tripp St., Ames, claimed there is no consensus in the neighborhood. He said there are many different opinions from the neighborhood itself and also friends of the neighborhood. Paull said that a good, strong discussion is wanted by the neighborhood to achieve goals for both the neighborhood and City.

Catherine Scott, 1510 Roosevelt Ave., Ames, believes that promises were made to the neighborhood, and wonders how the new addition will work with the current neighborhood. She is concerned with how large lots are becoming, and feels like the City needs to give more residents the opportunity to own a home.

Council Member Orazem stated it is important to think through the types of housing. It will be challenging for both the developer and the owner of housing, so many options need to be available. Family occupation is the primary concern.

Council Member Betcher said that more rentals downtown would be a good option to consider rather than in the middle school parcel. She suggested the more the 6th Street parcel is utilized, the better. She would like more ownership options.

ADJOURNMENT: Moved by Corrieri to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Diane R. Voss, City Clerk

Ann H. Campbell, Mayor

Heidi Petersen, Recording Secretary