

Ad Hoc Housing Committee Meeting September 16, 2021

Welcome & Introductions

Chairs Jon Birkel and Ian Graves began the meeting at Harmon Park at 5:30 p.m. The following Housing Committee members were present: Jon Birkel, Ian Graves, Bonnie Limbird, Ron Nelson, Mary Rimann, April Engstrom (on behalf of Matt Gillam), and Mayor Mikkelson. Matt Gillam and Todd Harris were unable to be at the meeting due to other commitments. Jamie Robichaud was present as staff liaison to the Committee.

Jon Birkel and Ian Graves welcomed everybody and said this is meant to be an informal meeting to hear everyone's thoughts and ideas and do some goal setting. Ian added that when the council talks about housing, we ask the question: "is it going in the direction that is consistent with Village Values." The goal of the group is to bring different factions of people together to think about things that are outlined in Village Vision 2.0, the UCS Housing Toolkit, and put our heads together to chart a course for moving the needle on housing attainability in Prairie Village.

Mayor Mikkelson welcomed everyone and thanked them for agreeing to participate. He said that this committee is meant to be temporary and has a very specific purpose: over the next several months, create a deliverable of a written, prioritized list of recommendations to the City Council on attainable housing strategies for Prairie Village. He explained that the City Council will then ultimately decide, what, if anything, we do to prioritize attainable housing in Prairie Village.

Mayor Mikkelson then added the first place to start is the recently-adopted Village Vision 2.0, in which he explained provided a great background for our City, goals, and principles. This document outlines where we are as a City today and where we'd generally like to be in the future. Jamie Robichaud distributed copies of Village Vision 2.0 to all committee members.

Chairs Ian Graves and Jon Birkel then went around the room and asked all of the committee members to introduce themselves and give a little bit of information on their background: Ron Nelson, Ward 2 City Council Member and attorney; Ian Graves; Ward 6 council member and software engineer; Jon Birkel: planning commissioner and Director of Residential Development for Hunt Midwest; Bonnie Limbird: Ward 3 Councilmember and interior designer; April Engstrom: Prairie Village resident and Development Associate at Overland Property Group (a housing developer); Mary Rimann: long-time Prairie Village resident and local business owner; and Jamie Robichaud: Deputy City Administrator who oversees community development and planning for the City.

Goals and Vision

Co-chairs Ian Graves and Jon Birkel then began a discussion on the goals and vision of this committee and asked to hear about personal stories and anecdotes from committee members. Discussion topics included what is Prairie Village currently missing in terms of housing; what are we trying to achieve; how do we ensure our workforce like our

teachers and police officers and local business employees can continue to afford to live in Prairie Village?

The committee discussed the challenges of the aging apartment complexes in Prairie Village, which were once affordable places to live in the community. But as they age and experience reinvestment, the rents increase and result in a less affordable option for our fixed and lower income residents.

The committee also talked about how to attract developers to the community who can invest and develop housing products that are more attainable for our residents. April Engstrom shared her experience in her profession on federal tax credits for acquisition rehab and how those work.

Co-chair Jon Birkel said he would like to see an inventory of what Prairie Village needs in terms of a diversified housing portfolio and set a target metric, such as a number of attainable units, etc. He added that if we looked at the incomes of Prairie Village jobs, that might give us an idea of a target number and provide ideas on strategies for how to achieve that target.

Bonnie Limbird added to the discussion that an important part of the housing discussion is easing the current property tax burden on our residents by prioritizing and approving more commercial investment along the major corridors in Prairie village, such as 75th Street, which would offset the residential property tax burden and, in turn, impact housing costs in Prairie Village in a positive way.

Co-Chair Ian Graves said that there is also a challenge for a lot of growing families in Prairie Village and it is that these growing families need more space, but there are a lot of people aging in place and empty nesters in larger homes. We have missing middle housing, and there's nowhere for these growing families to go and there's nowhere for empty nesters to scale down. Mr. Graves believes that the City has an inventory problem, but we need the creation of the right kind of housing to solve the missing-middle inventory problem.

Mary Rimann was asked by other committee members about her experience about where employees in her local business choose to live. She said that it is not easy for employees to live in Prairie Village; some are making \$40-60K with health insurance provided and most still cannot afford to purchase in PV. She added that it is hard enough to find employees right now and when she does find them, most are coming from KCK or other areas all outside of PV. She knows that most of the employees at Tavern in the Village don't live in Prairie Village either.

Bonnie Limbird asked what specifically are our next action items for this group. She wanted to see how certain ideas in VV2.0 and UCS toolkit overlap and identify what has already been identified as a top priority for Prairie Village.

The committee agreed that the next steps would be to develop the list of ideas from VV 2.0 and UCS toolkit into one document and do a prioritization exercise of those ideas, as well as others that are not contemplated in the documents.

The committee discussed next meetings and felt that the group needed to meet once a month and maybe as often as bi-weekly. Chairs Ian Graves and Jon Birkel said that we would work on compiling those lists and planning the prioritization exercise and would work on scheduling the next meeting in about a month.

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.