

Advisory Team Meeting #18
January 12, 2022
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Summary notes are below. A recording of this meeting is also available on the website at www.red-wing.org/1032/Policy-and-Practice-Project-Meetings

Team Members Present

Cholwe Hantuba Walker, Michael Holmes, Liz Magill, Alexis DeVries, Cory Koplin, Steve Blaine, Racheal Savage, Samantha Malcom

Team Members Absent: Yaneth Santiago Huerta, Marvin Bradford, Sara Kern

Facilitator: Michelle Leise, City of Red Wing Community Engagement Facilitator

Meeting Notes

Meeting began at 6:10 p.m.

Facilitator Michelle Leise opened the meeting by outlining the City Council's schedule of reviewing housing topics this month. She explained that on January 10th, the Council received a presentation by consultant Ali Niemi on the Plan to Increase Housing Stability and Reduce Homelessness. On January 24th, the Council will hear a presentation by Leah Hall of Three Rivers Community Action Partnership, and during the Council workshop on January 28 and 29, Council members will discuss their priorities in the housing arena for the near future.

Michelle shared that the goal for tonight's meeting is to come to a consensus on the Advisory Team's housing recommendations so one or two members of the Advisory Team can present them to the Council during the Council's January 24th meeting – prior to the Council's workshop discussion.

The team walked through the draft recommendations, below, and made their comments and suggested changes. Those changes are made on the following pages in red.

UPDATED DRAFT HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create More Affordable and Supportive Housing Units

A. Commit to working with a developers to build ~~transitional, at least one permanent supportive housing project (4 units or more) by mid-2023, with others to follow.~~

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Transitional, sSupportive housing, as defined for this document, is affordable housing combined with coordinated support services to help those struggling with maintaining permanent housing. Advisory Team members shared experiences and knowledge and made this a high priority. These are four areas of support needed:

- (a) drug and/or alcohol addiction recovery support
- (b) criminal background history support (one member mentioned NuWay as a good resource: <https://www.nuway.org/>)
- (c) mental health and behavioral health support
- (d) support for those with one or more documented physical disability support disabilities or with backgrounds that make it challenging to become a tenant (such as a prior eviction). Accessibility is necessary for those with physical limitations.

B. Commit to working with partners to create ~~at least 8 affordable housing units by the end of 2023, with more to follow.~~ Units can be either new construction or upgraded current houses and apartments. Yearly increases in units should progressively close the gap in needed housing by 5% every two years.

CE. Research and add new local incentive(s) for homeowners, landlords, and developers to build or upgrade units or houses into affordable and supportive housing. Prioritize creating incentives for revamping vacant or dilapidated homes.

DC. Help combat the stigma of affordable and supportive housing in a community.

- (a) Designate City time and/or funding to collaborate with community partners and provide a unified message to the public about the economic, social, health, and community benefits of these units. Utilize data, along with stories, to show reality versus myths about these types of housing.

ED. Make changes to City zoning rules and practices.

- (a) Write more flexibility into the City's zoning code related to the number of parking stalls necessary for units/projects. (Not all people need two parking stalls per unit.)

(b) ~~Research the pros and cons of using~~ the Red Wing median income (\$54,785) instead of the Goodhue County median income (\$66,800) when calculating Tax Increment Financing projects. ~~so rents are more affordable.~~

(c) Update the language in our current local zoning language (i.e. "half-way house" would become "supportive housing.") ~~Research and add new local incentive(s) for homeowners, landlords, and developers to build or upgrade units or houses into affordable and supportive housing.~~

F. ~~Create a Research possibilities for a plan for~~ small-home/small lot development, with amenities that include green space, transportation options, and walkability. ~~(construction to start by 2024).~~

2. Convene Community Partners to Collectively Provide More Education, Resources, and Mediation to Community Members.

A. Work with housing partners to better provide and promote educational opportunities to landlords, tenants, and potential first-time homebuyers.

Three Rivers provides many of these classes right now, but they are not promoted to or targeted to residents of Red Wing. Increasing our residents' awareness of these classes will help build knowledge and stability and prevent eviction and the risk of homelessness. Partners include Three Rivers Community Action, the HRA, [Habitat for Humanity](#), Goodhue County Health and Human Services, United Way, and others. City could provide financial support and/or promotional support.

Advisory Team identified these areas of need:

- (a) Financial literacy for new renters, landlords, and first-time homebuyers
- (b) Available programs such as the homebuyer's assistance loan program, owner-occupied rehab loans, etc.
- (c) Rights and responsibilities for renters, landlords, and homeowners
- (d) Access to housing assistance for undocumented residents with a Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN)
- (e) Mediation services and legal aid, especially for tenant-landlord conflicts
- (f) How to expunge an eviction and assistance along the way to get it accomplished
- (g) Anti-discrimination information (such as the Fair Housing Act) and how renters can utilize it and get help

- (h) Anti-discrimination laws and education for the real estate community and landlord community
- (i) Classes for young adults who want to rent. This would help them gain “points” and help give landlords a nudge to be more willing to rent to them.
- (j) Training for landlords on de-escalation

B. Collaborate with housing partners to create a centralized list of landlords and available places to rent. Host on the City’s website.

(a) List of places should also categorize properties into which landlords and properties take specific kinds of vouchers (i.e. which properties are available for Bridges vouchers, Housing Choice vouchers, etc.)

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CB. Convene partners like school district teachers and Youth Outreach staff to see how young people could learn more about renting and homeownership.

- (a) The High School’s new Adulting Class is a good start. Help find ways our housing partners can assist with additional education to our older teens and young adults.

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DC. Write a regular “City Question and Answer” series on housing topics in 2022.

- (a) Include facts on services, rules, regulations, etc. Also incorporate things for the public like “why is housing an issue?” “why do we need all types of housing?” and “why do some people have trouble getting housing?”
- (b) Share in English and Spanish through traditional and social media.

3. Decrease Discrimination in Local Housing

A. Support local partners to bring in anti-discrimination education and best practices and share with landlords and real estate agents.

This may include a small amount of funding to help those partners bring in those educational campaigns– and City staff time to promote the information. Partners can be housing agencies, such as the HRA and Goodhue County – and also partners outside the housing industry, such as the Chamber of Commerce and United Way.

B. Increase education to community members on their rights through the Fair Housing Act, the Minnesota Human Rights Act, and others. This would include staff time to promote the information.

C. Research the idea of hiring a Housing Advocate or helping fund an advocate through another objective agency, such as Goodhue County Health and Human Services.

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4. Provide More Housing Assistance Programs for Undocumented Residents and Close Language Barriers.

- A. Support the HRA in researching and then implementing or expanding a housing assistance ~~one new potential~~ program for undocumented residents in 2022.**
- B. Use City resources to help housing partners close the language gap in promoting housing programs to residents in 2022.** This includes supporting the HRA in making sure many materials are translated into Spanish.

5. Ensure Red Wing's Mobile Home Neighborhoods are the Best They Can Be.

Based on the experiences shared by team members, there is a need to prioritize looking at Red Wing's two mobile home neighborhoods and see what local government can do and should do to ensure the health of the residents who live there. More time is needed to research and create a plan focused on our mobile home parks.

- A. Reach out to mobile home residents in Red Wing** to listen to their needs and follow up with opportunities to improve things that are within local government's control.
- B. Research ways in which local government can ensure the health and safety of the mobile home structures** (inside and out) and the neighborhood structures around them (roads, parks, etc.).
- C. Ensure that local mobile home management companies offer contracts, licenses, and agreements to people in English, Spanish, and other languages as requested.**

6. Decrease Homelessness

- A. Work with partners so Red Wing provides a stable, consistent emergency shelter system.** (This includes working with partners to create an "Opportunity Center" for daytime needs – and other steps as outlined in the Plan to Increase Housing Stability and Reduce Homelessness.)
- B. Share emergency shelter information more often and in better ways** so residents know what options are available to them when they are in crisis.
- C. Work with community partners to find storage solutions for people in transition.** Having storage would help people store their belongings short-term while they are finding new housing.

After the team reviewed the housing recommendations, they chose Cholwe Hantuba Walker and Liz Magill as the Advisory Team members who will present the recommendations to the Council on January 24, 2022.

Next, the team had time to discuss their opinions on how the Advisory Team should continue (or not) in 2022.

The team agreed they should continue throughout 2022. They also felt this would be a good time to ask each member if they want to continue on the team or step down. Right now, it is unclear what the process would be for choosing new members, since the three alternates originally chosen are now members of the team.

The team discussed what topics they would still like to cover. Policing was the team's number one priority. One member suggested also talking with the Fire Department and reviewing some of those practices – and the team agreed. The team also discussed hiring practices. A couple of members talked about the difference between simply reaching out in different ways during the hiring process -- and intentionally and purposefully prioritizing diversifying one's workforce, focusing on bringing in people with different life experiences, etc. Hiring could be a third topic for the team in 2022.

The team also shared that they would like to hear from City Council on how the team's work has been viewed so far and if the work has been valued or not from the Council's perspective. The team also wishes to hear feedback from Council members on how the Council is using their recommendations. Michelle relayed that the recommendations are now in the City's Strategic Racial Equity Action Plan and they are being scheduled for implementation during the coming year(s).

Michelle reminded the team that their next meeting in February would be virtual per the Council's vote that all City meetings be virtual starting January 24. The team's February meeting will be to review what the Council said regarding the Advisory Team's housing recommendations and housing topics as a whole. February's meeting will also most likely introduce the team's next topic.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.