

MINUTES

Eugene City Council Virtual Work Session Eugene, Oregon 97401

July 22, 2020
12:00 p.m.

Councilors Present: Emily Semple, Betty Taylor, Alan Zelenka, Jennifer Yeh, Mike Clark, Greg Evans, Claire Syrett and Chris Pryor

Mayor Vinis opened the July 22, 2020, work session of the Eugene City Council.

1. **WORK SESSION: Middle Housing Code Amendments (Implementation of HB 2001)**

Metro Community Planning Manager Terri Harding and Assistant Planner Sophie McGinley provided an overview of the Middle Housing Code Amendments project, including the draft Public Involvement Plan.

Council Discussion:

- Councilor Taylor – stated she is disturbed to see this issue turned into something about race and disturbed about the City paying volunteers; said this is a bad law and the City should be working for its repeal.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated he is concerned that HB2001’s “one size fits all” approach to neighborhoods is problematic, especially in his ward, where older, affordable single-family homes will be torn down to build market-rate, non-affordable housing (including quads and such) for students; stated this law essentially does away with R-1 zoning; approved of the public involvement plan and including reimbursement for participation.
- Councilor Semple – asked clarifying questions regarding the model code and minimum standards, and the process.
- Councilor Syrett – stated this process represents the opportunity to move past the legacy of exclusion in Oregon’s code; appreciated the plan to front-load conversations so people engaged in conversation about code get a good foundation of its meaning and implications; asked about providing translation services; supports the compensation piece.
- Councilor Pryor – stated the difficulty is how to reconcile the fact that there are differences, but those differences should not be used as an excuse to keep people out; need to ensure all the types of discrimination going on don’t affect council’s discussions about housing.
- Councilor Clark – stated he appreciates the work toward increasing equity and inclusion; said that HB2001 is both dangerous and wrong, and the net result will be less affordable housing.
- Councilor Yeh – expressed approval of the engagement plan.
- Councilor Evans – stated this is not just a zoning issue, and the practices of lenders and insurance companies should also be considered; stated neighborhoods in Eugene today are more segregated by economic circumstances and the ability to pay a mortgage, maintain insurance and keep up the property; stated he would like to see the council delve into this further to consider other barriers that exist and how it can work to remove them; asked if other cities have code that deals with lending and insurance discrimination.
- Councilor Taylor – stated she agrees that affordability will disappear rather than be increased by this law; stated she finds it strange that the council is talking about preserving housing when it did nothing about short-term rentals.
- Councilor Zelenka – stated that planning and zoning are complicated and not intuitive, and knowledge of these topics is critical for people to have meaningful input.

- Councilor Clark – briefly explained mortgage lending licensing in Oregon; stated he is in favor of examining lending practices.
- Councilor Syrett – stated she feels that giving a stipend helps level the playing field in terms of who from the community can participate and helps provide opportunity for more to participate.
- Councilor Semple – stated she is not against a stipend but does not want to spend money needlessly; agreed this is not a good law and the council should be realistic about its time and energy fighting it.
- Councilor Pryor – said the chance this law will be rescinded is minimal, so the council needs to figure out the best and most thoughtful way it can be incorporated into the City’s planning process; need to start this process now to be intentional about creating a code that reflects local needs while still meeting requirements of HB2001; stated he is comfortable with compensating or reimbursing for participation.
- Councilor Evans – stated there is urgency to move this forward and a need to recognize nuances the law does not address, and barriers raised by what the law does not cover.
- Mayor Vinis – stated that the council knows missing middle housing is not going to be affordable housing, and has acted on that information; stated this is still an important step in order to retain the urban growth boundary and be able to increase the amount of housing units available; thinks the engagement plan is interesting and powerful and expressed appreciation for the work put into it.

The meeting adjourned at 1:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie Adams
Deputy City Recorder

(Recorded by Jessica Gebb)

Link to the webcast of this City Council meeting [here](#).