

Lyons Special Housing Committee

Semi-monthly report to Board of Trustees

5/18/2015

Update:

We've met 5 times to date.

1. Committee is getting process off the ground.
 - a. Hopefully we are filled out as of this meeting.
 - b. Regular meeting times and places established:
 - i. Semi-monthly business meetings 5:30-6:30 PM on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month (opposite the BOT meetings), located at Town Hall Annex.
 - ii. Weekly working meetings 8:30-10:00 PM on Thursdays, located at LVV Community House, 195 2nd Ave.
 - c. Established working groups focused on particular issues and projects.
2. Clarification of goals. While the board made it clear that we should have a goal of 100 rooftops, we'd like clarification on what our goal for affordable housing should be.
3. Working with Habitat
 - a. Valley Bank is proceeding with same plan as discussed earlier
 - i. maintaining commercial/business use of existing structure and portion of lot towards highway (a prospective tenant has been ID'ed).
 - ii. Adding affordable ownership housing along Park Street side with Habitat.
 - b. Craig Ferguson is under contract and is starting a land trust
 - c. Site plan is being worked on in advance of application for PUD with requests for variances on setbacks, parking, etc. We are still hoping there might be room for 8 units, but 6 definitely fit
 - d. We are asking the town to vacate the right of way through the middle of the building.
 - i. Craig agreed to research this and provide more information.
 - ii. It has been communicated to me that this was done, but not properly recorded
 - iii. It will take two readings, the project requests the first before by June 8th, before closing.
 - e. Cody has been working on developing a Habitat project at 3rd and Railroad
 - f. We need help on tap fees and any other fees possible
4. Request for help on tap fees

Our request for flexibility on tap fees can be summarized:

1. With a stated goal of increasing affordable housing and creating replacement housing, we are requesting that the Town contribute materially to the formation of affordable housing so that projects in Lyons can actually be affordable and successful.
2. The town currently has underutilized water, wastewater, and electricity infrastructure that was partially paid for by residences that have been abandoned (including the 42 in the 404 buyout).

3. This unused portion of our infrastructure should be earmarked for use in supporting affordable housing.
4. While we understand our utilities have funding issues of their own, we believe that the new utilities provided by this project would bring in more ratepayers and help contribute to the funds' restoration.
5. We ask the town to waive all tap fees associated with development of 8-10 Habitat for Humanity-built units, for the projects proposed at the Valley Bank property and the town-owned property at 3rd and Railroad.¹
6. While Habitat is willing to go beyond their normal threshold for land costs including taps, the maximum the Valley Bank project can reasonably support in tap fees for electricity, water, and sewer is about \$3,000/dwelling. (We don't have the details for the RR project.)
7. The Housing Committee is asking for clarity on what the town is willing to fund in terms of utility fees before June 8th in order to close on the property and move ahead on the project planning.
8. We are asking to be added to the workshop agenda on June 1st to review this proposal in more depth and answer your questions.

Similarly, the Housing Committee will be requesting town support for reductions in building permit costs and other fees associated with the new housing, to keep development costs within the Habitat guidelines.

Lyons stands to gain tremendously from getting people back into town. On the economic side of the equation, town revenues will increase from additional property taxes, sales taxes, and utility revenues associated with these 8-10 owner-occupied affordable residences.

¹ Section 13-3-90 (d) of Town of Lyons code appears to allow the town to modify connection requirements (including fees) for water connections. Section 13-4-110 (f) specifically calls out affordable housing as a possible reason for waiving or reducing wastewater connection fees.