

MINUTES

CITY OF FORT COLLINS • BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS



ECONOMIC ADVISORY BOARD

TYPE OF MEETING – REGULAR

January 19, 2022 4:00 - 6:00 pm
via Zoom

1. CALL TO ORDER

4:00pm

2. ROLL CALL

- List of Board Members Present
 - John Parks
 - Renee Walkup
 - Thierry Dossou
 - Blake Naughton
 - Denny Coleman
 - Aric Light
 - Mistene Nugent
 - Jeff Havens
 - Braulio Rojas

- List of Board Members Absent – Excused or Unexcused, if no contact with Chair has been made.

- List of Staff Members Present
 - Josh Birks
 - Molly Saylor
 - Meaghan Overton
 - Noah Beels (briefly)

3. AGENDA REVIEW

- Ultimately no changes

4. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

- N/A

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- No changes

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- N/A

7. NEW BUSINESS

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advice, and runs things behind the scenes.

- d. **Closing remarks:** We serve for the pleasure of City Council - everything we do goes as a suggestion to Council.
- e. **Housing Strategic Plan Update – Land Use Code Updates Phase I**
 - Presentation – Meaghan Overton – 10 minutes
 - Meaghan Overton – City’s Housing Manager.
 - Goal is to get everyone up to speed on Land Use Code update. Information included in packets.
 - Project involves revamping land use codes, which dictates what can be built where, and the process that it needs to go through to be built. The first phase of this work is focused on housing, and phase two will tackle industrial and commercial uses. The purpose of this project is to align the policies already set in place by various city plans (city plan, transit master plan, our climate future plan, etc.). The plan began with an audit done in 2020.
 - Quick history of Fort Collins: The first zoning code served from 1920’s to mid-1950’s. Old Town is the historic core of the city. It’s walkable, mixed use, has trees and alleys. At the end of this era, the chamber of commerce adopted a mantra: “Fort Collins Expands.”
 - The late-1950’s to the 1980’s involved growing out from the core; the city expanded outward. 27% of the city was built between 1960 and 1980. A lot of expansion was done via annexation of unincorporated parts of Larimer County. In the 1980’s and 1990’s auto-dependence became more pronounced, and a lot of work was done in construction of single, detached houses. In 1997, the code was updated, and many values from the core came back: trees, staying connected, and biking/walking opportunities. We also see a lot more multi-unit development.
 - The plan is now to accommodate the future vision. We want more mobility, more diversity in the kinds of houses we have available, and more focus on sustainability.
 - 5 guiding principles shape the current work:
 - (1) Increase overall housing capacity.
 - (2) Enable more affordability.
 - (3) Allow for more diverse housing choices.

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- (4) Make the code easier to understand.
- (5) Improve predictability of the development permit review process.
- **Discussion – 20 minutes – Board**
 - **Comment (Jeff):** A flood in Michigan town gave city an opportunity to restructure downtown. Many complaints came from residents when a reduction of 20 parking spaces was suggested. The city advertised that, when visiting a city, no one remembers how great the parking is. Supports removal of parking.
 - **Comment (Denny)** Suggests that there is always a percentage of the population who believes that if they cannot park right in front of a store whenever they want - they think there's not enough parking.
 - **Q (Denny)** His experience with affordable housing is that it's best if there's a percentage of the affordable housing is sold at market rate. Does FC have plans to provide something like that.
 - **A (Meaghan)** Inclusionary policy is not required in Fort Collins (and wasn't allowed in rental housing until last year). They continue to look at inclusionary policy as a potential option, but it would need to be carefully designed to work with whatever densities are allowed in code. Expect more conversation about this after code changes.
 - **Q (Denny)** In SL, historic preservation was important. What's the feeling on historic districts, particularly in old town?
 - **A (Meaghan)** There are a few historic districts in FC (primarily in Old Town area), and Housing works closely with historic preservation staff to balance affordability and historic preservation concerns. Example: use of an existing house is more sustainable than building a new one, but the existing houses wouldn't be as energy efficient.
 - **Q (Jeff)** Asks if there any conversation regarding incentivizing individual property owners (of small apartment complexes or of individual houses) to provide affordable housing.
 - **A (Meaghan)** That's a subject that falls in the Housing Plan, though not the Land Use Code project. The Housing Plan is on a much slower timeline and looks at occupancy, rental licensing, and small landlord incentives. Most of the housing

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that will be available in FC has already been built since there is not enough capacity to build enough to match what already exists. Work needs to be done with what we have and can't necessarily "build our way out of it."

- **Q (John)** FC, and the rest of the country, have a history of redlining and exclusionary practices. Is the commitment to equity tied into some of what you guys are looking at?
 - **A (Meaghan)** The housing plan delves into the history beyond what was mentioned today (e.g., a plan that only allowed certain races or incomes to buy housing). There was also an equity and opportunity assessment that looked at displacement, gentrification, and access to different kinds of opportunity in the community geographically. This allows identification of the most vulnerable communities are located, and where neighborhood change and gentrification are occurring.
- **Q (John)** The City has recently adopted higher efficiency code and wonders whether that's tied in with the Land Use Code, the sustainability, and the cost aspects of new builds.
 - **A (Meaghan)** The city is also updating the building code on February 15th. Energy and sustainability compliance will be dealt with through the building code, not the Land Use Code.
- **Q (Renee)** Since the pandemic, have the numbers of people who are moving in adjust – is there new data on that. And second, has the funding changed for affordable housing?
 - **A (Meaghan)** A lot of the trends that existed before the pandemic are pretty similar to current trends. There is a rapidly growing older population, smaller family sizes, and people doubling up on housing. The city invests 1.5 – 3 million dollars in affordable housing; based on production goals, the required amount is closer to 10-11.5 million dollars per year. There are recovery funds that are beginning to be allocated to projects across the city, so she expects housing to be one of the top priorities. Money from the City is focused towards the lowest-income groups. The city is also getting 2.6 million towards housing from ARPA.
- **Q (Renee)** Developers said that they're not getting incentives to build affordable housing. Have any adjustments been made to that?

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- **A (Noah Beals – Development Review Manager for the City)**
We are only one piece of the puzzle, and we are teeing up that conversation for the future, but we're not incorporating it in our current work.
- **A (Meaghan)** We also have credits that are only for those hard-to-develop units (30% median income or below). It's a flat rate that developers can apply to their fees, but it's a limited program because of funding. With more funding, more money could be applied there. Some additional funding went there in the first round of ARPA.
 - **Meaghan:** Draft is expected to come out around April. She and Noah would love to come back and share the details of the draft, then.

f. Plastic Bag Update

- **Presentation – Molly Saylor – 10 minutes**
 - Working on plastic pollution is a city council priority and is in our city's strategic plan. The program is funded by bag fee revenue of about \$120k in 2022. This strategy also supports an Our Climate Future alignment as a move towards zero waste.
 - In developing Our Climate Future, we learned that more renewing, recycling, and composting was one of the big priorities of our BIPOC community in FC. So, we know that this is an important place to be working, especially working within equity.
 - This work specifically is centering community and equity. It centers community by making the plastic bag fee revenue available for things that the community might want to lead or co-lead with our city. We are also centering equity by partnering with historically underrepresented groups including people living with a disability.
 - The Bag Ordinance was passed by City Council in February 2021 and was affirmed by voters in April 2021. It will become effective on May 1, 2022, and ban plastic bags at large grocers (over 10k square feet). Paper bags will then be available for purchase for 12 cents. Half of the 12-cent fee will go to the grocers, and the other half will go to the city. The fee that goes to the city will go to waste reduction measures. Note that participants of federal, state, and local income-qualified programs will be exempt from this fee if they can present a current benefit card.
 - Since Council adoption and voter approval, we've seen: