

# WFH Steering Committee Minutes

*July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 4:00pm*

**Meeting Purpose:** Monthly workforce housing steering committee meeting to discuss and take action on Committee mission and goals.

**Attendees:** Russ Born, Jo Ann Eder, Kim Haman, Sandy Conlee, Chris Lorash, Eric Allen (RLACF VISTA), Robin Adams (RLACF staff), Tesla Palmatier (RLACF staff), James Caniglia, Tim Weamer

**Guests:** Tim Weamer, James Caniglia

## **Action Items:**

1. Americorps Housing VISTA Funding. No action was required, the \$5,000 for the VISTA has been covered by an anonymous donor. There is currently \$131,892.07 in the Workforce Housing Fund (Robin misspoke in the meeting and said \$119k).

## **TIF District Presentation (*James Caniglia*)**

2. The City of Red Lodge is looking into creating an "Urban Renewal District" to pay for impact fees, water and sewer connection lines, curbs / gutters / sidewalks outside future projects to mitigate costs of development in this district.
  - a. Incentivizing workforce housing, larger residential buildings, and denser development are a priority to receive TIF funding in the future. Possible projects are limited to what is allowed with zoning.
3. The Urban Renewal District plan can be updated over the years. There are not many public streets in this area (see attached slides with maps). It is intentionally smaller in size so as not to freeze too many mills and keep enough general fund revenue. The Wildlife Sanctuary and Coal Miner's Park are included.
4. The City will not force property owners to do anything, but will incentivize beautification and the type of development identified as goals in the zoning and growth policy, including workforce housing.
5. The first step is passing a resolution declaring blight. The City Council passed this resolution last week (see attached Council Packet). Next step is to go to Planning Board

to confirm Urban Renewal Plan meets objective of Growth Policy. In November, the City must pass an Urban Renewal Ordinance. February 1 all documentation must be submitted to State Chamber of Commerce. There are over 70 Urban Renewal Districts in state of Montana.

6. The first project to create TIF revenue would likely be the one proposed by Sam's Tap Room. Within a year or two there will likely be a pot of money to fund projects, James is hoping for at least \$20,000 in the next two years.
7. Kim expressed concern that there aren't many vacant lots within the district where new projects could take place. James pointed out the gravel pit, peacannery, sam's, the lot north of sam's, the lot north of the fire station....
8. Sandy asks: how much revenue might be collected from this district in first 2 years?
  - a. James says he doesn't know. Sam's alone may be another \$10-\$20k. James' hope within 2 years is at least \$20k, but that's completely dependent on the type of development. The first project won't benefit from any increment tax revenue.
  - b. The City would prefer to incentivize denser development, especially multi-story apartments, in that district since it's walkable to downtown.
  - c. Sandy asks why not the south end of town with the old hospital. James says that it would need to be a much larger district to include all the potential rehab projects in the south end. The north end is smaller and includes the school to potentially do a project for them in the future. Chris asks does TIF district have to be contiguous? James says yes.
  - d. Broadway Ave is where the water/sewer capacity is to handle large projects
  - e. Kim asks how can WFH group help facilitate this conversation
    - i. We could provide housing information: needs, future tenants, a survey about what people want to see, what they're willing to live in, etc...
    - ii. Brainstorm successful components of a housing district
  - f. The City is aiming to have an Urban Renewal Plan draft done by end of next month
    - i. Robin will send out a doodle poll for an extra meeting to review this

### **Fun Run update (*Chris Lorash*)**

9. Chris will be at our booth and the foundation booth. Will be done by 11, setting up at 7:30 or 8. Could use one or two extra volunteers, Robin can attend the booth if needed.
10. Do we want materials? Print outs, current project, August 18<sup>th</sup> dedication ceremony
  - a. Robin will reach out to homeowners to see if they'd like to participate
  - b. Chris will invite Jacob Kuntz to participate
  - c. Materials to include:
    - i. Sign-up sheet for newsletter, Owner-Built Housing program
    - ii. Easel with poster and photo of homes and program and solar campaign
    - iii. Beartooth Electric may want to have a poster for the spec house, Robin will send the contact info for Kaaren Robbins

### **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Planning Grant and ARPA Grant**

11. RLACF submitted an application with the City of Red Lodge for the CDBG Planning Grant for a Preliminary Architectural Report (PAR) for workforce housing development within the City. We also submitted a similar ARPA grant to Carbon County for a PAR that could cover surrounding areas of Red Lodge as well as Joliet and Bridger.

### **Status of Owner-Built Housing Program**

12. Volunteers needed
  - a. Looking at first few weeks of September for volunteers, Eric proposed a group volunteer day for Workforce Housing Committee members.
  - b. Jo Ann has a lot of volunteers that she knows are interested, she'll be in touch with Eric
13. Dedication Ceremony August 18<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm – 7pm

### **Sub-Committee Reports**

14. Long-term Rental meeting: Kim says it's a very fluid meeting at this point, still new and defining the concrete direction to move in for their first project.
15. The ADU Committee could use additional members

## **Other news/announcements**

16. Pat Thomson is delivering a presentation on LIHTC at RLACF next Wednesday, 7/28 at 3pm. This will be a more technical workshop to understand the ins and outs of financing affordable housing development. All WFH Committee members and anyone interested in workforce housing development are welcome to attend.
17. Eric Allen, our new VISTA member, would like to meet with each of the committee members over breakfast, lunch, or coffee. Please contact him at [eric@rlacf.org](mailto:eric@rlacf.org) or (503) 512-9659 to set those up.