

Minutes - Draft

PECS-Planning, Economic Development & Community Services Committee

Monday, October 3, 2022

10:00 AM

Special Called Meeting

This meeting will be conducted via teleconference (Zoom). Simultaneous public access to the meeting will be available

- (1) via live stream on DCTV s webpage,*
- (2) on DCTVChannel23.TV*

Meeting Started At: 10:01AM

Attendees: Commissioners Johnson, Davis Johnson, Rader, Terry, Cochran-Johnson

I. DISCUSSION

HOUSING:

-presentation provided by Central Staff on Housing challenges and opportunities in DeKalb

The Office of Honorable Representative Hank Johnson, U.S. Congressional District 4

-information from Xeron Pledger, Director of External Affairs
-Pres. Biden has come up with a program for housing
-long term solutions are needed

The Office of Honorable U.S. Senator John Ossoff

-information provided by Laura Pantoja, Constituent Services Representative

The Honorable Representative Karen Bennett, GA House District 94

-information provided by Representative Bennett
-discussion of resources for tenants and landlords
-regarding Georgia Dept of Community affairs - I'll be looking to see how I can work to support our DeKalb Commissioners

Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG): Legislative Director Clint Mueller

-presentation from Clint Mueller - Director of Legislative Affairs

--House Study Committee created from HR 1149 - Rep. Dale Washburn is chair. They will be reviewing housing affordability next session on October 12th

-NACo is having a housing study committee

-issues in Georgia:

1) Homebuilders will try to blame counties and cities for creating regulations adding to the costs of housing. There may be preemptions from the business communities, such as design standards (garages facing certain directions, etc.). Should local governments be able to implement design standards, and if so to what extent?

2) building permits and inspections

3) HB 1405: makes it harder to downside single-family zoning and accessory dwelling units

4) HB 876: prohibiting use of construction materials preemptions

5) Cobb just passed an ordinance regulating short term rentals

6) Land Banks

7) Rental Caps discussed nationally. We don't have current ability to enforce per GA law, for privately owned rental property. In order to have discussions at the local level that would have to be repealed first

8) foreclosure registries - HB 110 banned property registries

9) State credits: How are properties being valued by the tax assessors? They are saying DeKalb is valuing them higher than others and making it cost-prohibitive

10) Impact fees: DeKalb may not have them but others may; discussion at state level

11) didn't pass was introduced last year; HB 1093 build to rent communities, where the homes are built with the intent on renting out; investment companies buy them and rent them out. Atlanta has more activity going on here than anywhere else regarding investor owned rental neighborhoods; Cherokee has changed their zoning ordinances to make developers disclose what type of property this will be

12) look at rental vs. owner occupied

13) padsplit is taking single family residential homes and renting out individual bedrooms; a lot of that in Atlanta

-Question MDJ: are you saying that developers are coming into local communities and building subdivisions exclusively for rent? There's no buy to own single family homes?

C Mueller: yes that's correct; additional information provided by Director Mueller

-Question MDJ: that type of practice can be regulated by each individual county?

C Mueller: yes through zoning laws those can be regulated, but you have to change local zoning ordinances to do that. But the state had a bill that didn't pass to preempt that, but it could come up again

-Question MDJ: could it be prohibited altogether?

C Mueller: yes I think you could; but I'm sure that could be litigated in court. It's kind of like short term rentals - it could be banned but I haven't seen any legislation on it

-JR: identify mechanism used in the past and applicable here, regarding homestead exemption. That mechanism is in place across the state; giving owners a bigger advantage as it comes to their tax bill. City of Atlanta has had local legislation to allow for a referendum to increase their homestead exemption. That benefits those at the lower end of the price spectrum. I would like to see what that impact on our tax bill would be and if that opportunity is there

-JR: the idea of inclusionary zoning - if we were to adopt and impose an inclusionary zoning mandate, then the costs associated would be felt in land values. The developer would compute their construction costs, and the one variable that typically is not as current market condition-directed is the cost of land, which often has resided with the owner for some time, and the profits to be considered from those values are considerable. A developer could pay less for a piece of property if they had a inclusionary zoning responsibility that could reduce their income from the property. We would incorporate that affordable housing aspect that a developer would have to consider in doing so. As a result we would see more affordable housing and the prices to go with that

-JR: special purpose authorities are important regarding housing affordability, to focus on preserving housing that is affordable in the County. We need to develop a strategy with our housing authorities; we have to develop a joint strategy to approach the issue to get into ownership and management of existing housing, and work on investing in substandard and multifamily housing so that it can be cleaned or well maintained. Then it could stay in the portfolio of loans and maintain their existing stock

-JR: preservation, giving advantages to lower priced occupied homes, and making prices available and able to maintain

TT: regarding investor-owned homes in DeKalb, we need tools to allow local investors to maximize the value of their property. Such as accessory dwelling units; ANDP has been looking at a project in Atlanta and working with seniors. By relaxing ADU rules in DeKalb, that could allow others to increase generational wealth

-TT: regarding allowing density, a law was passed where a sign has to be put up every 500 feet for signs to advertise zoning changes. Imagine the barrier we would look at if we wanted to do a zoning rewrite. In essence that is a preemption

-TT: housing has to be a key in job centers

-TT: if we solely relied on what the commissioners know and our journey, it may take us longer to reach consensus. But we spend so much time on other things. We should have a chief housing officer; I would hope that if the CEO does not fund a position, the Board of Commissioners develop a housing policy staff position.

Meeting Ended At: 11:35AM

Barbara H. Sanders-Norwood CCC, CMC