

1. ROLL CALL

The Housing Commission meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m. with the following members present: Angie Davenport, Ryan Patton, Lisa Gleason, Lucas Soltow, Nathan DeBerry, Aubrey Patterson, Scott Cooley, Jeff Thomson, Dan Rich and Anthony Finlay. Kelly Anne Lanham was absent. Adam Stewart, Neighborhood Development Coordinator; and Steve Dechant, Mayor, were also present. Staff present were Jim Seitnater, Director of Planning and Development; Amy Allison, Senior Planner; Trent Maxwell, Building Official; and Charlene Mosier, Planning Technician.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the July 25, 2018 meeting were approved on a motion by Deberry, seconded by Davenport, passed unanimously.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. **R-6 Infill**

Allison gave an update that the R-6 Residential Infill District was approved with no changes. On August 28 the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing and the City Council will consider the case on September 18. Soltow and Finlay would like the R-6 District information placed online and on the Board of Realtors website.

4. WRITTEN REPORTS

- a. **Brush Up Hutch**
- b. **Down Payment Match Incentive**
- c. **Zero-Interest Home Repair Loan**
- d. **Housing and Rental Registration Report**

The reports for the above-listed items were included in the agenda packet.

5. ORAL COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

a. **Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative**

Gleason said the SW Bricktown Park is being well utilized. Lighting and trails are also being planned.

Cooley arrived.

Adam Stewart reported that National Night Out was held on August 7 in three neighborhoods. He estimated 400 people attended the three neighborhood events. Farmington Park Neighborhood voted on their street topper logo and said they are ready to plan another neighborhood event this fall. Patterson commented the neighborhoods are catching on and residents in the Countryside West area have been asking about it.

b. Hutchinson Land Bank Update

Seitnater mentioned the Land Bank also had an impact in the SW Bricktown Park effort by donating the lot. There is an opening on the Land Bank Board of Trustees because one member's term will end in September.

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. Rental Registration and Inspection Program Review

Finlay said a committee was formed to study how to move forward with RRIP program. He asked Allison to summarize the staff report for the group for background information. Allison gave an overview of the report. The Committee is recommending the City discontinue the Rental Registration and Inspection Program and improve the IPMC code enforcement process. The Committee would like to explore the following options:

1. Remove the Complaint-Only Policy from all IPMC code enforcement
2. Hire temporary staff during tall grass and weeds season
3. Increase the fines attached to offenses for non-compliance
4. Educate municipal court judges about the housing issues in Hutchinson and encourage imposition of fines rather than granting extensions and reducing fines OR
5. Investigate an alternative court for just code enforcement violations
6. Publicize violations on website

Allison noted the estimated expenses chart for the RRIP does not include the Planning Department staff time for posting payments, assisting customers at the counter or handling phone calls.

Seitnater explained the Environmental Court is an option to explore and is a separate court for violations which prevents bogging down municipal court. The example in the agenda packet is from Clinton, Mississippi.

Finlay asked each commissioner to briefly explain their thoughts and vote for the item.

Cooley said he believes the program should be discontinued due to the findings of the report.

Gleason said she would like to continue the RRIP through 2019 with modifications and she does not want to abandon all the work we have done to get to this point.

Patterson said she would also like to continue the program and modify it rather than making it seem like the commission is giving up on this issue while there are still inadequate homes and rentals.

Patton, Davenport, and Deberry would also like to see the program continue with modifications.

Soltow said he believes the program has not been effective but he is unsure of the best way to improve it.

Maxwell said we have till the end of 2019 to complete rental inspections. Currently, money and the inspector are in place to complete the inspections. We are on the third inspector in the position. The plan would be to hire a part time person next year to handle tall grass complaints so the inspector can dedicate the majority of time to inspect rentals. Staff also spends considerable time on court cases, especially when those cases are given extensions. Discussion ensued.

Patterson said we have been working on analyzing housing stock for years. Housing has been a priority for a long time and pulling out of this program would be a huge loss.

Soltow said ending the program does not end our concerns for housing; however, this program does not seem to be effective. Finlay said the housing stock took decades to get to this point and two years cannot fix that. Gleason said there needs to be a long-term program that will be effective in improving living conditions for our community.

Patton said the best way to inspect the rentals is when they are empty. He said possibly the program can continue without charging the registration fee this year.

Patterson asked if violations can be fixed and enforced. She likes the idea of removing the complaint only basis. Hiring temporary staff would also help. Fines imposed by the court would be something to advocate to make the program more effective.

Cooley said if there is no interior inspection, he does not see the need for the yearly fee. The program was originally set up to pay for an inspector to conduct interior inspections.

Motion by Cooley, seconded by Soltow to recommend discontinuing the RRIP program, did not pass with a majority vote.

Motion by Patton, seconded by Cooley to recommend to the City Council to continue conducting exterior inspections on all rental units that have paid and remain uninspected and discontinue the registration for 2019 did not pass with a majority and two members abstained.

Motion by Patterson to recommend to the City Council to continue the Rental Registration and Inspection Program for 2019 passed with a majority vote.

Motion by Patterson, seconded by Deberry to recommend to the City Council to authorize the Housing Commission to explore alternative code enforcement methods for the city with a request for a study session at a future meeting, passed with a majority vote.

Dechant said the Housing Commission and Staff have worked hard on housing issues and the rental program and this discussion has brought up a lot of good points. This is all information that City Council needs to be aware of when they consider this item.

Soltow made a motion to remove the complaint only policy from IPMC, seconded by Cooley, passed unanimously.

b. Housing Analysis Tool Questionnaire

Allison said a Housing Analysis Tool (HAT) is needed for our application for CDBG funds. A survey of seven questions was included in the agenda packet. She asked if the questions covered the main issues or if anything was missing. The survey will be given to stakeholders from all avenues of housing similar to questions asked in the past and to use for comparison. Stakeholders will include nonprofits, Chamber of Commerce, realtors, five top employers, Landlords Association, etc.

Motion by Deberry, seconded by Soltow to approve the seven Housing Analysis questions, passed unanimously.

c. Brush Up Hutch Program Amendments

Allison said administrative updates to the Brush Up Hutch Program include the applicant submitting photos of all sides of their house and if the applicant is requesting assistance to paint their home, authorizing the volunteer coordinator to do a pre-paint check to determine if repairs need to be made prior to painting. To better market the program, Staff would place the application online and promote the program in feature neighborhoods using door hangers.

Motion by Gleason, seconded by Soltow to approve the administrative updates, passed unanimously.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. Central Kansas Landlord Association Request Update

Finlay said he and Patterson met with The Hutchinson News regarding the housing website. This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

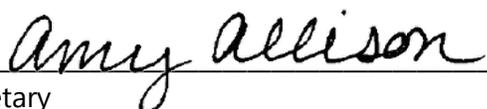
8. OTHER

- a. The next regularly scheduled Housing Commission meeting is Wednesday, September 26, 2018, at 4:00 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT – The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Charlene Mosier, Planning Technician

Approved this 26th day of September, 2018.


Secretary