



City of Sebastopol
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APPROVED MINUTES

PLANNING COMMISSION
CITY OF SEBASTOPOL
MINUTES OF July 26, 2022

PLANNING COMMISSION:

The notice of the meeting was posted on July 21, 2022.

1. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Oetinger called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. Director Svanstrom read a procedural statement.

2. ROLL CALL: **Present:** Chair Oetinger, Vice Chair Fernandez, and Commissioners Burnes, Fritz, and Kelley
 Absent: None
 Staff: Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

3. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA: None.

4. STATEMENTS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: None.

5. REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

A. DRAFT HOUSING ELEMENT PRESENTATION – A presentation and discussion on the Draft Housing Element for the City of Sebastopol. The Public Review Draft public comment period will be open July 21 until August 22, 2022.

Director Svanstrom and consultants Jane Riley and Elliott Pickett of 4LEAF presented the staff report.

Chair Fritz asked for Planning Commission questions of staff.

Linda Kelley, Commissioner

On page 32 of the actual report, Item C-2, Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, says, "Inclusionary Housing Ordinance provides flexibility. We have received good feedback, and now the program is completed and removed." Explain to me what that means that the program is completed and removed. It doesn't mean the ordinance is removed, I imagine.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Correct, it means we're removing it from our next Housing Element, because it's done and checked off, and that is part of that section of the Housing Element where you have to

report on your prior Housing Element and how you've done in terms of the programs, if they're successful, if they're completed; and if they're not successful, what you would need, or if it's just not feasible. It's similar to what we report to HCD on an annual basis where we have to report on these housing policy programs as well.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

On Table 8, Progress in Achieving 2015 Quantified Objectives by Income Group, on page 27 of the report, or page 34 of the PDF, I have a question about the quantified objectives. Can someone explain what that is, because I wasn't quite following what that was tracking.

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

Table 8 reports on how the City did in meeting last cycle's quantified objectives. Section 1 is reporting out how well you did last time, and then there is a new section of quantified objectives, and it's simply quantification of what you plan to do. It has to be at least as great as the RHNA, but it can be more, and it can have non-unit housing types. It's really an expression of what the City wants to achieve quantified in the next Housing Element cycle.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

I think that makes sense. My other question starts with Figure 21, which is page 89 of the report, or 96 of the PDF. This is Housing Sites and Percent Nonwhite Population. I'm a little puzzled as to Meadowlark Field, which is the blue in the very northeast corner of the site, having 21%-40% of nonwhite population, because I don't believe there's anyone living there. And the site across Highway 12 from there is 41%-60% nonwhite population in what is also, I believe, open space. And the next few tables also have similar puzzling demographics for those empty lots.

Elliott Pickett, 4LEAF

These tables are based on, in some cases census tract data, and in some cases census block data. Either way, they do not conform to City boundaries, so what we have shown here is where that aligns with City boundaries. For instance, that one that Kari has her mouse on right now, that tract extends far beyond the City boundaries, and so that is reflecting the percentage that's population with a disability within that entire tract, and this really highlights the importance of getting the local knowledge in there, and if it didn't make sense to you reading it, it was not explained well enough.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

It's a good point, because those two, because the Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve is right there, there is nothing other than open space and industrial uses; there's no housing there.

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

The gas station.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes, the gas station, the open space, the Laguna, and the park; and similar this is Tomodachi Park. The Park Village mobile home complex is on the west side of the Laguna, so if this is correct, both of those are nonresidential.

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

We don't blank them out, but we need to talk about the fact that this census tract extends far beyond the City boundaries, and so what you're seeing within the City is a misrepresentation, and we need to add that local knowledge to this discussion.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes, and that's helpful, because they're different colors than what the main body of the City is, and so you look at it and ask what's the explanation for it. That's a really good point, Commissioner Fritz.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

Yes, that explanation makes sense, but just looking at this and thinking no one is living there, it's a little confusing, so that would be helpful. Another general question: Is any market rate development assumed to be all above moderate in terms of income levels, or is there any way for a market rate development to qualify for moderate, for example? There may be some market rate developments that do have what would be considered moderate units, but in terms of how they get calculated for the Housing Element, is any market rate assumed to be only applicable for above moderate?

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

Generally, yes, with the exception of the study that was done for accessory dwelling units, so we can distribute it across that continuum, and the reason that we don't assume when a market rate multi-family unit may in fact rent for moderate is unless we know and can say this is what the projected rent is going to be, or this is the projected sale price, we can't count it with HCD.

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

If you go to page 20 on the report, looking at that graph it's showing 29.4% for Seasonal Recreation Occasional Use. How is that defined and why is it such a large percentage?

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

Seasonal Recreation Occasional Use means pretty much exactly what you would think it is. These are second homes, or potentially they could be vacation rentals if the City was allowing vacation rentals, and they could also be homes that are used only occasionally. It could be a lot of different things. These are not ones that are undergoing a renovation so that they can be rented or sold, these are ones that are specifically seasonal, recreational, or occasional. It's a census definition, and Elliott will pull it up for you. When you're looking at a county, like you see Sonoma County, the dark blue, that's their percentage of their vacant units that are in that category. It's much more common in an unincorporated county to have seasonal and recreational dwellings, the fishing huts, the camper hunting huts, and that kind of stuff. It's much less common to see them in the cities, so when you see that 30% of your vacant units are being held for this reason in the City, it makes you want to stop and see what's going on.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

The important thing to look at, because it does look weird, is the total number of vacant units. In the County it's 18,000 vacant units of some sort, and we only have 143. I know we have 18 licensed non-hosted vacation rentals, so those would be under that blue. But yes, people who have bought a home because they're planning on retiring up here and they're coming up for only weekends at this point, I know we have a number of those; I believe those would also be in that dark blue category, and that would be the occasional use. I don't think we have any seasons like Tahoe does.

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

I'm just wondering how you get that data of people having second homes and not occupying them or being vacant? It sounds like it would be difficult non-concrete data to get, so I'm wondering where is the source?

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

This is census data, but you bring up a really good point about something that a lot of communities are struggling with right now: how valid is that data and does every situation fit into those census categories neatly and completely? Are there better ways of doing it? Can we look at utility bills? Some communities do that. What are the other ways that we can see what occupancy these residences actually have? There's another category called the Other Vacant, and overseas investors can hold a lot of those and they're never used as a home at all. You can see that that's a very small category in Sebastopol compared to the County and the Bay Area as a whole, so Sebastopol has got good control over that, but this is still an issue that's growing larger, so it's something that we need to keep everyone aware of.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Vice Chair Fernandez, when I do the math, 30% of 143 units are 43 units, and so take out the 20 vacation rentals that we know are out there and you end up with 22 units that are maybe the second homes, and I believe that number to be accurate.

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

Yes, 30% sounds better. I know there's a lot of data on the makeup and census demographics of our community. For elder citizens there are a lot of structures or housing that they wouldn't be able to live in, say, if it was multi-story, or is that taken into consideration for that age group, or how is that addressed? I know for disabilities you'd want to look at wide doors and what's available; I'm using that as an example. I'm sure it's probably here in this data somewhere, but the thought that we have all this housing, but maybe only a certain number would apply to retirement or families and so forth.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Jane, correct me if I'm wrong. Does special needs housing include senior housing?

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

Yes, senior are a special needs group; as are persons with disabilities, and seniors tend to have more disabilities and multiple disabilities. The older you are the more likely you are to have disabilities, so we do have correlations between what kind of housing we have, and we have correlations between what the features are of our disabled population, but we don't have that direct match of are our disabled citizens living in housing that is inappropriate for them because it's three stories or whatever? That kind of data is too personal to be shared on that kind of a micro-level, but we can see it happening. We know we have an aging housing stock, we know we have an aging population, and so we have to get serious about things like universal design and making units accessible.

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

I know some of the strategies for increasing housing stock are ADUs. What about as far as conversion? Would that include where a conversion like a garage is, or dividing up bigger homes or creating those? Where is that counted, or how is that looked at?

Elliott Pickett, 4LEAF

Those are included within the discussion of ADUs as garage conversions and other converted structures. While we're discussing needs I would like to point out that while the full technical background report is a lot to go through, one part I'll call everybody's attention to is the section on housing needs. This is within that long PDF; it starts on PDF page 64, or Technical Background Report page 2, since that goes with all the other appendices. At some point on page 5 we have the analysis on seniors and elderly households, so it talks about the existing population and identifies needs and the strategies proposed to address those

needs. That would be a great place also if you have a population that you are especially looking to make sure their needs are addressed. Look at the existing analysis on here's what we're proposing, and in your public feedback say this doesn't look like enough, or this looks like plenty, or consider these; that's a very good place to focus your time.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

The policies related to that group are actually included in that technical report, so you can go through it that way too.

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

There's a question related to plexes, dividing larger units up into individual. Do you recall the policies and programs offhand, Kari?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I do not, but I would say with the SB 9 regulations, which would allow a duplex from a single-family home, that would be one of the policies looking at that. We did institute a different variety of zoning districts in our last Housing Element, some of which includes duplexes in what used to be single-family homes, so there is some additional zoning stuff, and I believe that's the one with the R-5 zoning where we're potentially looking at either the cottage home development, which Cotati has adopted, and/or looking at potentially additional rezoning properties R-5, which is the smaller lot, but also includes allowing plexes.

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

Could you go back to that map showing the available areas, the sites map? If I've got this right, in theory these formulas and how many houses are allocated is based on the area and what is developable in the area, and then they come up with some formula. Is that essentially in simple terms how this is all arrived at?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

In simple terms Elliott and 4LEAF looked at it, and I don't know what the metric for a normal site is, what percentage of the allowed density you're looking at for them.

Elliott Pickett, 4LEAF

This full analysis is within Section 3, which is around page 70-ish of the Housing Element report itself, but that contains mostly a site-by-site analysis of the sites that don't already have projects proposed on them. We looked at past development of market rate and affordable developments and we came up with this number of 85% of maximum density for the market rate developments and around 94% of maximum density for projects with affordable units on them, and we looked at sites that have, say, there was one site with a creek setback, so we took that out of the acreage. So, yes, the formula is based on past development trends and all those numbers are here, but each site and each developer might have different ideas of what to do with things, so they won't be exact numbers, but that's what they're derived from.

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

I'm looking at the site that's on Valentine Avenue, and in the beginning when they're describing this whole process religion is included in there as to taking it all into consideration. How is this parcel that is owned by the church treated and is it considered vacant?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

This is actually not in our site analysis. I believe it may be because it was in the last and it did not get developed, and so you can't reuse it. It doesn't mean that the church couldn't come forward and develop it. Just to be clear, this isn't a map of the only places housing can go, but I think because it was already included in the past and it wasn't developed it isn't in our site analysis, and I think the same thing happened with the Robinson Road site at the church; I don't believe that's included, because that was also included in the last round and they've chosen to do some garden and playground areas on their site, not housing, and so those sites have been removed. Not all the sites you saw last time will be in this time.

Kathy Oetinger, Chair

I was concerned about the vacation rental housing, and I looked at the numbers and realized that they weren't as great as they looked on that chart.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

That bar graph makes it look like we have a lot. I just calculated Sonoma County's seasonal and vacation and it's 8,600, so by comparison, it's like our column should be really, really small and the other ones should be really fat.

Kathy Oetinger, Chair

Right, which is something that I noticed throughout the entire report, which I love reading. It's so interesting to try to wrap your mind around the topic, the level of affordability and the location, but because our town is so small it's all so granular and it's understandable, which is interesting if you're talking about tens of thousands. I don't know how people can wrap their minds around it, but it's really nice to be working with this small town. The parcels that were taken out because we had used them before, could there be a time when they could be brought back in? Is there a time frame for that, or do they just disappear completely?

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

We can reuse them, but there are hoops that we have to jump through to reuse them. They're assumed by HCD to not be suitable, so if we could demonstrate developer interest, that the church was coming in saying we want to do 50 units of affordable housing here, if we could demonstrate that we could certainly put the site back in, but HCD is saying you've been saying it's appropriate for development for the last 16 years but there is nothing on it, so it's out unless you can demonstrate to us that it's good.

Kathy Oetinger, Chair

I can understand that, but it does seem very strange to consider annexing and extending infrastructure and planning to do that when you do have these other lots in town, but then it reduces the instinct to develop those sites. It's a little bit of a conundrum in my mind.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

It's interesting, because there are certainly sites that we added because people were talking about them. You all probably remember from the Benedetti car wash how the owner of the site next door had an interest in developing the very large parking lot in the back, and so we added that to it, saying well if he's interested in it let's try to encourage that and let's include it in the inventory. There are a few sites that are on here for the same reason. The site that City Ventures did a preliminary review of is on here and we have been talking with them again. There is a vacant site that wraps around the Murphy Healdsburg construction project on the corner, and we just had a pre-application staff-level meeting with the potential applicant there. So all of those sites get added because they are either considered

to be in the pipeline now, or they really have potential and people are looking at them seriously, and certainly some of those sites, like the church sites, are removed. There is a site south of Big O Tires that I feel should be on the list, that it is on our current list, and maybe that's one that makes sense to reuse. Jane, I can probably talk to you about that one.

Kathy Oetinger, Chair

Was that the site that had some toxics on it before?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

It had a gas station, but I believe that has a site closure letter for any of the contaminants. A developer contacted me recently about this one and another site, so there are potential sites that aren't on this list that might be developed as well. Similarly, we added the AmeriGas site that is now vacant and that building has been demolished, but because St. Vincent de Paul bought that and they are interested in developing housing there, that one was added as well.

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

As Kari mentioned earlier, this doesn't mean these are the sites where housing can go, because housing can go almost anywhere in the City. This is just a demonstration to HCD that we have sites with appropriate zoning to accommodate the RHNA that we expect. The other thing is we have a program for kind of a B-list, an administrative backup list that we can continue every annual planning report, which we do every April. Every annual planning report we can shift around sites. If sites look like they're going to develop, then we can put them on this sites inventory list, so for the first time that sites inventory is going to be truly dynamic, and it has to be what's truly available and ready for development throughout the eight-year Housing Element period. That's a lot different than what it's been in the past when you made a list and you walked away and as times changed and sites developed nobody changed the list. So this is kind of a snapshot in time, and two years from now it could be different.

Chair Oetinger asked for further Commission questions to staff and the consultants. Seeing none, Chair Oetinger opened public comment.

Calum Weeks, Generation Housing

The one thing I wanted to call attention to, and this might be semantics, but under Missing Middle Housing on PDF page 59 it says that, "The City will increase opportunities for small lot, single-family homes such as tiny homes and cottage court housing developments." Yes, cottage court housing developments, if you go to missingmiddlehousing.com, are traditionally part of that missing middle housing stock that is more often not proposed, but usually tiny homes are between 100-400 square feet, and if that's Huntley Square, well Huntley Square is around 500 square feet. What I'm getting at is I think the language there needs to be expanded or better articulated in terms of what you're discussing, because I don't know if a tiny home would necessarily count as that missing middle housing; it's really more about the plex time housing that we've been discussing: duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and cottage court housing. Then in terms of actually expanding the portfolio or the zoning opportunities in terms of the actual missing middle housing itself, are we talking about converting 5% of the single-family zoned parcels to R-5 designation, 10%? Maybe that's a little bit granular right now and maybe that's a conversation for offline, but I want to see if we can get a better sense of what that will look like. Obviously, missing middle housing is a front of mind issue, especially if we want to keep our families and our workforce here, so I wanted to drill down into this and make sure we create the absolute perfect conditions to ensure these units are built over the next six cycles. I will reserve most

of my other comments for later, but because I know she's here and will say something, I want to say that Community Land Trust is great. I think we need to throw as much resources at the Land Trust as we possibly can. If we want to create affordable housing that is *for purchase*, the Community Land Trust is one of the best ways we can go, so I'd like to really emphasize the importance of us focusing in on that. I am mildly concerned potentially about monitoring of affordable housing. I think we really need to focus on that, and you saw the grand jury report, I'm sure. I would like to emphasize that so we can discuss it a little more.

Kaitlyn Garfield, Housing Land Trust Sonoma County

We're here to say thank you so much for including the first time homebuyer program; we're very excited about that. Also, thank you for Calum Weeks for pointing out the importance of having homeownership that is affordable. I know often there is a focus on affordable renters, and that is just as important, but there needs to be that stepping stone to affordable homeownership so that households can build that equity and wealth and continue to pass that on both to the generations of their families and to other families as well, so that's why we really want to emphasize the importance of creating affordable homeownership and also using a model that makes those units affordable in perpetuity. You guys have been amazing partners on this, and we are very excited about this new Housing Element.

Chair Oetinger closed public comment.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

You don't adopt this draft right now. We're just taking public input on it. Between this and City Council we will be doing the same presentation next Tuesday and taking public comment through August 22nd, and then we'll have a couple of week to incorporate those comments into the document, including what we heard tonight, and we have to send that to HCD for their review, and once they've reviewed it we'll need to make any corrections. Then it will be coming to the City for adoption in probably January 2023.

Chair Oetinger asked for further Commission questions of staff

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

Did you get the information, comments, or opinions you wanted, and what did you get out of this discussion?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I'm surprised you guys didn't want to talk about the sites more, and you're right, it is such a small town that I know every site intimately, and so does John at this point. Looking at the Fair Housing Issues and Contributing Factors slide, I think there are a couple things that in some ways because we're such a small town it's a little difficult, and I grew up in a town of 5,000 and there was no bad site or good site in town, it's just the town, and Sebastopol is a little bit like that. Some of these fair housing issues were being compared to the larger Bay Area, which is a little odd because we don't have the same kind of transit and those types of resources, but there are issues here that 4LEAF pulled out, such as neighborhoods that are becoming exclusive, making sure that the next generation can live here, that seniors can age in place and there are places for them when their finances are tighter, so I really appreciate that. The access to financing for small sites is certainly something I've tried to emphasize, and we heard from all the affordable housing developers last year who said the smaller sites, the smaller infill, is really difficult to do because of the tax credit structure, but looking at other ways with the CDC to get financing. Then looking at the displacement due to high housing costs and vacation rental policy. We can't control rents, but we can

control limiting the loss of housing stock, and that's definitely an interest of the Planning Department as well as the City as a whole. Then making sure we have the availability and the range of sizes. Definitely those are all nuts that we're interested in cracking. Similarly, on the Fair Housing Enforcement Outreach, again, it's a smaller town and it's a little bit difficult to do some of these things. There are two planners in the Planning Department for a lot of different things, but at the same time we do definitely coordinate well with the CDC and they've been great partners.

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

Just hearing the questions is really instructive, because if you guys have read the document and you still have a question, that means we haven't covered everything that we need to cover, so that's always very helpful to me. The other thing I want to emphasize is this is just the very beginning of the public input process, so it's really important that you guys help us and you share this on your Facebook pages, and Instagram, and get those links out there on social media and encourage people to get involved. This thing is going to live through 2031 and this is the opportunity.

Elliott Pickett, 4LEAF

One of the things I got out of this was the sections that may need to be explained a little better. We've spent the better part of the last year working through this data, and it can be very easy once you get all bogged down in the data to just forget to explain where it came from.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

I have some additional comments about specific policies and items in the document I'd like to go over. I want to start with Table 9, which is the status of the current cycle's implementation of the programs. Item A-4, page 29 of the document, is access City-owned parking lots for possible use, and it says program not achieved. I feel like this is something that should be continued, even though there was a specific City parking lot that was looked at and the City Council kind of abandoned it. I feel like these are important resources of the City, and as we heard from our affordable housing presentations last year, several of the developers talked about we really need a City partnership, and we all know our City's affordable housing fund is not particularly robust and this is one way that the City could help an affordable housing developer. Not even just parking lots, but other City-owned properties where they can have some kind of agreement with an affordable housing developer to either sell it or lease it to them for very little money, and then that becomes a huge resource for an affordable housing developer. I'm working on a project in Cloverdale that is an affordable housing project on City-owned land, and so I feel like this is something that we should continue to monitor and be aware of possible partnership opportunities by using City-owned property, including parking lots, so I don't want to abandon this and I hope this gets incorporated into the final document.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Commissioner Fritz, because there is new legislation regarding surplus City land as well I did review the City-owned land, and we don't have a lot of excess land, so parking lots aside, we have a lot of land that's in the flood plane in the Laguna, which is mostly open space, and then we have parks throughout town, but we actually don't have a lot of surplus land. I think the one place that, depending on how it goes, which isn't the City, but the high school has the Laguna campus, and if they were to abandon that as part of the consolidation that's an area where I thought of future housing. One of the things that Jane has impressed on me is that any time you put a program in, HCD no longer allows you to consider something, you have to actually do it. I know the Pine Grove Square parking lot was the one that was considered that you're discussing. There were a lot of concerns by

businesses who paid the in lieu fee at some point in the past for the construction of that parking lot and were pretty adamant about not taking that away. It doesn't mean that we can't do things. I talked with a developer the other day about a site that was adjacent to a City parking lot and said that if the City parking lot isn't being used at night it maybe could help supplement for the development potentially. It's something that would need to be approved by the Planning Commission, so I think we can still do things to that extent, or could pursue them, but I do have concerns about including it as a program, because we can't say assess or consider anymore.

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

We can do things that are not in the Housing Element. The problem is that the State now considers programs to be a contract between the jurisdiction and the State, and if the same thing happens again and we say we're going to keep this program as it was and we're going to do that and then nothing happens, then we could be in trouble with the State. I did want to mention though—and it should be reflected in this table, so I think we should make a note—that one of the things that we talked about with this program was continuing it with the workforce housing overlay where we would allow that to be placed on City properties, including parking lots where they're available, to make that more available for housing, so we should be reflecting that in here. See, every time you have a question, I see something I need to change.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

Some of my other comments may be in a similar vein. I understand the Housing Element piece of it, but there are things that I don't want to lose sight of as a commission or just as a community. This is another one I brought up on numerous occasions, and maybe this is a little bit related to the workforce housing overlay idea, but needing a use permit to do 100% housing projects in the CO zone, and even the CG zone, I find crazy and I would put that in there as well. There are so many 100% housing projects in the CO zone already, and I don't know why we would require a use permit for those. Again, we don't want to necessarily commit to that, because it may not pass or whatever, but I don't want to lose sight of that idea. Housing by right is so much easier for a developer to swallow than having to get a use permit, and I really think that's a limiting factor. That property that you mentioned, Kari, next to Big O Tires is in that zone, and so if you develop that you either have to get a use permit for 100% housing or you have to make it a mixed-use project. I would love to see that developed as 100% housing, and I think it would be easier for a developer to swallow that if they didn't have to get a use permit in order to do that.

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

What would you think of a rule that says you have to get a use permit, except that use permit would be waived if you provide at least 25% of your units as affordable or lower?

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

I think that's okay. I think it depends on the property. One of my issues with inclusionary is if it's a small property and you can only do seven or eight units, making 20% of them affordable doesn't make sense. On a bigger property we can get 30-40 units and that might pencil, but I have a concern about inclusionary housing. I think it's discouraging for small lots, because I've talked to developers about properties in Sebastopol where you can get like ten or 12 units, and even do 15% or 20% of those as inclusionary, but they can't do it, and so we don't get any units in that case, and that's one of the reasons that Huntley Square was developed in the way that it was, because we do have this exception for small units. So obviously it's complicated, there are many layers, and from a developer standpoint the less complication and the more guarantee, the more likely they are to do something.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

So you're talking about trying to get market rate housing on those sites?

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

Yes.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Because we already do allow affordable housing projects without a use permit, or mixed-use where there's something else on the first floor is also allowed.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

This is just in my daydreams, because I've talked about the cottage housing idea as well, and I think that that site next to Big O Tires in particular could be a nice cottage housing development. It's a decent size and it's flat, but cottage housing with retail or commercial space doesn't really make sense, and also to do a cottage housing, the affordable component, because it's not a huge property, that's kind of related. Policy A-3 on page 47 of the document is a list of things, and I thought one of them could be a cottage housing ordinance idea. I don't remember seeing this specifically, maybe it was somewhere, and maybe we don't want to put it in here because then we have to commit to doing it. It talks about missing middle housing, workforce Housing overlay zone, and accessory dwelling units, and I was thinking adding a cottage housing ordinance to that would be helpful. The way that would happen now is you'd have to do a PC probably, or small lot subdivision, but a cottage housing ordinance that allows it clearly by right with specific development standards may be more attractive to a developer.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I believe if you go to that actual program, and this is what Mr. Weeks had commented on, we do actually talk about looking at cottage court developments, so that is also included in that.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

Great. Then that same one, you mentioned identify additional sites for R-5 zoning. I think that's great, because right now we have like nine, which is not super helpful, so that's good. This is just a clarification, because there are references to annual or bi-annual housing expos, and there are references to it both ways, annual and bi-annual, and I don't think we actually can do them that frequently. I don't know if we want to commit to doing one bi-annually or annually, but it just mentions several different ways in the document, so I think pick one or the other to make it consistent. But I thought that was a great idea.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

That's actually one I talked to Elliott about, because there are a couple of different versions. One is the big housing fair we have that I know, Commissioner Fritz, you took part in, that had a Permit Sonoma, a Sonoma County CEC, a Share Sonoma County, and they had myself and Supervisor Hopkins, and I think Mayor Slater was there, so it was a pretty big production and costly. I don't think we could do that every year.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

I thought that was ambitious, so I wanted to clarify exactly what we are intending by that.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I don't think it means it needs to be something of that scale. It is up to the City. It can be a special meeting or workshop where we're talking about updates to housing laws as part of the education of the community as well as the decision makers, and we're talking about

various sites and potential sites and things like that. But I think the intent of the housing workshop, and Elliott and Jane, please speak up, is partially to be education to people who might be interested in doing housing on the homeowner level or on the developer level.

Elliott Pickett, 4LEAF

Like Kari mentioned, there is the housing fair, there's a housing workshop, so trying to see what fits best where and the best way to plan for that need while also committing to something that the City can commit to.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

And I do want to express for those who might be in the audience, and also remind Commissioners, that we do a lot of things just because it's of peoples' interests or is the right thing to do, so even though it's not in our Housing Element. We had that affordable housing developer forum last spring where we had six or eight different housing developers come and talk with the Planning Commission, the RV safe parking site, the project Homekey, and none of those were in our Housing Element. The micro-shelters up at the Community Church that you approved for a temporary use permit for five years, those aren't in the quantifiable dynamics. You don't get credit for those in a numbered calculation way in your Housing Element, but the City is doing them because they're the right thing to do and others in the community are doing them, so there's a lot of stuff outside of the Housing Element that we will continue to do. We know that there are going to be things that come up just as a matter of course, like the two RV spaces at Park Village through the homeless emergency funding; that wasn't in our Housing Element, but we got the grant and we built the units and they're there.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

Again, this doesn't need to be in the Housing Element, but just thinking about the housing expo idea, or housing workshops or whatever, it would be nice to have rotating topics, like one year we do ADUs, and one year we do how to do an SB 9 lot split. There could be a variety of topics that rotate and might get different people in terms of education, but it would be nice to have some kind of ongoing community outreach education component. Then I have a couple of comments about sites, not questioning what sites are where, but 7765 Healdsburg Avenue was used twice. I didn't know if the address was right or if that meant it was intentional; it's on page 80.

Elliott Pickett, 4LEAF

One is Healdsburg Avenue and one is Bodega Avenue.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

Then on Table 20, page 82, the recent impending projects, I thought The Barlow Crossing townhomes, that's in the downtown core, so shouldn't that max density be 25?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes, there were a couple of corrections on that. I think you're right, that should be 25. And that's actually the one where the last Housing Element had like 36 units, but it's in a flood plane, so that's the difference between a restricted site and an unrestricted site where that's 68%.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

I think you answered this earlier, but this workforce housing overlay, that's an idea that we would either pick specific sites, or if we develop a workforce housing overlay a developer could ask for it to be applied to a specific site, and if that's the case would that be processed as a zoning amendment or something, or like a zone change where you had a half a site

and say I want this housing overlay, then we'd go through a Planning Commission as zoning amendment, or how does that work exactly?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Correct, it would be just like rezoning. If the City does it, it would be like when we created the R-5 where we're proposing what areas. And some of them, as Jane said, might be the commercial office zones. We did discuss with Council, and there was some concern about the cost to the City to try to do that effort for developer to develop and do the CEQA for all the sites as part of that zoning overlay, and obviously when something is in your zoning code you can request it to be added through a zoning amendment, what those parameters are; I think we certainly want it to be helpful. I kind of see the conjunction that the commercial office is a potential way to facilitate some of those sites that we've discussed, and actually even at our kickoff meeting with the joint City Council/Planning Commission meeting there was some question about some of those commercial office zones. Jane, do you have any additions to that?

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

The important first step is to get it adopted into the code, of course, and then developers can use it as the City is going through those processes, and I'm hoping that an opportunity will come up where we can get the CEQA done. I know there's been a big push on the part of the collaborative leaders to get ABAG to give us that kind of resource so that we can get rezonings done and upzone for housing all across the Bay Area, but that is such a huge stumbling block, especially for small jurisdictions, to get that CEQA done. So let's get it adopted into the code. Hopefully that's what we'll end up doing with it, but we've got to get over the CEQA hurdle.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

Program A-1.2 on page 50 says no reduction of density without replacement sites. For example, The Barlow Crossing didn't develop to their full maximum density. Their maximum density is 36 units, but they only built 18 units. Does that mean you have to have 18 units someplace else to back that in?

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

That's the No Net Loss Law and that's why it's important that we always have a buffer, because you don't want to be put in a position where you can't approve a good project because you don't have the, say, six units that they couldn't put in or something, and also a reason why it's important to have a realistic development assumption in the Housing Element to begin with.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

And that's why some of those, the more conservative percentage, the 85%, you don't have to do that full capacity if it just doesn't make sense with the site.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

I know Village Park, I think, is included as an affordable housing, but the other Fircrest Mobile Home Park is not. Is that because the City doesn't own it, it's privately owned, so we don't have control over it, so even though mobile homes are generally affordable we can't really count that?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Right, Fircrest Mobile Home site is privately owned and the City doesn't have control over what those are. Now, Jane, there is legislation on mobile home regulations at the State level, or no, in terms of preserving mobile home...

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

You mean pending legislation?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes, or anything that restricts rental rates and things like that?

Jane Riley, 4LEAF

There are some. The City of Sebastopol is in a different situation, because it has the purview over its mobile home parks, which is very rare. Unless there was potential to expand the mobile home park without like encroaching further into the Laguna de Santa Rosa, then yes, there's no reason to put it in there.

Elliott Pickett, 4LEAF

As a reminder to Commissioner Fritz and everybody else on the call, we've got another almost month left to provide comments, so anything you didn't get to today we'll still be listening to later on in the review period.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

Yes, please go ahead and send them directly to me.

Chair Oetinger thanked Jane Riley and Elliott Pickett of 4LEAF and Director Svanstrom for the presentation and hard work.

B. PLANNING COMMISSION WORKPLAN – Final review and approval of the updated workplan.

Director Svanstrom presented the staff report.

Chair Oetinger asked for Planning Commission questions of staff.

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

On page 5 under the last item, joint Planning Commission/City Council Meeting Action, I feel it is really important to endeavor to hold at least one public joint PC/CC meeting in the first quarter of the year, or something that makes it more likely to happen. I have participated in the past and I thought they were really helpful to create communication and understanding of where we're heading, coordinate efforts, and know what kinds of things we need to educate ourselves on. It seems pretty weak, and I'd like it to be stronger to have it happen on an annual basis. Also, it's important to consider future maintenance liabilities, project costs, and funding when we're reviewing something, that it should be part of the review process, rather than just continue to do things and then have stuff going to disrepair or just not have the manpower for that, so I don't know if that can be something on there. It's not necessarily appropriate for our discussion here under the Vacation Rental Ordinance Update, but we're missing an opportunity to coordinate promotion to people visiting our town to a vacation rental and to patronize our town and shop here. I think the Chamber of Commerce used to have a welcoming basket for people that moved in, but I try to encourage and list things in town that people can do, and oftentimes they'll walk there and they'll consider that rather than get in their car and driving far way, so that's just an opportunity to put it on there. Also, under the Ives Park Master Plan Implementation, one important thing to add on there is getting reports from organizations or entities that rent or lease space, for example, the Sebastopol Little League, so it's not forgotten and we have the status of that.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

It's probably under the Ives Park Master Plan Implementation to receive regular reports from park lessors; that would be the Little League, the pool, Wischemann Hall, or others. I agree with Vice Chair Fernandez, it's an interesting concept but probably not the right place to put the promotional stuff for vacation rentals. I think the other thing regarding the joint Planning Commission/City Council meeting, that language is out of the General Plan for that action item, but I hear what you're saying. Let's try to make it a more regular meeting. We did have one in September of last year as the kickoff for the Housing Element and to talk about the housing issues. I could certainly see one in the coming year, perhaps for the Housing Element again, or some of the other priority issues in terms of kicking off their implementation.

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

What do you think about the maintenance and the projects that are approved and always kicking the can down the road and worrying about the maintenance later?

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I would add that under the Parks and Recreation Master Plan section. You have needs assessment, financial planning and funding sources, CIP planning, but "maintenance needs and requirements for new and existing facilities," we can expand on that to say, "Maintenance requirements for new and existing improvements should be considered whenever looking at capital improvement planning."

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

Perfect.

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

It sounds like Vice Chair Fernandez has suggested two additions for Item 6 on the screen to include, "Receive regular reports from park lessors," and actually maybe this should go into the master plan anyway, because it's not just Ives Park, and "Maintenance needs and requirements for new and existing facilities should be considered whenever reviewing CIP projects."

Evert Fernandez, Vice Chair

I think we should even have physical visits to the parks, at least on an annual basis, to see what's going on. It's a little different than just getting the reports.

Paul Fritz, Commissioner

I'm fine with the additions that Evert suggested.

Commissioner Fritz made a motion to approve the resolution as presented and the workplan as presented with modifications suggested by Vice Chair Fernandez, and recommend the workplan for review and approval by the City Council.

Vice Chair Fernandez seconded the motion.

Chair Oetinger opened public comment. Seeing none, Chair Oetinger closed public comment.

AYES: Chair Oetinger, Vice Chair Fernandez, and Commissioners Burnes, Fritz, and Kelley.

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

Kari Svanstrom, Planning Director

I have this item tentatively scheduled for the September 6th City Council meeting right after Labor Day.

C. PLANNING COMMISSION TRAINING (Video)

The Planning Commission decided by consensus to postpone Item 5.C, the Planning Commission Training, to the next meeting.

7. SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES None.

8. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Svanstrom provided updates.

The Commission asked questions of Director Svanstrom.

9. ADJOURNMENT: Chair Oetinger adjourned the meeting at 8:19 p.m. The next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting will take place on Wednesday, August 14, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.