

Housing & Homelessness Working Group 5-25-17
City and County Building, Room 391

Councilmembers in Attendance: Kniech, New, Kashmann

Summary of Discussion

Councilwoman Kniech explained that the meeting would be devoted solely to the discussion on Tiny Homes.

Nathan Hunt, Beloved Community Village, discussed the progress of the Colorado Village Collaborative, noting that St. Andrew's tiny home village at 28th & Glenarm is expected to open by November. The long-term goal is to develop 3 Villages totaling 30-40 homes by winter 2017-18 and 20 Villages by 2020-21 with up to 300 homes. He described the self-governing organizational structure, campus layout, and noted the ways that the City could improve the process for developing tiny homes including:

- Streamlining the permitting process
- Designating permanent zoning specifically for tiny homes; and
- Repealing the City's camping ban ordinance.

Elizabeth Garfield, St Andrews, agreed with these suggestions and added that the City should also provide financial support to assist non-profits and religious organizations in developing such alternative housing models.

Chris Ollar, a homeless individual who will be living in the first Tiny Home Village discussed the benefits of this housing model in terms of self-governance and developing community among residents. He and other presenters answered questions from Councilmembers. Jill Jennings-Golich, Community Planning and Development, explained that the agency had no zoning designation that fits this model and that the building code also does not currently provide for such habitats. Considering the first village as a pilot, the agency is working with the sponsors to problem-solve and develop an improved process for the future.

Additionally, the presenters noted similar projects that are happening successfully around the country. They include Right to Dream Too in Portland, Low Income Housing Institute (LIHI) in Seattle, Community First! Village in Austin, and the first and most successful village, Dignity Village in Portland which has 50 units and 70 individuals residing there.

Public Comment

Diane Thiel, Denver resident, suggested that straw bale construction could be among affordable housing alternatives as it is both cost and energy efficient.