



Community Development Authority

Meeting Notes

Thursday, February 24, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

via Tele/Video-Conference

Present: Chair Peter Hammond, Jessica Carpenter, Jon Krouse (arrived after the meeting started), and Tr. Kathy Stokebrand

Also present: Ana Simpson, Kevin Newell, Sam Coleman, Frank Cumberbatch, Village Manager Rebecca Ewald; and Planning & Development Director Bart Griepentrog

1. Call to order.

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm without quorum.

2. Presentation – System Change and How It Relates to Affordable Housing

Chair Hammond introduced Ana Simpson the Director of Community and Economic Development for WHEDA as the facilitator of the presentation.

Ms. Simpson introduced Kevin Newell of Royal Capital Group, Sam Coleman from the Shorewood School District and Frank Cumberbatch of Bader Philanthropies as the presenters of the evening's discussion.

Mr. Newell first spoke about his ThriveOn King project which would be the home of the Medical College of Wisconsin Centers and Institutes with an emphasis on the Social Determinants of Health and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation's new headquarters. He noted that the project would have community components, such as early childhood education, food access and a maker space. The development would also include 89 units of affordable housing for both seniors and families. He stated that this development took over three years to come together and undertook an intentional engagement strategy to understand what the community needed.

Mr. Newell discussed the Fortitude project which was done in collaboration with the Milwaukee Public Library. This project included 65 units of housing, 56 of which are affordable, and a new public library branch.

Lastly, he spoke about his Harmony @ Grandview Commons project in Madison, Wisconsin. This project was built in a new subdivision and included 94 units of affordable housing as townhomes with afterschool programming in partnership with UW-Madison and other programs such as financial literacy and nutrition.

Mr. Coleman discussed affordable housing as a systems strategy for equitable outcomes from the education landscape. He noted that one of the great benefits of having more affordable housing is that it would provide students from different backgrounds the opportunity to attend Shorewood's public schools. He stated that more students would have a better shot at gaining a solid educational experience and ultimately improve their economic chances at mobility. He noted that the school is part of a larger community system and that partnerships with the Library and Police Department have proven beneficial.

Mr. Coleman noted that affordable housing doesn't just mean apartment buildings, but also duplex or triplex units, as well as homeownership. He stated that providing affordable housing would expand access to quality educational opportunities that can be used as a strategy to help break cycles of socio-

economic insecurity and disrupt generational perpetuation of inequities. He also noted that it would make more housing available for people who work in the community.

Mr. Coleman noted that not only will the individuals and families who live in affordable housing benefit, but the community as a whole would benefit. He stated that societies are stronger when they are more diverse, and that diversity enriches a community with character and substance. He also noted that it allows for people who serve students to live in the community.

Mr. Coleman noted that the state and county offer resources to facilitate the development of affordable housing. He also noted that he did not see a pathway forward to expand affordable housing options without the participation of local government.

Mr. Cumberbatch presented his perspective that Shorewood has the opportunity to create an affordable community. He noted that an equitable school district is integral to that vision. He also noted that Shorewood has access to numerous living wage jobs in the vicinity. He stated that access to healthy food is also necessary and that the local grocery store and farmers market are in place. He noted that the next component would be more affordable housing. He stated that understanding what type of affordable housing is best for the community was a big question. Lastly, he noted that access to affordable sports and wellness facilities were also important. He noted that the current system is largely “pay to play” and leaves out a huge segment of the community. He shared his plans for the development of a sports and wellness complex in the region that would be open to all.

Mr. Cumberbatch shared the understanding that there is a growing body of evidence that shows where children grow up has substantial causal effects on their prospects for upward income mobility. He stated that every child in the region should have that opportunity.

Ms. Simpson introduced the first pre-set question for the panelists, which related to what affordable housing looked like in their experience. Mr. Cumberbatch noted that people are the faces of affordable housing. He noted that these people are often seeking a better future for their children and are working multiple jobs. He stated that they bring a different perspective to various aspects of life. He noted that the percentage of people who diverge from this characterization are no different in this socioeconomic class than any other. Mr. Coleman stated that affordable housing looks like the teachers or school staff who work in your community. It is also the kids who go to your schools. Mr. Newell stated that affordable housing is housing relative to what you can afford. He noted the differences between low-income housing and workforce housing. He discussed the cost of childcare, car payments and other living expenses in relation to housing. He agreed that putting faces on the subject is important.

Ms. Simpson asked the panelists if conflating affordable and workforce housing addresses the complexities of the problem, or should communities address the topics separately. Mr. Newell acknowledged that the industry has not helped by not creating better definitions. He reiterated that almost everyone lives in affordable housing as it relates to their situations. He referenced that workforce housing utilizes resources to subsidize the front-end of the deal to create the financial capacity for development at the same quality of market rate development and allow the developer to charge affordable rents. He noted that low-income housing differs in that it is developed for those with less steady or lower incomes whose rent is subsidized monthly. Mr. Coleman added that other programs exist to help support down payment assistance for homeownership. Mr. Cumberbatch once again noted that people who live in affordable housing are our fellow community members and that a humanity needs to be placed on the conversation.

Ms. Simpson raised a question that was submitted ahead of the discussion to the panelists: are there studies or data that show that affordable housing increases crime trends. Mr. Newell stated that crime does not have a border. He shared personal experience as the victim of a car break-in and his feelings about how the perpetrator grew up and why he chose to do what he did. He suggested if the perpetrator had grown up in a better environment that the crime may not have taken place. He stated

that crime is not the result of any affordable housing that was built, but of the affordable housing that was not built. Mr. Cumberbatch said there is no evidence of an increase in crime associated with affordable housing. He noted that there is an increased sense of dignity and humanity for families who grow up in better housing, which changes the way they see what's around them. He shared that he knew that because it was his personal story. Mr. Coleman noted that there have been studies done to dispel the myth of crime and affordable housing. He referenced the study "Public Housing Myths: Perception, Reality, and Social Policy" by Cornell University in 2015. Ms. Simpson noted that there are also studies that show the inverse when safe, affordable housing is not provided that crime increases. Chair Hammond expressed appreciation for the resident who asked the question because he knows the community has concerns and he'd like to be able to talk about them. Mr. Cumberbatch agreed.

Ms. Simpson asked the panelists how municipalities in the position of Shorewood can create policies that address the scarcity of affordable housing. Mr. Newell noted that communities can go on the offensive, acquire land and impose affordability requirements upon it. He also noted that TIF could be leveraged as an incentive for affordable housing. Mr. Cumberbatch stated that a land trust could be created. Mr. Coleman referenced the Village's suspended home loan program, which could be restructured to allow for housing unit conversions into duplexes or triplexes or down payment assistance.

Nacindia Johnson stated that she believed low-income housing has hurt and disabled black people in many ways, especially on the north side of Milwaukee. She noted that she lives in Shorewood as a minority and was not rich. She believed that Shorewood was very diverse, and that low-income housing did not need to be developed in Shorewood to allow black people to live here. She stated that she has relatives who have been living in low-income housing their entire lives and are too dependent on it. She stated that other communities need more help, but that Shorewood already has a strong foundation. She questioned how Shorewood would benefit from an affordable housing development.

Ms. Simpson reminded those in attendance that affordable housing is not specific to any racial or ethnic background.

Mr. Cumberbatch welcomed Ms. Johnson to Shorewood. He offered two corrections, one particular to the difference between low-income housing and affordable housing, which was the focus of the evening's conversation. He also stated that black people were never discussed as a specific demographic. He also made it clear that he was not denying Ms. Johnson's experiences but reiterated that there is no direct correlation between crime, which we know exists, and the existence of affordable housing.

Mr. Newell noted that he valued Ms. Johnson's reflections. He confirmed that Ms. Johnson rented in Shorewood. He stated that based on the anecdotal information she provided that she was likely living in affordable housing. He also stated that she added value to the community and believed that she chose to live in Shorewood's healthy environment because it would dramatically improve the outcomes of her family. Upon clarification of Ms. Johnson's income share of housing costs, Mr. Newell stated that affordable housing in Shorewood would benefit Ms. Johnson's family by reducing their rent cost and allowing them to live in Shorewood as valued members of the community. Ms. Johnson appreciated Mr. Newell's analysis and stated that she just didn't want to see Shorewood go backwards because she's sacrificed a lot to get here. Ms. Simpson invited Ms. Johnson to continue on in Shorewood's conversations to learn and hear more.

Jessica Carpenter stated that she believed that the ability to reuse a historic building, as evidenced in Mr. Newell's ThriveOn King development, was important to Shorewood residents. She questioned what percentage of units in his developments were affordable housing. Mr. Newell said that his projects ranged from 20% market rate and 80% affordable to a little less, perhaps around 40/60. He noted that nobody should say that there's a set rule for the proportion of market rate to affordable within a development. He said that was the point of collaboration and identifying the needs of each community.

He noted that there are models that allow for as low as 20% affordable units. He said that every little bit helps.

Ms. Carpenter also questioned the size of the units, particularly the number of bedrooms as it relates to attracting families. He noted that senior affordable units are typically one bedrooms, but that the ThriveOn King development also has units as large as four-bedrooms. He also referenced the development of affordable townhomes in his portfolio. Ms. Carpenter questioned if any of those were rent-to-own. Mr. Newell said they were not, but that they do offer homeownership training for their residents.

Ms. Simpson thanked the Village and CDA for convening the discussion, the speakers for their insights and the community for their participation. Chair Hammond thanked Ms. Simpson for her facilitation and reminded all participants to reference the Village's website for more information on prior and next steps. He reminded all to keep kindness in mind, stated that the Village benefits from affordable housing and encouraged anyone with questions to reach out to him.

3. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bart Griepentrog". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bart Griepentrog, AICP
Planning & Development Director