



\*\*\* All present are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with our City's Core Values \*\*\*

## OFFICIAL NOTICE AND AGENDA

*of a meeting of a City Board, Commission, Department, Committee, Agency, Corporation, Quasi-Municipal Corporation, or sub-unit thereof.*

**Meeting:** Affordable Housing Task Force

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, October 29, 2024 at 1:00-2:30 pm

**Location:** City Hall, 1st Floor Maple Room

**Members:** Sarah Watson (C), Diane Sennholz (Co-Chair), Tom Holster, Juli Birkenmeier, Kristin Slonski, Ben Lee

### AGENDA ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

*(All items listed may be acted upon)*

1. Approval of Minutes from 8/30/24
2. Discussion on the Role of Transit and Transportation with Regards to Access to Affordable Housing. (Hersey)
3. Updates on affordable housing projects (ARPA, infill, Income Qualified Housing Developments).
4. Discussion on additional education regarding Affordable housing definition.
5. Update from United Way Task Force.
6. Update on Tiny Home Regulation.
7. Update on Wausau's Y.I.M.B.Y. chapter.
8. Discussion on potential local Land Trust opportunities.
9. Schedule next meeting

Adjourn.

It is likely that members of, and a quorum of the Council and/or members of other committees of the Common Council of the City of Wausau will be in attendance at the above-mentioned meeting to gather information. **No action will be taken by any such groups.**

**This Notice was posted at City Hall and emailed to the Media on 10/21/24**

Any person wishing to offer public comment who does not appear in person to do so, may email [tammy.stratz@ci.wausau.wi.us](mailto:tammy.stratz@ci.wausau.wi.us) with "AHTF public comment" in the subject line by 8:00 a.m. on the meeting day. All public comments received, either by email or in person, if agendaized, will be limited to items on the agenda only. Messages related to agenda items received by 8:00 a.m. on the meeting day will be provided to the Committee Chair.

In accordance with the requirements of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the City of Wausau will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in its services, programs or activities. If you need assistance or reasonable accommodations in participating in this meeting or event due to a disability as defined under the ADA, please call the ADA Coordinator at (715) 261-6590 or [ADAServices@ci.wausau.wi.us](mailto:ADAServices@ci.wausau.wi.us) to discuss your accessibility needs. We ask your request be provided a minimum of 72 hours before the scheduled event or meeting. If a request is made less than 72 hours before the event, the City of Wausau will make a good faith effort to accommodate your request.

Other Distribution: Media, City Council, Mayor, City Departments

# TEAMS MINUTES

## Affordable Housing Task Force Meeting

*Date | time* Friday, August 30, 2024, at 10:00 A.M. | *Meeting called to order by* Sarah Watson at 10:00 A.M.

### In Attendance

Members Present: Sarah Watson (C), Juli Birkenmeier, Diane Sennholz, Tom Holster, Kristin Slonski (arrived late)  
Members Absent: Ben Lee  
Others/Staff Present: Tammy Stratz, Randy Fifrick, Casey (Resident/Local Landlord)

*In accordance with Chapter 19, Wisc. Statutes, notice of this meeting was posted and sent to the Daily Herald in the proper manner.*

### Agenda Item 1 | Approval of Minutes from 3/22/24

Sennholz moved to approve the minutes from 3/22/24, contingent on the removal of the note stating that the 3/22/24 minutes were approved on 6/28/24. Seconded by Holster. **Motion Carried 6-0**

### Agenda Item 2 | Approval of Minutes from 6/28/24.

Sennholz moved to approve the minutes from 6/28/24. Seconded by Holster. **Motion Carried 6-0**

### Agenda Item 3 | Updates on affordable housing projects (ARPA, infill).

Fifrick provided an update on affordable housing developments noting that Westside Commons closed last week, construction fencing was installed around the property and groundbreaking will happen soon. The completion deadline for this project is 12/31/25. Additionally, the alteration of the sanitary line by Mandarin that goes through the Westside Commons property has begun.

Fifrick also provided an update on the Commonwealth development for 700 Grand Ave. He noted there have been several challenges with development, the most recent being an issue with how the City acquired the property. In 2007, there was an agreement with the City and the DOT that if the City purchased the lot for a future DOT Right of Way project, the DOT would reimburse the City for the cost to acquire it. However, there have been no projects on the DOT's schedule for the intersection in the last 17 years. The lot was RFP'd in 2023 and awarded to Commonwealth that year and in June of 2024 the City was informed of a DOT project for that intersection, scheduled for 2033. The issue was taken to the Finance Committee who approved foregoing reimbursement of the acquisition costs in favor of affordable housing and will now move to the Council for final approval. Fifrick noted a development agreement is still being negotiated.

Stratz provided an update on the in-fill housing project. She noted a Request for Bids (RFB) was released for construction of a manufactured home on Bridge St. and possibly one on Thomas St. which are due back at the end of September. Watson asked about the lots on Jefferson. Stratz responded that Habitat for Humanity is interested in those and plan to put in an offer, so they were pulled from the request. Stratz also noted staff are working to transfer the ARPA funds allocated to affordable housing to Community Development Authority (CDA) due to funds requiring a commitment by end of year which will be presented to Council for approval on September 10<sup>th</sup> and then take back to CDA's board for final approval.

Fifrick provided an update on the in-fill housing project on Thomas Street. He noted staff applied for a Wisconsin Assessment Monies (WAM) Grant in July 2023 to assist with environmental testing on Thomas Street parcels. Staff were advised a decision would be provided within 6-8-weeks but approval was not received until March 2024. The DNR then sought and awarded a contractor with the project but as of today's meeting, no contract has been signed.

Fifrick also noted there are a couple of parcels of interest that can be purchased from the county to pursue a smaller affordable housing complex and potentially other infill housing but an offer to purchase has not been completed yet until it's confirmed that the ARPA funds will be transferred to CDA.

### Agenda Item 4 | Discussion on potential education regarding Affordable housing definition.

Watson expressed interest in the Task Force becoming more vocal in educating the community on what Affordable Housing is and requested to brainstorm on different things that could be done as a committee to get the word out.

Stratz recommended defining Affordable Housing in the quarterly newsletter. Stratz offered to draft the information for the newsletter. Birkenmeier indicated that HUD has something on their website defining Affordable Housing. Fifrick noted WHEDA defines "Workforce Housing" (type of housing) on their website as Affordable Housing for those whose income is too low to afford quality housing near their workplace. It was discussed that Workforce Housing and Affordable Housing are both terms that can mean something different to everyone based on household size, income, budgets, debt load, etc., so it's difficult to meet everyone's idea.

Watson noted that as a City, we are using the HUD definition of Affordable Housing which isn't one size fits all but needs to be used in order for the City and/or Developers to develop Affordable Housing in our community. If funds were available to subsidize Affordable Housing developments elsewhere that used different criteria, then that would be used but there are usually multiple sources of funding so the strictest guidelines must be adhered to.

Casey, a citizen and daughter of local landlord, noted her family caters to a lower income population but it's often difficult to understand the difference between the categories of rental assistance programs and their guidelines and is trying to understand how to direct their tenants to different programs. Sennholz responded that guidelines will always vary based on how programs are funded.

Stratz mentioned the YIMBY chapter that is being established and asked if that would be something to mention to build membership and push the movement more.

---

#### **Agenda Item 5 | Discussion on task force three priorities and action forward.**

---

**Priority 1 – Education** – Discussed in previous agenda item

**Priority 2 – Transportation** – Stratz noted the City Assistance Planner works closely with transit and he noted the Mayor and transit director went to Green Bay for transportation ideas. Stratz said the Transit Director is open to presenting potential ideas and can be invited to speak at the next meeting. Fifrlick noted a committee formed through the MPO is looking to expand mass transit within the metro area. He noted that currently, only Metro Ride serves Wausau, and there are many factors to consider when expanding service to neighboring communities. It must be determined if these communities want and need the service, but historically, they have shown little interest. Fifrlick noted representatives from neighboring communities were tasked with taking the topic back to their boards/citizens to determine if there is interest so a plan can be developed with appropriate costs reflected.

**Priority 3 – Advance strategies that support equitable neighborhood rejuvenation** – Stratz mentioned to invite Liz Brodek back to discuss AARP because Brodek was hoping to continue working with this initiative. She noted there was a discussion with the Hmong American Center who may have developers would be interested in this.

---

#### **Agenda Item 6 | Update from United Way Task Force.**

---

Sennholz noted they are still completing the education series and determining what the next initiative is going to be but noted it has been leaning towards transitional housing that is not backed by Christian beliefs.

---

#### **Agenda Item 7 | Discussion and potential action on recommending inclusionary zoning to be presented to relevant committees for consideration and adoption.**

---

Watson defined Inclusionary Zoning as requiring a percentage of units in new housing developments or redevelopments be affordable. Watson noted that Planning has done a wonderful job in updating zoning codes to expand housing opportunities but said there are still other measures that can be considered like allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU). She asked if Inclusionary Zoning is legal in Wisconsin Statute and see if that is something this Task Force could advocate for. Members noted they liked the idea.

---

#### **Agenda Item 8 | Discussion on recent state law changes that encourage developers to include affordable housing in their projects.**

---

Watson noted that the Assistant City Attorney provided her with material highlighting new provisions designed to incentivize construction of affordable housing. She requested that the topic be added to the next agenda so she could include the information in the packet for committee members.

---

#### **Agenda Item 8 | Schedule next meeting**

---

Next meeting is scheduled for October 18, 2024.

---

#### **Agenda Item 9 | Adjournment**

---

*Birkenmeier motioned to adjourn, seconded by Lee. Meeting adjourned.*