

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADHOC COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, August 2, 2023 – 9:00 a.m.
Howard Male Conference Room

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Bill Peterson
Burt Francisco
Travis Konarzewski (excused)
Robin Lalonde

OTHERS PRESENT: Mary Catherine Hannah, County Administrator
Kim MacArthur, Board Assistant
Lenny Avery, Economic Development Coordinator

Chair Bill Peterson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

Roll Call – All committee members present. Commissioner Konarzewski, excused.

ADOPT AGENDA

Motion was made by Commissioner Francisco and supported by Commissioner Lalonde to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEM: Economic Development Coordinator Lenny Avery gave the Committee an overview of Michigan's first Statewide Housing Assessment Plan. They tasked 15 regional housing partners and Lenny is the Region E Lead and in charge of 11 counties to develop a micro plan.

Michigan has 8 priorities in the plan: 1) Equity and Racial Justice; 2) Housing Ecosystem 3) Housing Stock; 4) Preventing and Ending Homelessness; 5) Older Adult Housing; 6) Rental Housing; 7) Homeownership; 8) Communication and Education.

Lenny discussed the 4 that this region will be targeting: 1) Housing Stock; 2) Rental Housing; 3) Housing Ecosystem; and 4) Communication and Education.

Housing Stock – Most houses in Alpena that are pre-1960-1970s were good for that time but now are full of ADA barriers. Should money go into fixing those houses or should money go into developing new. Cluster Developments were built 100 years ago for 3 and 4 families. We need to figure out what areas in our community are zoned for that type of housing. In development strategy over the next 5 years, we need to look at where good areas are to place prefab communities that will hit middle income earners. There are a lot of blighted properties that can be targeted to cluster develop.

Rental Housing – Alpena has a housing registry that renters must register their property. Lenny would like to see that regionalized and streamlined. Reducing the burden of evictions and slums are a priority as well as increasing the quality of rental housing.

Housing Ecosystem – Increase availability of data. Stakeholders put together a county needs assessment and determined that we need approximately 370 full spectrum housing. Many of the stakeholders thought that was a low number and think 500-700 units just for Alpena itself.

Community & Education – Helping to education landlords on services to help them and their renters and increase awareness and help to find quality renters.

Lenny stressed the need for the partnerships that they will need during the next 5 years to work with them to do initiatives and funding. Both private and public partnerships will be needed.

Lenny reported the Housing Needs Study that was completed for Alpena County was broken into categories and basically states if something isn't done, we will hit critical mass. There is a growing number of seniors and a shrinking number of young people in the area.

Administrator Hannah reported housing will need to be a key part of economic development and education will be a key piece and needs to be part of ongoing discussions. Economic development and housing need to be looked at hand in hand.

Chair Peterson would like Lenny to attend a Full Board meeting for more discussion.

Administrator Hannah reported the County just created a Land Bank Authority and their bylaws still need to be created. The next step will be to create a brownfield authority. Brownfield properties automatically qualify for certain types of funding. The city and township both have brownfield authorities. Once the bylaws and committee are formed an action list can be created. The authority board will set the tone going forward.

Administrator Hannah discussed the Economic Development Goals in the Master Plan. She will send this out to the Committee members for further review.


Discussion was made on future meeting topics.

Commissioner Francisco recommended bringing the topic of Economic Development and Housing to the Intergovernmental meeting in October for further discussion.

Next Meeting Wednesday, September 13, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in the Howard Male Conference Room

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.



Bill Peterson, Chair

kvm