

St. Helena HEU Public Comment Letters

Letters received through January 25, 2022

From: Ester Akersloot <heliosascarta@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 14, 2021 4:02 PM
To: Public Comment <publiccomment@cityofstheleena.org>
Subject: [External]

Please submit for Community Housing Workshop

From Ester Akersloot, heliosascarta@gmail.com, comment:

I would like to suggest, as has been previously recommended through meetings, letters, reports, and emails, that part of the Adams Street property be used for low income housing and provided with all necessary facilities.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ester Akersloot
heliosascarta@gmail.com
St. Helena



Ryan Lester <ryanl@mintierharnish.com>

Fwd: [#20210916230041] Comment from St Helena Website St Helena Housing Element

1 message

Theda Justiniani <theda@mintierharnish.com>

Thu, Sep 16, 2021 at 4:12 PM

To: Jim Harnish <jim@mintierharnish.com>, Ryan Lester <ryanL@mintierharnish.com>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: rick@mintierharnish.com <rick@mintierharnish.com>

Date: Thu, Sep 16, 2021 at 4:00 PM

Subject: [#20210916230041] Comment from St Helena Website St Helena Housing Element

To: <rick@mintierharnish.com>, <amy@mintierharnish.com>, <ahecock@cityofstheleena.org>

Ticket: [#20210916230041]

Name: Dawn Leininger

e-mail: onetapeone@comcast.net

Comments:

I would like to see our town move toward adding affordable housing for people who work in our town. I feel like many of our town entities would benefit from a balance of socioeconomic residents. For instance, our congregation at church is dwindling, the school enrollments have declined. I imagine the service clubs & philanthropic groups have also lost members. We need an infusion of people who live & work here to bring energy back to St. Helena. Because of space (not to mention water shortage) sometimes smaller projects are easier to manage. Could the city help build ADU's on lots that have room with a fixed rental price/locked for a period of time below market for the person whose property it is at? We wouldn't have to cut a deal with a developer for their interests with this plan. I want to see progress on this issue sooner than later. Remember every affordable dwelling makes a difference. Thank you.

Page title: [Home](#)

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Theda Justiniani, Office Manager



1415 20th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811
P: 916-446-0522 xt 201
F: 916-446-7520
www.mintierharnish.com

September 16, 2021

Dear Senior Planner Hecock and Team,

Over the last 10 or 12 years several proposals to build affordable housing on the Adams Street property have been offered and, for one reason or another, rejected. The city is currently in possession of another proposal for housing on Adams Street given by St. Helena Housing Coalition.

Here is an excerpt from the Feasibility Analysis and Comparison of Sites for New Affordable Housing Development given by VERNAZZA WOLFE ASSOCIATES, INC to the City of St. Helena in September of 2015:

"Based on considerations of site availability and size, the Adams Street site stands out as the best possible site for rental housing among the six assessed in this study."

Read the entire report for further assessments and recommendations.

https://www.cityofsthenana.org/sites/default/files/fileattachments/planning_resources/page/3395/final_report_-_2015_feasibility_analysis_and_site_comparison_study_-_st_helena.pdf

We are in dire need of hundreds of affordable and workforce housing units. Please take whatever steps necessary to go forward and get it done.

Sincerely,

Nancy Dervin

From: Pat Friday <patfriday@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, September 16, 2021 5:57 PM
To: Public Comment <publiccomment@cityofsthelena.org>
Subject: [External] Comment on Housing Concerns and Needs

Hello Housing Element Workshop folks,
I was hoping to attend tonight, but alas, have a conflict. So I'd like to put in my 2 cents regarding affordable housing and housing for seniors.

These notes below are from Julie Spencer, director of Rianda House:

"Affordable housing is very important for all ages, especially for seniors. What is really needed is a continuum of care facility ... like there used to be on Pratt years ago. When folks need to move out of their large homes, the continuum of care options are few – we have two in two (same family runs both) on Olive St. and Crinenlla St. Silverado Orchard is only a Bed and Board (no skilled nursing); Woodbridge has affordable units, just not enough (no skilled nursing); Vineyard Valley is could be considered affordable but there is no care; and Stonebridge is well suited for families, not so much for seniors (no skilled nursing). Some type of facility like in Napa: Watermark, Meadows, Aegis, Redwood Care Home, etc. I can dream, right?!"

And I support her comments.

I'd also like to add that I support affordable housing or multi family housing units sprinkled all over town. The large home being built at the corner of Spring and St. James Drive is a real missed opportunity, since it was zoned multi unit prior the sale. That would have been a perfect location for several units.

The property at the end of Crane (where Whitings Nursery used to be) could be another potential multi-unit workforce housing or senior housing.

Please look at re-zoning properties in town that would assist in creating more work force housing and senior housing opportunities.

Thank you,
Pat Friday

From: Tobacco Free Napa <tobaccofreenapa@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 16, 2021 8:52 AM
To: Public Comment <publiccomment@cityofsthelena.org>
Subject: [External] Comment on Housing Concerns and Needs

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Coalition for a Tobacco Free Napa, I am writing to request that the Housing Element be revised to address secondhand and thirdhand smoke exposure in multi-unit housing. There is growing recognition of the importance of the built environment and land use policy in promoting good health. The update of the housing element is an opportunity to increase health equity by ensuring all residents live in safe and healthy conditions.

Exposure to harmful chemicals from secondhand smoke and its lingering residues (thirdhand smoke) is a threat to safe housing. The U.S. Surgeon General has declared that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke, which annually causes an estimated 41,000 deaths of people who do not smoke. The risk of harm is most acute in multifamily housing, where drifting smoke from one person can contaminate many living units and is expensive and difficult to clean up. The home is the main place where children are exposed to secondhand smoke. Children who live in multi-unit housing are significantly more exposed to secondhand smoke than children who live in single-family homes, even if no one smokes inside their apartment.

Including specific recommendations related to eliminating secondhand and thirdhand smoke exposure in St. Helena's General Plan would eliminate many preventable health issues in multi-unit housing. The coalition recommends that the Housing Element update include the following as a minimum to protect multi-unit housing residents:

- **Smoking is prohibited in all units of a multi-unit residence, including any associated exclusive-use enclosed areas or unenclosed areas, such as a private balcony, porch, deck, or patio.**
- **Smoking is also prohibited at least twenty-five (25) feet in any direction of any doorways, window, opening, or other vent into an enclosed area of a multi-unit residence and unenclosed areas primarily used by children.**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input regarding the need to address secondhand smoke protections in multi-units housing. We believe that incorporating protections for these families will create a safe and high standard of living for residents.

Thank you,

Jessica Chapin

Co-Chair

From: Joe McGrath <joe.mcgrath65@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, November 18, 2021 12:42 PM

To: Geoff Ellsworth <GEllsworth@cityofsthelena.org>; Paul Dohring <PDohring@cityofsthelena.org>; Anna Chouteau <AChouteau@cityofsthelena.org>; Lester Hardy <LHardy@cityofsthelena.org>; Eric Hall <EHall@cityofsthelena.org>; Mark Prestwich <MPrestwich@cityofsthelena.org>; Maya DeRosa <MDeRosa@cityofsthelena.org>; Joe McGrath <joe.mcgrath65@gmail.com>

Subject: [External] Housing Input

Dear Council Members & Staff:

I had the opportunity to listen in on the 11/15 Workshop on City Surplus Property.

I would like to provide some insights/inputs to this discussion:

*** Surplus Property:**

The discussion with respect to the "best use" for each of the respective properties was spot on.

Railroad ave is an excellent location for residential. The Old City Hall is an excellent location for mixed use. I would encourage the City to come to a resolution on best use and then move forward to rezone these properties (including overlay provisions) while the properties remain in City's hands. This would not only remove a barrier for would-be developers, but create value for the respective property and the City.

*** Cross-Property Projects/Joining Non-adjacent Properties for development scale:** While there may be some very nominal economies of scale for combining parcels into "single" projects, you would be equally precluding small and local developers from participating. Please keep in mind that the only two projects built in the last 10+ years for workforce or affordable housing were bootstrapped projects by a local non-profit and a small developer respectively. Combining two 3/4 acre sites into "one" project would still not be that enticing to an affordable developer (for profit or non-profit) as the scale is still not economical. Rather than try and social engineer the outcome, the City would be best served by removing obstacles for development where they want it. Spending City money on what-if scenarios (ie. 2015 study on 644 and 684 McCorkle) or any other speculative and visionary ideas would appear to be a waste of taxpayer dollars.

*** Housing Generally:**

I do not believe that St. Helena (or any other jurisdiction in CA) will be able to subsidize their way to a housing solution. It is imperative that municipalities seek to truly understand the barriers that prevent the market from being a component of the solution for affordable and workforce housing. Having faced many of these barriers during the development of 632 McCorkle, let me outline a few.

*** "Land, Joseph, Land"** Nicole Kidman had it right in "Far and Away". There is a dearth of HDR lots in St. Helena. This is inhibitor #1 toward solving for housing. The current HDR lots are haphazardly spread throughout the City with no discernable pattern adhering to an academic's view of urban planning. With a vision of "in and up" the city should be taking a serious look at a rezoning effort that allows for residential mixed use on main street and HDR zoning in the town center. My wife and I recently visited the City of Bordeaux. It was the surprise of our trip. The Old Town center is bursting with vitality. Average building height is 4-6 stories. "Streets" are 20' wide. No appreciable above ground parking. Squares at every turn. Very pedestrian friendly. Public transit a short walk away.

*** Housing Opportunity Sites:** The housing opportunity sites in the latest Housing Element and Zoning Ordinance is a good start, but why so few? and how were they chosen? Why would we not consider ALL lots > 1/2 acre within the ULL as housing opportunity sites or something like that.

*** Don't tax and burden what you want, incent it.** If you don't want something, tax it, if you do want something, incent it. I spent over \$200K in City fees to build 8 units at McCorkle. I spent nearly \$500K on lawyers defending a "by-right" project. Those two line items alone tally to nearly \$100k / unit or approx \$800/month in rent for a low-single digit return. If the City wants affordable and workforce housing, don't disincent it with fee structure and overly "discretionary" review process.

*** Don't add even more requirements.** With all due respect to the union representative who advocated for mandating healthcare requirements for all contractor's or developer's employees, this would add just one more cost obstacle to getting a project off the ground. It would also rule out small developers. There are already prevailing wage requirements tied to all federal, state and most municipal subsidies.

*** Water Moratorium/Water Neutrality.**

The City cannot expect a developer to proceed with a project without the commitment of a will-serve letter for water.

Multi-family apartment living (particularly new construction) is the most efficient user of residential water resources, particularly with water efficiency measures required by the State. My tenants at McCorkle are routinely using about half of the 65 gpd allocation. All new apartments built after 2018 are required by the State to bill tenants for water. This is a good model and it works. But even with the low water use above, the water & sewer utility is close to \$100/month per unit. More expensive than gas & electric.

Fixed meter fees are too high. Fire suppression is necessary and required and thus requires bigger meters, but why should we pay the bigger meter fee monthly for the oversized meter for a singular (maybe never) incident of fire suppression. The meter fees should be sized to the domestic use requirement.

The City should remove the Water Neutrality Requirement on affordable and workforce housing.

The City should not allow for irrigated landscaping from City water resources, period.

Leak Detection. What keeps me up at night is potential leaks in my apartment units in context of the latest municipal fee structure. The City needs to invest in smart meters and event/alert management. I recently had a leak at some units in Santa Rosa. Once we fixed it, the City was able to tell me by looking at the meter online that it was repaired. In the near future they will alert me immediately. In St. Helena I get a letter that arrives perhaps up to 60-days from the detection of round the clock usage. This is low-hanging fruit.

City Indemnification:

Why should a developer indemnify the City for a project that complies to all zoning ordinances? This was the most frustrating element of the McCorkle project. At minimum, if the City requires indemnification, the applicant should be able to choose the legal defense strategy, including selection of the entire legal defense team. If the City wants to use it's attorney, the City should pay for them.

Design Review: This process should be re-engineered entirely. I have served 6-years on a Planning Commission in Orinda and two years as a Chair. I have seen decisions made based on the mood of a commissioner on any given night. This process should be scrutinized for subjectivity. Requirements should be clear and objective. Develop design standards. Develop paths for ministerial approval by Staff. Doing so creates objective standards that are predictable to a developer. The California Building Code (CBC) is very complex. But developers do not fear the CBC because it is clear and objective. Developers fear Design Review. Additionally Design Review should be achieved with a very minimal design package. It should not require extensive Civil or any Structural Engineering. When I applied for 632 McCorkle, the contracted staff requested excruciating detail for design review (eg. curb elevations, etc). This level of details is for Building Permit Review. Pushing these requirements into Design Review just front loads the expense in the environment of subjective outcome. That is not a good combination.

Height Limit and Parking: The City should look at relaxing the height limit. The 35' height limit precludes 3-story with sloped roof on raised foundation and may even preclude sloped roof on three-story modular w/ flat roof on raised foundation (modular has higher stack height).

Within a public transportation zone, the City should re-evaluate parking requirements. The Covered Parking requirement should be eliminated entirely. Perhaps "enclosed" parking (storage) has a benefit, but it is not clear what benefit covered parking has. My experience with a garage or enclosed requirement in the rental market is not good. Garages are more often used as storage and actually reduce available parking. Or worst case, they are used as sub-leased housing.

"Workforce" Housing: The City needs to define this term in the context of % AMI. In the current context, workforce housing should be considered affordable housing and benefit from the same concession structure as defined "affordable" housing. Finite housing supply is like squeezing a balloon with finite air. If Pacaso or second home owners take supply off the market, and there is no availability of "workforce" housing, there are three choices. 1) Pack up and Leave, 2) Stretch budget and go up, 3) Put pressure on lower rent, lower cost and go down market.

Workforce under "Affordable" :

I have proposed to staff the following model: Trade 2:1 "moderate" units for the average of "low income" and "very low income". Meaning, if the City under current ordinance would require (1) "Low" and (1) "Very Low" unit, that requirement could be met by a developer by providing (4) "Moderate" units (80-120% AMI). Under current zoning ordinance, it is nearly impossible for a for-profit developer who is not tapped into federal, state or municipal subsidies to pencil out a 40% inclusionary project. Further it would require that the remaining 60% units go "up market". How does this solve for "workforce" that is not considered "affordable"?

Why I think this model works. The current rental market is less (lower) than the affordability limits for 120% AMI. The rental rates would not have a negative impact on the developer. But why is this a benefit to the City? In return, units would be deed-restricted "moderate" and only available to eligible households, thus truly available to the "workforce". This would preclude the new units to be used as pied-a-terres and, or priced as luxury units. The developer would get the concessions, but be burdened by the ongoing eligibility requirement. I believe there is still a window for this model to pencil out and would advocate that the City consider this.

Thanks for your attention and I look forward to working collaboratively with the City to help solve our housing challenges.

Thx,

Joe

1/20/22

Dear Housing Element Workshop Facilitators

I am writing to discuss the County's mandated housing element update. The update of the housing element is an opportunity to increase health equity by ensuring all residents live in safe and healthy conditions. As the Governor's Office of Planning and Research has stated, in its guidance on environmental justice in general plans (https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20200706-GPG_Chapter_4_EJ.pdf), exposure to harmful chemicals from secondhand smoke and its lingering residues (thirdhand smoke) is a threat to safe housing. The U.S. Surgeon General has declared that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke, which annually causes an estimated 41,000 deaths of people who do not smoke.

The risk of harm is most acute in multifamily housing, where drifting smoke from one person can contaminate many living units and is expensive and difficult to clean up. The home is the main place where children are exposed to secondhand smoke. Children who live in multi-unit housing are significantly more exposed to secondhand smoke than children who live in single-family homes, even if no one smokes inside their apartment.

Including specific recommendations related to eliminating secondhand and thirdhand smoke exposure in Napa's General Plan would eliminate many preventable health issues in multi-unit housing. The Coalition for a Tobacco Free Napa recommends that the Housing Element update include the following as a minimum to protect multi-unit housing residents:

- **Smoking is prohibited in all units of a multi-unit residence, including any associated exclusive-use enclosed areas or unenclosed areas, such as a private balcony, porch, deck, or patio.**
- **Smoking is also prohibited at least twenty-five (25) feet in any direction of any doorways, window, opening, or other vent into an enclosed area of a multi-unit residence and unenclosed areas primarily used by children.**

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input regarding the need to address secondhand smoke protections in multi-units housing. We believe that incorporating protections for these families will create a safe and high standard of living for residents.

Sincerely,

Bobbi Monnett

January 19, 2022

Dear Planning Department,

It seems as though since the two properties listed below have previously been evaluated and deemed suitable for rental housing development they should be added to/included with your site inventory.

To not do so based on rationale such as potential complications or challenges will be construed as political interference. Let's face it, every potential site has difficulties and challenges.

Sincerely
Nancy Dervin

September 2015

Feasibility Analysis and Comparison of Sites
for New Affordable Housing Development Final Report
Submitted to
The City of St. Helena
By
VERNAZZA WOLFE ASSOCIATES, INC.
2909 Shasta Road
Berkeley, CA 94708

Site Ranking

Based on considerations of site availability and size, the Adams Street site stands out as the best possible site for rental housing among the six assessed in this study.

November 2017

A RESTRICTED APPRAISAL REPORT
of
Signorelli Barn
A 2,925 Rentable Square Foot
Special Use Property
Situated On A 5.13 Acre Site
933 Signorelli Circle
St. Helena, CA 94574

Highest and best use is an analysis of those uses which are legally, physically and financially feasible. Once the potential uses are identified within these parameters, the most probable highest and best use can be identified.

The highest and best use as vacant is for the development of a multi-family project.

The highest and best use of the subject property as improved is for demolition of the barn and construction of a multi-family development.

Saint Helena Housing Coalition, Inc.

PO Box 988

Saint Helena, CA 94574

Questions for Housing Element Workshop, January 20, 2022.

1. Housing Element 65580-6589.1 (b)(f) requires the city to “Designating and maintaining a supply of land and adequate sites suitable, feasible, and available for the development of housing sufficient to meet the locality’s housing need for all income levels is essential to achieving the state’s housing goals and the purposes of this article.

AB 2162 (CA Govt. Code Section §65650) requires the city to “(3) An inventory of land suitable and available for residential development, including vacant sites and sites having realistic and demonstrated potential for redevelopment during the planning period to meet the locality’s housing need for a designated income level, and an analysis of the relationship of zoning and public facilities and services to these sites”.

Section 65913.1 Least Cost Zoning Law requires the city to “(a) In exercising its authority to zone for land uses and in revising its housing element pursuant to Article 10.6 (commencing with Section 65580) of Chapter 3, a city, county, or city and county shall designate and zone sufficient vacant land for residential use with appropriate standards, in relation to zoning for nonresidential use, and in relation to growth projections of the general plan to meet housing needs for all income categories as identified in the housing element of the general plan. For the purposes of this section:

Question: Given that the above statutes require that the sites identified in the City of St. Helena 2023-2031 Housing Element Community Workshop for Thursday, January 20, 2022, Link: Online Map of Potential Sites please explain, or offer proof, “are available and having a realistic & demonstratable potential for development during the planning period”?

In the above statutes given that the words realistic, sufficient, demonstrated are not defined within the statutes here is Black’s Law Dictionary definitions for your consideration:

Demonstrated: “To teach by exhibition of samples; to derive from admitted premises by steps of reasoning which admit no doubt; to prove indubitably.

Sufficient: “Adequate, enough, as much as may be necessary, equal or fit for end proposed, and that may be necessary to accomplish an object”.

“Tending to or expressing an awareness of things as they really are.

Question: Is the city committed to utilizing its powers of eminent domain (such as in Kelo v. New London Decision, U.S. Supreme Court 545 U.S. 469) to satisfy the aforementioned statutory requirements in providing the “land suitable for development” as SHHC’s experience has been that few, if any, of the parcels listed would be willing made available for development?

Question: Given the 2020 US Census, when adjusted, estimates that 855 of SH single-family residential housing stock are now occupied as second homes. That suggests that SH actually needs 855 new additional “affordable” housing units to bring SH back into equilibrium. How has that been accounted for in the proposed 2023-2031 housing Element?

Question: Given that 100% of the 2023-2031 Housing element Identified Draft Sites for Lower income are all on the East Side of Saint Helena might not consideration be given to the US Supreme Court decision TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS ET AL. v. COMMUNITIES PROJECT, INC. ET AL. No.13-1371, which in part held that “respectively, antidiscrimination laws should be construed to encompass disparate-impact claims when their text refers to the consequences of actions and not just to the mindset of actors, and where that interpretation is consistent with statutory purpose”. And “The introductory word “otherwise” also signals a shift in emphasis from an actor’s intent to the consequences of his actions.”

SHHC submits that given that 100% of the ‘affordable’ housing projects for lower income constructed in the past (Woodbridge Village Apartments (50 units) , Hunt’s Grove Apartments (56 units), and Stonebridge Apartments (80 units) the 177 units identified as for Lower Income on the East side compound the issues addressed in the above-mentioned U.S. Supreme Court case.

Question: Why was the city owned Adams Street property not listed as a potential site in the Saint Helena Housing Element Draft Site Inventory -2023-2031? Considering that the City of Saint Helena Final May 2009, ADAMS STREET PROPERTY VISIONING, set forth ‘affordable workforce housing, the City Council Approved Three-Year Goals and 2021/22 Work Plan, “Goal 2 Stabilize, Maintain and Improve Access to Housing (A) Consider and synthesize stakeholder housing recommendations and recommend short and long-term housing initiatives to the City Council, including advancing the use of one or more of city-owned parcels (including Adams Street) for affordable housing”. The St Helena Housing & Community Report, 2018 specifically sets forth on page 23 that “When considering use of public land, housing could be established as a priority use. As St. Helena examines City owned assets each would be evaluated for its potential for housing development both for low and moderate-income rental and for sale” should not the Adams Street site have been included?

Respectfully submitted:

Rick Crebs

Rick Crebs
SHHC
707-580-0418



BLUE ZONES PROJECT

January 20th, 2022

City of St. Helena City Council
1572 Railroad Avenue
St. Helena, CA 94574

Re: Housing Element Update

Dear Council Members,

Blue Zones Project is writing to urge your consideration of adding tobacco and secondhand smoke recommendations in the City's updated housing element, including comprehensive smoke-free multi-unit housing protections.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Secondhand tobacco and marijuana smoke or vaporized aerosols can easily drift from unit-to-unit through vents, pipes and electrical outlets and through windows and doors from neighbor balconies, patios and other outdoor areas. Individuals who are exposed to secondhand smoke can suffer from serious adverse health effects including chronic health problems.

Updating the housing element is a chance to ensure equitable health opportunities for all residents while encouraging a productive community with economic stability. Health starts in our communities and is shaped by where we live, work, and play. As such, housing is a vital component to one's health. The inclusion of tobacco control restrictions to prevent secondhand smoke and aerosol exposure will provide profound health benefits to all residents so they can have healthy and productive lives.

As you work on updating your housing element, I would ask that you consider incorporating the following language into your goals and policies:

To reduce secondhand and thirdhand smoke death and disability, adopt and enforce a comprehensive smoke-free ordinance for multifamily housing properties that covers all exclusive-use areas, both exterior areas (such as private balconies and decks) and interior unit spaces, as well as common areas not already covered by state law.

Sincerely,

Joaquin Razo
Executive Director

Kelly Bond
Public Policy Advocate

January 21, 2022

Dear Planning Department and City Council,

Thank you for the Housing Element Workshop. It was interesting as well as eye-opening. A few confusing and disappointing things I'd like to point out are as follows.

1. There are a number of properties on the potential site list that have not been vetted for viability.
2. Sites were mentioned as potential options that are not on the site list that appeared to be potentially more suitable than some of the sites that are listed.
3. It was implied that Adams Street is not on the site list mostly due to political concerns. All or part of that property needs to be on the site list.
4. Nearly all east side sites are marked for high density/low or very low income vs. medium density moderate/above moderate on the west side of town.

The Planning Department was informed by members of the community that some of the sites on the current site map are not viable for various reasons. Therefore the City must either remove those sites from the list or concretely confirm them for viability before going any further.

To go forward and provide the State of California with a knowingly faulty list of sites containing unviable options would, I believe, constitute fraud.

Also, segregating people in housing with 90% of low and very low-income earners crowded into high density developments on one side of town where there are no public schools while 90% of moderate and above moderate-income earners are afforded housing in more spacious medium density conditions on the other side of town where all the public schools are is a big issue.

From an economic policy analysis article in The Washington Post:

“ ‘Snob zoning’ is racial housing segregation by another name. It’s no secret that Americans live in divided spaces. The country’s cities and suburbs are segregated by race and socioeconomic status. These divides are often assumed to be a result of economics — as poor and rich families alike pick neighborhoods they can afford — and of personal choice, as Americans seek to live near people with whom they have more in common.

There’s a more sinister force at work, however. In many places, economic and racial segregation goes beyond market forces or personal choices. That segregation is buttressed by local laws and ordinances that effectively exclude or discourage poor and working-class people from moving into certain communities, keeping those areas primarily the domain of the white and wealthy.”

Are we snobs or are we seeking justice, equity and morality for St. Helena?

Sincerely,
Nancy Dervin

St. Helena HEU

Public Received via StHelenaHousing.com

January 25, 2022

Henry Gundling	<p>It seems inconceivable that city government would consider ANY new development, commercial or residential, given the obvious additional burden that would place on our already failing water resources.</p> <p>Henry Gundling</p>
Jordan Bentley	<p>I am very excited about the opportunity we have as community to come together and successfully create the much needed housing for our citizens. In order for us all to thrive we need to provide options for a full spectrum of home buyers and long-term tenants: our workforce, young professionals, families and seniors. In addition, I support the implementation of mixed-use housing to serve our entrepreneurial professionals and support a prosperous rejuvenation of our downtown. Now is the time to creatively address these issues together and to take action.</p> <p>- Jordan Bentley / V.P. of Our Town St. Helena</p>
Dawn Leininger	<p>I would like to see our town move toward adding affordable housing for people who work in our town. I feel like many of our town entities would benefit from a balance of socioeconomic residents. For instance, our congregation at church is dwindling, the school enrollments have declined. I imagine the service clubs & philanthropic groups have also lost members. We need an infusion of people who live & work here to bring energy back to St. Helena. Because of space (not to mention water shortage) sometimes smaller projects are easier to manage. Could the city help build ADU's on lots that have room with a fixed rental price/locked for a period of time below market for the person whose property it is at? We wouldn't have to cut a deal with a developer for their interests with this plan. I want to see progress on this issue sooner than later. Remember every affordable dwelling makes a difference. Thank you.</p>
Kevin	<p>Every unit makes a difference. Make it easy for anyone willing to build an ADU. Make it easy for any company willing to build lower income units(housing/apartments). We need all kinds of housing available for full time residents. Encourage it!</p>
Richard Crebs	<p>September 20, 2021</p> <p>Saint Helena Housing Coalition (SHHC), a not-for-profit 501C3 was formed to bring larger 'affordable housing project to SH concentrating on those making between \$50,000 and \$100,000. That is our missing "middleclass. There are three other sizable 'affordable' housing for those making less than \$50,000.</p> <p>SHHC submitted an Offer to the City to develop up to 90 'affordable' apartment units on the most Eastern end of the Adams Street property (Parcel # 009 150 006 000). SHHC is in the process of securing an Option Agreement on Parcel # 009 660 005 000, as a joint venture with OTSH, an approximate 1.4-acre parcel upon which to develop up to 48 'affordable' apartment units.</p> <p>SHHC has a reasonable expectation to secure the rights to develop Parcel #'s 009 180 005 006 & 009 283 007 consisting of 11 acres, mor or less, of most undevelopable land. We estimate that over a number of years that perhaps 100 or more 'affordable' apartment units can developed.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted:</p>

St. Helena HEU

Community Workshop #1

September 16, 2021

Public Comments*

Jenny – Executive Director, local nonprofit

- Shortage of affordable housing compounded by 2020 fires
- Rents have increased but wages haven't kept up
- Many residents are struggling to pay rent. Her organization has recently helped more than 200 residents with rent and other expenses.
- There is a long waiting list for affordable housing (5 year waiting list); more affordable housing please!
- Smoke Free housing is needed, as 2nd hand smoke is an issue in multifamily housing

Nancy Dervin

- Proposals for affordable and workforce housing have been denied in the past
- Demand is such that large-scale developments are needed
- Overcrowding is an issue in the city
- Many St. Helena workers commute into the city because they can't afford to live here.

Joe – Developer

- Multifamily is challenging as affordability is difficult to make cost effective. Subsidies are required to create housing that is actually affordable. Financing for these projects is difficult.
- Affordable projects move slowly and this increases costs.
- Market partners may be able to help solve the housing problem.
- What in the zoning code can be changed to help reduce costs?
 - Development standards such as Density, Parking, Height, and Water Neutrality, as well as fees, can be obstacles to development.
- NIMBY opposition and land costs can be constraints
- Sites: feasibility is a problem and owners need to be engaged.
- Larger sites are located near the urban limit, but density is needed near city center. Height limits should be reconsidered.
- Main Street has commercial/retail vacancies. Potential for housing as mixed use.

Ester

- Many properties are small and can't hold larger projects. Lot consolidation may be needed. Adams St. property could be a potential low-income housing site.

Paul

- Please consider public safety issues and make sure that sites are feasible and safe.

**Please note that all comments are paraphrased from the live discussion during the workshop.*

Joe

- 900 Crane is for sale and may be a potential site.
- Can we expedite rezones for housing?
- Multifamily areas that only allow up to a triplex are a constraint. We need to allow more building forms.
- Please clear as many hurdles to development as possible.

St. Helena HEU

Community Workshop #2: Sites Inventory

January 20, 2022

Public Comments

On January 20, 2022, the City held a community workshop to discuss available sites for housing in St. Helena. The workshop included a presentation of potential sites and a discussion with participants from the community. *Please note that all comments are paraphrased from the live discussion.*

Jeff Farmer:

- Consider closed catholic school or Oak. Some talk with church officials there.
- Also, the city corp yard. It may be available.
- ADUs, concern about lack of ADU rentals

Norma Ferriz:

- Potential sites: corner of Fulton and east of the railroad tracks, both the north and south side of Fulton.
- What happened with the big property by vineyard valley (Hunter project).
- Regarding Pope, there is another site east toward college there may be a big vacant site to consider.

Joe McGrath:

- Feasibility component: concern about owner intent
- 1998 Spring Street just changed hands and may have a vineyard lease. The 3-acre site.
- McCorkle sites have a pending contract and may have other plans
- One other McCorkle site was just renovated
- Fulton site had interest for housing development in the past.
- Meet the requirements vs. get the houses built. Don't lose track of the latter.
- Feasibility: is there opportunity for this to be a parameter driven process. We always get the wrong sites, or just 10 percent of the right sites.
- Other sites to consider: across from corp yard on charter oak. Consider this please.

Jordan Bentley:

- Concern about owner intent
- 1998 Spring Street changed hands and has a vineyard lease.
- Please provide a list of properties that can be developed.

Pat Friday:

- Crane is a good place for housing. Keep it.

- Across from Episcopal church, there is a vacant parcel that used to be a church. This may be a possibility. Walking distance to everything.
- Spring Street across from the cemetery there is a big area of vacant land.

Rick:

- St. Helena Housing Coalition (non-profit). Consider workforce housing for the missing middle types and incomes.
- Realistic challenges. Owners don't want to sell/develop. Even with offers from developers. This is typical.
- How many people are on this call? *Aaron: 29 attendees down from 33.Plus 9 Panelists.*

Mary Stevenson:

- Our Town St. Helena.
- All those listed in potential sites have been talked to by developers.
- Adams Street, why not include?
- Can we provide an analysis of ADUs built in the last year. How many are being rented? To what income levels.
- Over 40 percent of land in city limits is in vineyards. How much of this is zoned for housing? Can we look at these and create a long-term plan? What will remain in vineyard and what will remain in housing?
- Can we consolidate properties to rezone without such an expensive and time-consuming process?
- Great news that these have to be rezoned by the City, following the HE certification.
- Lots of expensive houses with ADUs that won't be rented. It's an extension of the main house.

John:

- Agrees on ADUs with Mary. Don't consider as they aren't rented.
- Site on Crane Avenue by the creek has a major power line running across the property. This has to be dealt with before housing can be built on the site.

Jennifer Le Liberte:

- North Crane: there's another parcel close to the one considered. Consider this. Suggests we include this site if Crane Avenue site is included.

Tracy McBride:

- The City needs low income housing that is ownership based.
- Consider providing data on rentals, costs, and housing types. Show some of the math behind your research.
- On the map on your website. The lower income sites are east of main street and site 9 is west of main street. Keep this site to disperse lower income sites around the city.
- How can we incentivize housing development? With by-right this can make things easier if nothing is developed and the site is reused in the next round.

- Adams St and church sites: why can't we use these sites? Are churches really harder to redevelop?
- Please choose sites likely to develop. Communication with owners may help.
- Explain the Adams Street decision. Tell the public if it's included and why? The community may want to consider this site.

Joe McGrath:

- Beckstopper/Dr. Crane site, is this currently counted? Aaron: no.
- If school is changed to residential then wants to go back to school, is this a headache?
- Why separate low and very low? Don't we want a mix?
- PG&E property on Mitchell: Consider
- Adams: would subdivision help the political situation.

Jennifer La Liberte:

- Works with Our Town St. Helena
- Housing element is a zoning exercise. What about state law revision to incentivize? Aren't there more teeth now?
- Please let the public know which sites have been ruled out and why.

Nancy Dervin

- Please show the public the full list of sites, including ones that have been removed.
- Re: Public Comments: Is there a way to make these public?
- Encourages the City to really include feasible sites.
- Some sites could be higher density and available to lower income families.
- The site map shows moderate on west side and lower on the east side of town. Is there a disparity between east and west? Please don't force the lowest income earners into the most-dense areas of the city. Mix up housing opportunities.
- Please vet the sites.
- Housing demands are only going to increase. We need to plan for more after this cycle.

Steve

- Adams Street. Why not include it? Advantages to this property: publicly owned (it can be sold). Please include this. It's feasible. Subdivision may be necessary, and it can house a lot of people across a lot of income categories.

Pat Friday:

- We need to develop Adams Street; agrees that the property may need to be subdivided.
- Spring Street – multifamily designated parcel was developed with a single-family home. How could that happen? This would have been a great location for housing.

Norma Ferriz:

- What are the criteria for selecting sites? How is this process undertaken?

- Consider vineyards that are further out than the city center. The edges of town may have potential for housing. *Aaron: urban limit line in general plan restricts this.*

Tracy McBride

- What about new laws regarding subdivision of sf homes (SB 9), how will they be addressed?
Aaron: HCD is still trying to figure it out.
- Consider including the topic in the Housing Element.