



Housing Committee

Thursday, September 14, 2023

City Hall Council Chambers – 601 Main St W. Ashland, WI 54806

1:30 PM

Take notice that a meeting of the Housing Committee will be held in- person in the City Hall Council Chambers, with the availability to attend virtually.

To join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone: <https://meet.goto.com/157765245>. Or dial in using your phone. United States (Toll Free): 1 866 899 4679 Access Code: 157-765-245

The following items will be considered:

1. Approval of Agenda

2. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of minutes from the August 9th, 2023 Housing Committee meeting

3. Citizen Comments

4. Old Business

- a. Foreclosures - Discussion
- b. Vacant Properties - Discussion
- c. Rooming House - Discussion
- d. Main Street Housing - Discussion
- e. Empty Buildable Lots - Discussion

5. New Business

6. Announcements

- a. Update on progress with CDBG, HIP, and property maintenance

7. Adjournment

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City of Ashland - Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

The City of Ashland Housing Committee will be holding its Wednesday August 9th, 2023 meeting at 10:00am in the City Hall Council Chamber and via GoTo Meetings.

The meeting can be accessed using a computer, tablet or smartphone using the link <https://meet.goto.com/157765245>. The meeting can also be accessed by phone at 1-866-899-4679 using access code: 157-765-245.

Present: Matt MacKenzie, Charlie Ortman, Tom Buzzi, Kaas Baichtal, Brant Kucera, Steven Wiley, Ray Kallio, Kelly Westlund, Jay Emmert

Absent: Priscilla Neiman

Agenda

- 1) Agenda Approval – 10:03 am
Baichtal moved and Ortman seconded to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
- 2) Consent Agenda
 - a) Approval of minutes from the July 12th, 2023 Housing Committee meeting
Ortman moved and Buzzi seconded. Baichtal asked to add in the 2nd paragraph of old business in the discussion on the HIP program a mention of not just numerical trends but specifically the reasons people cannot be helped/patterns so we can create programs to help them. MacKenzie asked if Baichtal was asking to change trends to patterns. Wiley read back to Baichtal her request and she acknowledged. Motion to approve the minutes carried with the amendment as proposed.
- 3) Citizen Comments
Westlund wanted to take chance to let committee know that there is a unique funding opportunity with HUD that was released in the last couple weeks. It was designed to identify and remove barriers to affordable housing. It opens the beginning of September and closes at the end of October. She wants to get with communities, counties, and tribes in area which would ensure a more competitive application. She would like to explore chances to collaborate. It is the Pro Housing program.
- 4) Old Business
 - a) Foreclosures – Discussion
Wiley provided an update. MacKenzie asked we table the item for the next meeting. Baichtal stated that she dug into the CCAP API more to determine who has access to the data. What she saw was unfinished. People have to go through the county to access the data.
 - b) Vacant Properties – Discussion
We need to look at legality. Wiley needs to follow up with Tyler on the City ordinances. Baichtal mentioned that there are also properties that are not in danger but not available for housing. She suggested perhaps a public service announcement saying if people have properties that are housing and could be

available we would be interested. MacKenzie suggested Baichtal connect with Wiley after the meeting and provide the name of any property owner she was talking about. Ortman stated that a realtor would be handy. Baichtal stated that if you have a house you are not doing anything with people need it! She suggested the committee look at an announcement like what they do for not flushing wipes down the toilet. Buzzi keeps tabs on people that own lots of properties because he does business with them. Emmert feels there have been a number of landlords that have sold their properties during the market uptick. That is why there is a shortage. They are cashing out. Westlund mentioned the CDBG revolving loan fund which is an underused program at NWRPC. It is a zero interest 10-year loan. As long as it is an income eligible tenant at the property. Kallio asked if the tenant or landlord was responsible for paying money back. Westlund answered that the landlord was responsible. Baichtal explained that she had approached NWRPC in the past. She said it was impossible to work with them. The lady was very anti-landlord and lost paperwork frequently. MacKenzie asked how we outreach to the properties. Emmert asked if the properties are maintained. Baichtal answered that some of them are. It depends. Emmert stated that with some estates it might be a year before the family calls them due to having to work things out. It could be a month, could be a year. MacKenzie asked the committee to come up with thoughts prior to next meeting on how we can locate these properties. Kallio sees some of them out on his property maintenance inspections. Someone owns the property just east of 2816 Main Street East for example. Kallio provided another example also. Baichtal mentioned the property at 10th St W and 4th Ave W. It has been vacant and shut up for years. It could be a college rental. She would rehab it as it is a block from her house. She would normally get in touch with a more aggressive realtor. The committee could do a PSA or create a brochure. Mackenzie stated that we want to know what our target is prior to creating a brochure. We needed to determine how we identify where vacant properties are at. Ortman asked how we help. Baichtal suggested advertising that there are rehabbers in town that would buy properties for \$25,000. She would buy anything for \$10,000-\$15,000 but \$25,000 is her limit. Mackenzie asked if an option would be to reach out to the people that are willing to do the work. Ortman answered affirmatively. Emmert recommended checking with City Attorney on what legally we can do. Mackenzie asked where we would advertise it. Baichtal proposed putting something in the mail. Westlund asked if mailing something in property taxes would work. Mackenzie explained that we pay to put stuff in the water bills. If we can get people to bring properties to our attention maybe we put that in the water bill. An example is if you have a vacant property next door.

c) Rooming House – Discussion

Mackenzie asked if we need a definition of rooming houses. Wiley stated that staff had started discussing whether or not to support them and that they would need to be regulated. Wiley asked Kucera if he wanted to weigh in. Kucera stated that he was completely opposed to this. The landlord needs to live on site. In our experience they have not worked out well. Baichtal stated that she had lived in them for years. In her experience they were occupied equally by men and women. Baichtal was working on remodeling. She stated that they consisted of a hallway with rooms, bathrooms, and kitchens. She asked why we would want to have eight more homeless single people because of ideas that came out segregating poor people from neighborhoods. Mackenzie asked for us to reach out to communities already doing this to see if it was successful for them and how they are doing. Baichtal explained how it would work. Ortman has seen

Kucera's scenario but the people are going to be here. He stated that we have to deal with them one way or another. Mackenzie asked if Wiley can find a couple communities that have rooming houses and get copies of their ordinances for the next meeting. Wiley stated that he would work on this. Buzzi has found examples of these from out east. Baichtal stated that only recently have cities started to reverse trends from before. Emmert stated that Our Lady of the Lake has huge reservations about having such a use right across from a school. They are not going to split off the gym from the property. Buzzi stated that it is a great location. Kallio mentioned the old clinic by Super One and that it has also been vacant. He asked if it could work. Emmert stated that the owner was asking much for it and Emmert does not know if someone can make it work there. He suggested identifying properties for lower income people close to grocery store, close to bus stops, etc.

Westlund left the meeting at 10:43 am.

Emmert left the meeting at 10:50 am.

d) Main Street Housing – Discussion

Baichtal thought Zackovich got buildings downtown near City Hall with the idea of putting in dorm style housing. Money was likely an issue. Wiley explained that staff is looking at an ordinance for downtown and Wiley has a draft in progress. Mackenzie asked us to look at this and follow up on creating a draft. Baichtal suggested coordinating with the Chamber of Commerce or someone like that to achieve buy in. Mackenzie suggested look at ordinances first and see and eventually we will need to work with our downtown businesses, etc. on buy in. Baichtal stated that there will likely be a shortage of ADA office spaces if we change the ordinance so we should look at that also.

e) Empty Buildable Lots – Discussion

Wiley explained the difference between buildable lots and former right-of-way. The City is giving back some right-of-way and has available buildable lots that can be sold. Mackenzie would like to see us identify some properties that are buildable lots with utilities to them. Baichtal asked if there was a list. The committee asked if for the next meeting Wiley could come up with five different properties from across the City to look at. They asked if the lots could be spread out across town. Baichtal mentioned one on Vaughn on the west side of the street closer to 3rd than 6th. Ortman explained that the Pro Housing grant could help maybe. He asked if we could have a house built and turn over to a realtor after. Mackenzie stated that we could but would be a nightmare. Ortman proposed picking one or two items from the agenda and not discuss the rest at the next meeting to really focus on them. Wiley was to get with Mackenzie and discuss and create agenda for the next meeting. Ortman wants to beat up the rooming house item for the next meeting.

Mackenzie stated that Priscilla Neiman had asked if it is possible for us to meet on Monday or Thursday. Baichtal stated that Thursday would be better for her. Kucera explained that Thursday mornings were the Department Head meetings so Wiley would not be available then. Afternoon works if it is Thursday.

5) New Business

6) Announcements

a) Update on progress with CDBG, HIP and property maintenance

Kallio gave an update on the HIP program. He runs into issues where people need more money than what we can contribute. We do \$1,000 to \$1,200. We can give small loans or pick a few larger projects. Currently the City does not have money coming into the program so we should discuss how best to proceed. Kallio had 33 lawns in the last week and a half and 2/3 have been taken care of.

7) Adjournment

Ortman moved and Buzzi seconded to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:09 am.

Mackenzie informed the committee that the volunteer picnic was scheduled for the 8th of September and asked members to keep their calendars open.

Rooming/Minimum Housing Standards - Examples

City of Medford Rooming House Ordinance

https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/medford/latest/medford_wi/0-0-0-3417.

City of Ripon Ordinance – Minimum Housing Standards

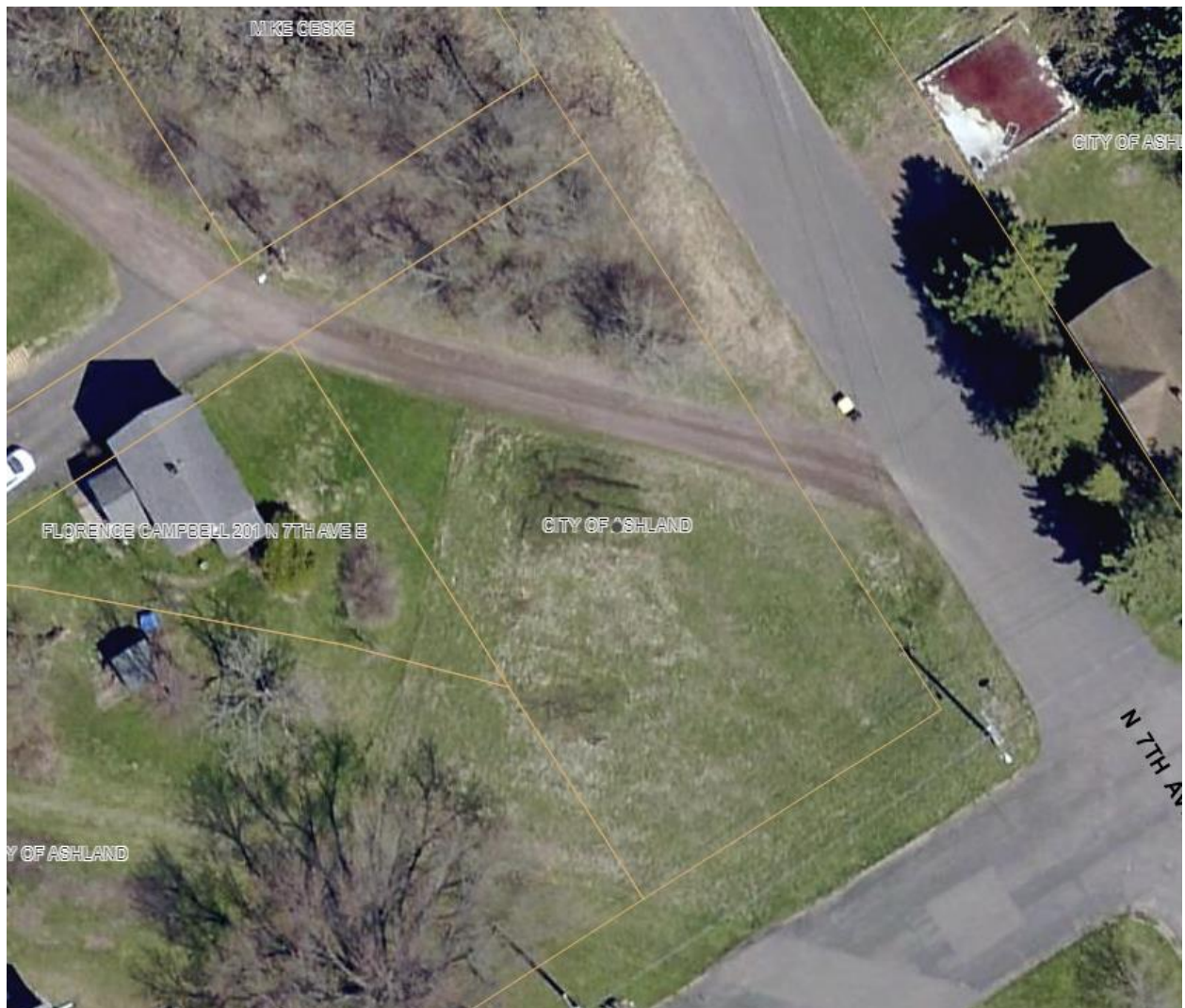
https://library.municode.com/wi/ripon/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TIT21MIHOCO

City of De Pere Ordinance – Minimum standards and Rooming House ordinance

https://library.municode.com/wi/de_pere/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIIMUCO_CH94BUPRM_ACO

Empty City-owned Parcels

Parcel 201-01084-0000



Zoning: Waterfront City Center (W-CC) with Waterfront Overlay District
Area: Approximately .258 acres

Portion of Parcel 201-01886-0000 all of Parcel 201-01894-0000



Zoning: Single & Two Family Residential (R-2)

Area: Approximately 7,500 square feet for parcel 201-01894-0000 and portion of parcel 201-01886-0000

Beaser Avenue Site (Parcel 201-00356-0000)



Zoning: Mixed Residential-Commercial with Gateway Overlay (MRC-GTWY)

Area: Approximately 4.5 acres

Junction Road Site (Parcel 201-03804-0000)



Zoning: Residential Estates with portion in Floodplain Overlay (R-E)

Area: Approximately 5.5 acres