

Townhouse Development on Ash Place Meeting #5 Minutes

Meeting:

Wednesday, February 7, 2024
6:00 pm-7:00 pm

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, February 21, 2024 @ 6:00 pm
2108 West Euclid Avenue

Attendance:

Dennis & Michele Flynn, Tammi Ray, Jack & Joan Ohl, Sheri Lattimore, Marni Solheim, Nancy Huck, Shari Hughey, Ken & Patty Hughey, Jeff Stevens, Karl Zacher, John St. Marie, Deb Rademacher, Buzz Bellessa, Monica Wasson

New News since our meeting:

Good news regarding the buffer zone in the park. According to the Historical Preservation, the park is not in the historic registry, but the SE lots in the park owned by the city were deeded to the city to keep as a park. If the city proposed a change in use, the lots go back to previous owner so there is no incentive for the city to change anything. (Thank you MS for the research!)

Key Takeaways:

1. January 1, 2024 anything zoned RSF (Residential Single Family) is now zoned R1, which means that duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes can be on a lot. (Starting in 2021, there were “interim” rules called BOCA that already allowed this, but the City Council has now made it permanent).
2. Jeff Stevens talked to Melissa Owen regarding the Agency Notification phase, she said that the Archeological and Historical agencies had more questions. This phase isn’t complete until those questions get answered.
3. We must assume the proposed Ash Place Project will happen. Focus needs to be on DENSITY! Current project slated for 21 Townhomes on 1.3 acres. We will focus on limiting the density to more resemble the current neighborhood characteristics – for example, from 21 townhomes to 12 townhomes and to require architectural build that maintains the character of our neighborhood.
4. Expand our reach and hit a critical mass – inform more people about the project – willing to speak up, write letters, attend neighborhood council meetings (our Audubon-Downriver, but also North Hill and Emerson/Garfield, and maybe West Central and Northwest), etc.
 - a. Neighborhood Councils can weigh in and communicate with the City Council indicating what the neighbors want – the more voices of Neighborhood Councils on our side the better.
5. The Audubon-Downriver Neighborhood Council has been discussing this and it is a hot topic. We need as many of us as possible need to attend the next 2 meetings (3rd Thursday: Feb 15 and Mar 21) in order to become a “voting member”, so we may influence the upcoming vote on this topic.
6. Contact individual tribal members. Whoever you can think of ... here are a few names.
 - a. Carol Evans, with the Spokane Tribes
509-458-6504 ext 652
 - b. Randy Abrahamson, Tribal Historical Preservation Office with Spokane Tribes
randya@spokanetribe.com 509-258-4222
 - c. Francis SiJohn, Director, Planning & Economic Development Department PEDD:
francis.sijohn@spokanetribe.com 509-458-6520
 - d. James Best, Economic Development Manager
James.best@spokanetribe.com 509-818-1408
 - e. Stacey Schinko, Executive Director
Stacey.schinko@spokanetribe.com 509-458-6599

Tasks/Homework:

1. All of us – attend Audubon-Downriver Neighborhood Council on February 15 @ 6:30 pm and March 21 in the Shadle Library. Happy hour at 6:00 pm.
2. Michele will invite Kitty Klitzke to our next meeting.
3. Michele will look into Conservation Futures, NW Conservation, and Future-wise.
4. Michele will contact Carol Evans from Spokane Tribes.
5. Michele will reach out to Emerson/Garfield and North Hill Neighborhood councils and ask for their support.
6. Continue talking to neighbors – consider putting a yard sign in your yard, pass out postcards (attached for you to print/cut or ask Michele to get some for you).
7. Continue writing to City Council Representatives, cc Giacobbe Byrd, Nicolette Ocheltree

Discussion plus a little research:

1. The city of Spokane's goal is to increase density and housing. The plan is already set, codes and zoning have already been changed. (Changing this is out of our scope.) We can pursue density.
2. How did this happen? How did Spokane change so much without seemingly any input from the community effected?
 - a. Interim Zoning Ordinance: In 2021 City of Spokane Planning Services had an interim zoning ordinance to implement strategies encouraged to address the housing shortage and increase residential building capacity increasing flexibility for attached homes, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes. Link to approved interim zoning ordinance [Ordinance C36232 Building Opportunity and Choices for All Interim Zoning Ordinance \(spokanecity.org\)](#) (Information on Density begins on page 10)
 - b. Building Opportunity and Choices for All (created through the interim zoning ordinance) was a pilot project until December 14, 2023 at which point City Council approved the emergency ordinance. Below is a snip of the announcement. Link to announcement: [Building Opportunity - City of Spokane, Washington \(spokanecity.org\)](#)

Announcements

On December 14, 2023, [City Council approved an emergency ordinance](#) to limit the number of units in the R1 and R2 zones to 4 units. The ordinance limits the units on a temporary basis, while the state legislature and federal agencies work on further guidance and adjustments to recent state legislation to address federal lending and appraisal requirements. Upon completion of that guidance, future amendments to Title 17 SMC are anticipated to permanently address any conflicts with the recently passed middle housing regulations.

On November 20, 2023, City Council approved the proposed Building Opportunity for Housing text amendments. Thanks to the attention and dedication of residents and community stakeholders, the new housing regulations will make Middle Housing more feasible throughout Spokane, providing for greater housing diversity and increasing opportunities for homeownership. You can [watch a recording of the City Council hearing](#).

Key changes include:

- Design standards for single-unit detached homes and Middle Housing developments.
- No parking required for residential uses within ½ mile of a transit stop.
- No lot density maximums for lots less than 2 acres in size.
- Reduced lot size minimums.
- Expanded Unit Lot Subdivision process to allow for greater site flexibility.
- Implementation of footprint and impervious surface maximums.
- Increased building height and reduced front and rear setbacks for some zones.

The code changes go into effect **January 1, 2024**.

- c. Here is a link to the website: [Building Opportunity - City of Spokane, Washington \(spokanecity.org\)](https://www.spokanecity.org/building-opportunity) and a link to the presentation dated 08-17-2022: [Building Opportunity and Choices for All Open House Aug 17, 2022 \(spokanecity.org\)](https://www.spokanecity.org/building-opportunity-and-choices-for-all-open-house-aug-17-2022)
 - d. Link to attached housing info sheet [Townhomes under Building Opportunity and Choices for All \(spokanecity.org\)](https://www.spokanecity.org/townhomes-under-building-opportunity-and-choices-for-all)
3. Comprehensive Housing Plan – Survey results 05-11-2023. [Final Report and Analysis - Housing Journey Survey \(spokanecity.org\)](https://www.spokanecity.org/final-report-and-analysis-housing-journey-survey)
- a. This is very interesting if you have time to look at it. It was open for 68 days, record number of people participated (over 5,000), majority of people taking survey worked in education and healthcare, and length of residency in Spokane – 2nd highest to respond were those that have lived in Spokane area only 3-5 years (higher than those born here).
 - b. How are we to know about these types of things?
4. FINALLY, some good news! Coming together, what we are doing now, as a shared community, is the beginning to having a voice that will be heard. Individuals → Neighbors → Neighborhood Council → City Council → State Legislature → Federal
- a. **It is critical that we attend the next two Neighborhood Council Meetings.** We are part of the Audubon-Downriver Neighborhood. Meetings are on the 3rd Thursday of each month (excluding July & August) at 6:30 pm at the Shadle Library.
 - b. This is a hot topic right now and our Neighborhood Council will be voting in possibly, April or May on aspects of this project to take to the city council. To be a voting member of the neighborhood council, you must attend 2 meetings. WE NEED TO have as many of us attend these meetings so there is a majority vote with the force of a lot of people to project the message that the Neighborhood Council wants to limit the density on this project.

Awareness & Next Steps:

1. Garland District: Developers are building two apartment buildings: one is 60 units other is 30 units. [Centers, Corridors and Spokane's Growth: Strategies for Next 20 Years - City of Spokane, Washington \(spokanecity.org\)](https://www.spokanecity.org/centers-corridors-and-spokane-s-growth-strategies-for-next-20-years)
 - a. No off-street parking requirements! On-street parking and increased traffic will impact existing neighborhood residents and shops greatly.
 - b. Developers are given incentives to do this – neighbors are caught unaware
2. Letters/emails written (nice job and **keep writing**) Include the topics that are of most concern:
 - a. Density – reduce density to 12 townhomes.
 - b. Euclid is a Dead End – safety
 - c. Indigenous Lands – historical and conservation
3. **KEEP A LOOK OUT FOR PUBLIC NOTICE!** If you see a big sign go up, please email the group ASAP so we can start writing letters. *If we don't write to the notification board, then we will not have a voice at the next community meeting.