From: Heidi West
To: Bonnie Doherty; Grp. City Council and City Web Site; Bryan von Lossberg
Subject: Re: Otis Street Apartments
Date: Thursday, July 9, 2020 11:23:57 AM

Hi Mike and Bonnie,

These are all very valid concerns related to the project.

I have been learning a lot about how Low Income Housing Tax Credit Projects work and recently had a yard beer with the person who is the lead architect on this project (I didn't know this prior to inviting her over).

The density of 200 units is allowed by current zoning (more easily with the recent adjustment that was just approved to allow balcony's to encroach into a right of way) - and that 200 is the number of residences that makes the Low Income Housing Tax Credit work. While I have a rudimentary understanding of how these LIHTC projects work - I invited Heather McMillin from HomeWord over recently to walk me through the process of financing more comprehensively.) I am learning they are more complicated than I ever assumed, hugely restrictive, and largely formulaic. The tax credits can only cover a small percentage of total project units and the total project has to be underwritten with the operational income that is capped in what rents can be charged to income limited renters. This particular site would be easier to build on, and design for the project would be simpler, at a lower density - but the reality is that the LIHTC math just doesn't work with any less units. Two hundred units wasn't something that was arrived at because someone thought it would look cool - It is two hundred because that is what works.

As someone who was low income for a long time, have listened to public comment that really dehumanizes low income folks in the context of affordable housing, and am currently working in the field of affordable housing - I am in support of this project - BUT - there IS A HUGE inequity in what parts of Missoula are absorbing new affordable housing. I am going to speak to that whenever I have the opportunity - because it is primarily our neighborhoods (North and West side) and while there are reasons for this in how these projects are ranked and scored - isn't fair that low income neighborhoods, with an existing lack of infrastructure and poor health outcomes, continually bear this burden. ALL OF OUR NEIGHBORHOODS SHOULD BE MEETING THIS NEED. LIHTC projects are the primary way the United States builds affordable housing and it isn't really a fair or equitable program. Projects that are located in Qualified Income Tracts are scored more favorably - which means most of them will be located in one of three neighborhoods in Missoula.

I know both Bryan and I are constantly in conversations with Transportation folks and/or the mayor regarding traffic on 5th, Turner, Scott Street, the road along the rail road track (can't

think of the name at the moment), and Scott and Phillips. These areas have their challenges and in some cases lack infrastructure to make them safe. Sidewalks would be a good start. It is also important to note that these units are targeted to low income families and it is likely that many residents will be children who do not drive yet. Our local elementary school should be prepared to absorb these students - they currently have around 300 students and the facility was built to hold 450 students. Lowell will receive students from this project as well as Trinity in the next 5 years... Barbara Frank, who is the principal, is aware of these projects and the impact on and future growth of the student body.

This location is relatively close to all sorts of services (groceries, downtown, hospital). As a frequent route 3 bus rider - it is my absolutely preferred way of getting around when I am going places (but then I mostly live, work and play on the North, West and Downtown parts of town). These days I rarely leave my house... But, if I remember right - the North Reserve - Scott Street Plan calls out areas like the Scott Street site (the 10 undeveloped acres) as having neighborhood level business/services in the future - of course that is just a plan and no guarantee that folks will actually build those things - but it is included in the vision for this part of town. I will also note that Scott Street Village also has a planned Phase 3 that is likely to be built at a higher density. A year ago or so, I met with a retired architect who was brainstorming for the future build out on behalf of the developers and, if I remember correctly he was suggesting almost 70 townhomes.

I also know that there are additional conversations happening about how the city is currently using the land they own in this area - as well as how the diocese use their land - and a broader goal of creating a larger park in this part of town. We are gaining the density to really need it.

Anyhow. I know 200 units is a lot - and yes - I share all of concerns about traffic (I live just on the other side of Scott Street, on Turner, which is our neighborhood truck route - but also want to add that after having driven to Helena to testify on behalf of some LIHTC projects (not this one), and having watched the process, and learning more of how LIHTCs work (compared to the funding sources I use in my work world) - I am grateful that we have some mission driven, Missoula based folks, who maybe don't live in our neighborhood, but who are invested in this place that are willing to try and make these projects as good as they can be within the parameters that exist for them. It tough all around.

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From: Bonnie Doherty <bonnieadoherty@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2020 3:12:00 PM
To: Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject: Otis Street Apartments

Dear City Council Members,
We would like to address the proposed development on Otis Street. 200 Apartments will create a tremendous strain on the already busy traffic flow on Scott Street and Rogers. Parking already is a concern in our area. We often deal with abandon or long term parked vehicles. How does the city plan to handle the influx of new residents for traffic flow and parking? 178 underground parking spaces will not handle residents of 200 units.

Thank you for your response,

Mike and Bonnie Doherty
1160 Village Way
Missoula, MT
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Sent from my iPad