

10-02-2019 Town Council Meeting Responses to Council Questions

ITEM #13: Receive the Affordable Housing FY 19 Annual Report

Council Question:

Could you please include information on the status, progress, lessons to date, etc. on the master leasing program and the employee housing program?

Council Question:

Would you ask staff to give an update on the Employee Housing Program: How many people have looked into it, and how many have taken advantage of it? Rent or buy? How much money has been disbursed? What feedback have employees given?

Staff Response:

The Community Home Trust's Master Leasing Program was launched in April 2019. All five units at Glen Lennox are currently occupied by residents at 30% Area Median Income or below.

The Town's Employee Housing Program was launched in February 2019. The program launch involved extensive communications and employee outreach effort, which included 13 employee interest meetings throughout the organization.

Over the last seven months, 15 employees have applied to the program, eight of whom were approved. Of the eight, one employee found housing and received assistance, six are currently looking for housing, and one purchased a home in Carrboro. The remaining seven employees who have applied are in the process of gathering the required documentation to be approved for the program. Staff is in the process of evaluating the program and will return after the first year of the pilot to share what we have learned with Council.

Council Question:

When you think about potential future displacement due to redevelopment, are there any apartments or mobile home parks that you would consider at risk in the upcoming 1-2 years?

Staff Response:

Staff and the Housing Advisory Board are creating a draft Affordable Housing Preservation Strategy Framework to continue to strengthen the Town's ability to preserve existing affordable housing. This draft framework is scheduled to come for Council discussion later this fall.

One of the strategies we have identified in the framework is the creation of an early warning system to help identify at risk affordable housing properties to assist the Town in creating proactive solutions for preservation. There are four manufactured home communities and around 20 apartment complexes that include naturally occurring affordable housing units in Town. Many of these communities, we believe, would be identified in an early warning system as communities at varying levels of risk of redevelopment.

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In addition to staff's work to create a preservation strategy framework, we have also had conversations with rental and manufactured home property owners in town interested in exploring opportunities to preserve affordable housing in their properties. The Town is serving as a resource to these owners and exploring potential partnership opportunities.