Student Family Housing Redevelopment Committee – Meeting Minutes Summary

Date: 2-10-2015    Time: 1:00PM - 2:30PM PST

Participants: Associate Dean Lenora Timm (Chair), Associate Director of Real Estate Services Mark Rutheiser, Marilyn Derby (Project Manager), Brittany Derieg (Project Assistant), Professor Michael Rios, Graduate Student Assistant to the Dean and Chancellor Angel Hinzo, Graduate Student Representatives Cutcha Risling Baldy, Carlos Colman Meixner, Gordon Rees, Sara Petrosillo, and Paul Johnson, and Undergraduate Student Representative Ryan Reynolds.

Discussion

There have been several issues with security lately in Solano Park, and residents are unaware of how to report and respond to these issues. Notifying the Parks Office often leaves the students feeling dismissed, and a proper protocol needs to be established and publicized to the residents.

The labor market in construction is quite volatile, and costs can as much as double in a single year. In addition, lumber costs have increased substantially in recent years due to increased regulations on sustainable forestry. Combined with the drastically increased building codes for accessibility, sustainability, and energy efficiency, are the reasons why the cost to construct new student housing today costs far more than if it had simply increased with inflation since the 1960s when the Parks were originally built.

If we built 200 affordable units (at $906 for a two-bedroom) 200 market units, we are left with a shortfall of $12 million. If we were to rebuild the existing layout with no market rate units, maintaining 200 units at current rates, we are left with a shortfall of $57 million dollars over the life of the property. If we were to double the number of units but keep all 400 at current rental rates, we are left with a $107 million dollar shortfall. We can choose to present these options to the community along with more financially neutral options at the upcoming community forum.

Twenty percent of the city of Davis’ housing market must be set aside for affordable housing. Could we work with the neighboring Nishi property to relieve them of their long-term affordable housing requirement by providing more ourselves in exchange for an immediate cash donation? The problem with this is that our affordable housing is not available to the general community, only to students, and may not qualify towards meeting the city’s 20% general affordable housing requirement.

Developing a List of Quality of Life Issues in Student Family Housing

Facilities

1. Both Orchard and Solano Parks should be maintained as family housing
2. We should provide a variety of apartment options (include studios, 1, 2 & 3 bedrooms; micro units may fit the needs of a subset of students)
3. The community is open to increasing the unit density if it is balanced against the concerns related to quality of life and the impact on the sense of community
4. Preserve outdoor recreational open space (and building up 3 or 4 floors if needed)
5. We need to ensure that the new project is designed with safety in mind; children need safe play areas with buffer areas that help keep them inside play areas.
6. The new design needs to include natural ventilation and temperature control.
7. There needs to be a central community space with a kitchen and play area.
8. We are receiving increasing requests for service & emotional-support animals. It should be a goal to explore how the design of student family housing can better facilitate this. We may also want to permit students to have pets, beyond students with disabilities.
9. Natural light and sightlines to play areas should be preserved.
10. Wi-fi needs to be included.

**Affordability**

1. The management of the parks should provide assistance to students in accessing financial support programs (certified enrollment counselors – CalFresh, WIC, Medi-Cal, Covered California, Housing Choice Vouchers / Section 8).
2. The new student family housing facilities need to accept Section 8 vouchers.
3. A washer & dryer can be included in apartments as it is much cheaper (~$8 a month) than most families spend on coin-operated laundry machines.
4. If market rate units are added, we need to be conscience of how the affordable units and the market-rate units are arranged, and if they will be noticeably different. We need to avoid creating a community of “haves” and “have nots.”

**Quality of Life**

1. Involve residents in development of policies & procedures (permit residents to use patios & balconies to suit family needs, examine how policies and procedures affect international students/families).
2. Establish a structure/process to solicit feedback & follow-up on issues (satisfaction surveys, follow-up on concerns).
3. Staff need to work on creating & maintaining a positive relationships with residents.
4. Improve orientation for new residents, especially international students.
5. Develop an email list for spouses/partners and send emails regarding community issues to them in addition to the student.
6. Establish social media & email lists (e.g., freecycle, babysitting & child care).
7. Work with students to develop some way to help them better predict when they might be able to get an apartment (e.g., what months typically have more openings?)
8. We need to look into the need for another child-care facility, and the financial impact this might have on the overall project.

**Upcoming:**

- Work on drafting the survey and contact Faye about getting an announcement in the newsletter and ask about posting notices in the Solano community.
- Look for a location for the community workshop on March 7, and look at getting lunch catered.
• Begin drafting survey publicity and the explanatory statement that we will post on our website (for survey issues that require background or explanation).

• See if we can develop any graphics of some of the information we shared about affordability issues.

2/16 - Survey will be shared with committee members, Sheryl-Ann, and Team Family Housing for additional feedback.

2/18 – We will incorporate this feedback and finish up the survey.

2/19 - The survey will go live. We will send the link to current and former residents of both Orchard and Solano Park, through GSA, and through GradLink.

2/24 - As this is the last committee meeting before the community workshop, we need to review plans.

2/27 - The Solano newsletter goes out with a reminder about the survey & workshop.

3/2 - Survey closes. We begin analyzing the results.

3/7 - Community workshop, lunch and child-care will be provided.