

City of Defiance Housing Committee

Wednesday, January 22, 2020

3:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, 631 Perry Street Defiance, OH 43512

Committee members present: Liz Keel, Emma Kirkpatrick, Rita Kissner, Niki Warncke, Mike McCann, Jerry Hayes, Rex Robinson, Aaron Hopson, Chris Switzer, Angie Franklin, Kirstie Mack, Jamie Gerken, Rachelle Kuhn, Cyndi Ensign, Karol Yeager, Jon Gathman

1. CRA Marketing

- a. Niki Warncke discussed the updates to the City's *Community Reinvestment Areas* (CRA) brochure, which will include updated maps and the expansion of CRA #3. The City's website (<http://cityofdefiance.com/>) will also feature a new "development" tab on the front page, which will contain information on the CRA as well as other organizations in order to provide more details and incentives for anyone interested in developing in the City. The planning & zoning application has also been updated since the two boards were combined: <http://cityofdefiance.com/wp-content/uploads/Defiance-Planning-and-Zoning-Appliation.2020.pdf>

2. Town Hall Meeting

- a. Once the CRA brochure is completed, the City will hold a Town Hall meeting for builders, lenders, realtors, remodelers, and anyone else that may be interested in development. Landlords could also be included to review incentives for improvements to rental properties.

3. Housing Discussion

- a. Rita Kissner discussed the possibility of a presentation for bankers, as well as regulatory-wise, making development as easy as possible in the City. Mike McCann referred to the update to the City Zoning Code, which will remedy some development issues such as setbacks for 45 ft wide lots, rendering them unbuildable with the current code.
- b. Mayor McCann also mentioned applications for the Defiance County Demolition Program, which are being accepted through the Defiance County Commissioners' office. If anyone has a property in mind to be demolished, they can submit addresses to the mayor or individually to the County.

4. Rent Smart

- a. The Good Tenant Program, now known as "Rent Smart" starts on **March 9, 2020** with the first of three classes. The free classes will focus on supporting knowledge and skills essential for a successful renting experience. Angie Franklin from NOCAC provided the committee with flyers and brochures on the Rent Smart program. Ms. Franklin stated that the classes will be offered quarterly in 2020. The first class will take place at the Defiance Dream Center, located at 1935 E. Second Street, Suite A in Defiance. Pre-registration is required by March 4, 2020.

- b. There was discussion on creating something similar to Rent Smart, but for landlords in order to promote networking opportunities. Options for mediation is still being discussed as well.
- c. Liz Keel of MVPO explained that funds are available to landlords to fix up their rental properties in the *Community Housing Impact & Preservation* (CHIP) program. Tenants must be low to moderate income and landlords are required to pay half of the repair costs. For more information, visit <https://www.mvpo.org/housing>.

5. Homebuilders Association

- a. The Mayor met with the Homebuilders Association and learned of the construction of two new homes, for which the City waived the permit fees. Kirstie Mack of the DDVB explained that applications for the Historic District in downtown Defiance are being accepted and work can start as early as April. There are several possibilities in Downtown Defiance for 2nd floor rentals. Jerry Hayes also noted that there is a planned housing development totaling 300 units to start in Van Wert. This kind of momentum in the region may help to bring developers to Defiance.
- b. There was also some discussion on Northtowne Estates as well as progress made by the Defiance Dream Center.

6. Adjourn

- a. The Mayor invited committee members to a digital marketing presentation at the Serrick Center, Defiance College on January 28th at 3:00 p.m.
- b. The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 19, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.**