

DRAKE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING MEETING
HOUSING SUB-COMMITTEE
Thursday March 4th, 2010 at 6:30pm
Holiday Inn Express, 1140 24th Street

1. **Polk County Assessor** – 30-45 mins.
Randy Ripperger, Chief Deputy Assessor for Polk County
 - Presentation: Brief Overview of the Assessment Process
 - Questions and discussion

2. **Discuss potential project areas to target for downsizing / density reduction** – 20-30 mins.
 - Built-as single family, 2-4 units appropriate for converting back to single family
 - Investor-owned, multi-family properties appropriate for reducing no. of units

3. **Review and discuss the updated draft of the Housing Goals** – 15-20 mins.

Next Meeting will be Thursday, April 1st, 6:30 pm
April topics: Finalize Housing Goals

Meeting Notes:

Polk County Assessor

Randy Ripperger, Chief Deputy Assessor for Polk County, gave an overview of the assessment process. He explained how properties are assessed and how their office determines whether or not properties are being assessed at market value. The primary tool to measure appraisal performance is the sales ratio study, which compares assessed values with recent sales prices. The Iowa Department of Revenue monitors the assessor's performance. Iowa state law requires the assessment level to be 100% of market value, with an allowance of +/- 5%. If the median sales ratio for an area falls outside of that range, the assessor is likely to adjust the assessments in that area.

Ripperger gave several examples from the Drake neighborhood, and conducted sample sales ratio studies for all of the "neighborhoods" (as defined by Polk County) that fall within Drake's boundaries. Overall, assessments within the Drake neighborhood fall within the allowable range. However, the southern two quadrants of the neighborhood had a median sales ratio below the allowable range, meaning assessments in those areas will likely be adjusted upward in 2011. Committee members noted that land values in these two areas dropped by half during the last assessment period. Ripperger indicated that they may have been associated with areas to the east of MLK (i.e. King Irving), which would explain the value drop. He noted that this may have been a mistake, since properties are clearly selling for higher values.

Another area of concern was the northeast quintile, where the median sales ratio was significantly above the allowable range. Kyle Larson, City Planner, suggested that this may be due to the large number of lots/homes that Habitat has purchased recently in that area. Ripperger indicated that it warrants further investigation by his staff.

Review and discuss updated Housing Goals Draft

The subcommittee reviewed the updated goals draft and began prioritizing the action steps. The group discussed the need to do things in phases, keeping in mind that some steps will need to be accomplished before others can begin. Amber Kobler and Kyle Larson will incorporate the revisions and timelines into the draft. The subcommittee will spend the April meeting finalizing the goals, priorities, and timelines.

Discuss potential project areas to target for downsizing / density reduction

Kyle and Amber explained that they had met with Holly Olson from the NFC to discuss the downsizing program and the potential for adjusting the program or creating a different offering to better address the goals of the neighborhood. The current downsizing program is intended to be for 1-4 unit conversions where at least one unit is owner-occupied. The current subsidy is \$20,000 per property. Committee members have previously suggested that this amount is not enough. The NFC is hesitant to increase the subsidy because they have limited funds, and increasing the allocation per property would reduce the funds available for other properties.

The NFC is willing to look into a different program offering for renovating and reducing the number of units in larger multi-family conversions, even if they are investor-owned. This would most likely be a loan program without a subsidy. Kyle explained that in the discussion with Holly, she stated it would be best (given the limited availability of funds per year) to have a target project area with a restricted dollar amount or number of loans. Loans would be given on a first come, first served basis. The group discussed potential project areas and decided that the best place to start would be the area between University and Kingman, from 31st to 24th. This area has a high concentration of multi-family conversions and the group felt that owners in this area may be more likely to take advantage of a program like this. In addition, it is a part of the neighborhood with high visibility and significant corridors. The possibility of doing later phases in other parts of the neighborhood was discussed as well. The group suggested looking at the density more closely to further define the project area. Kyle and Amber will do further analysis, discuss options with the NFC, and report back to the subcommittee.