

Girdwood Housing Working Group Meeting
March 10, 2021
Minutes Draft

Due to the current spread COVID-19 virus, meetings are held virtually and telephonic indefinitely.

The Girdwood Board of Supervisors, its committees, and subcommittees are subject to the Alaska Open Meetings Act as found in Alaska Statute 44.62.310 and Anchorage Municipal Code 1.25 - Public Meetings.

7:08PM Call to order, Mike Edgington

Attending are Mike Edgington, Drew Harlos, Kalie Harrison, Krystal Hoke, Britney Blackledge, Kellie Casselman, Kim Van Sickle, Mauri Parks, Shelley Rowton, HLB

Agenda Approval for March 10 2021 meeting	Drew Harlos/Krystal Hoke
Amendments to original agenda	Kalie Harrison/Krystal Hoke
Agenda approved by assent vote	4-0
Minutes approval from Feb 10 2021 meeting	postponed to April meeting

Introductions & New Attendees:

Kellie Casselman, new attendee

Announcements & Presentations:

Presentation on ADU regulations across the Northwest, Nisma Gabobe & Jeannette Lee, Sightline Institute
Nisma and Jeannette have been researching ADU's in Anchorage and have made recommendation to changing code. Sightline Institute is a think tank covering the Cascadia region and focuses on housing and democracy in Alaska. ADUs offer secondary housing unit with shared lot with main home.
Estimated 1000 ADUs in Anchorage, from Eagle River to Girdwood, 600 are registered; 37 registered ADUs in Girdwood.

2018 ordinance made it easier in Anchorage (excluding Girdwood and Eagle River) to allow ADUs:
additional changes would increase number of quality ADUs and increase property values.

Nisma provides ideas on how to incentivize ADUs in Girdwood. Other cities including Seattle, Portland and Vancouver BC are dealing with housing by initiating changes to ADU code.

Resistance comes from desire to maintain character of neighborhood, short term rental, parking concerns.
Less successful ADU examples have resulted when limited change to ADUs are made instead of comprehensive approach to inhibit ADU development. Other housing reforms may occur concurrently, allowing more multi-family duplex/triplex construction.

Community Land Trust is among the possible models to give control of housing to the community compared to government and developers. Sightline Institute is interested in learning more about CLTs in Alaska.
Other impediments to ADU development are bureaucratic processes of permitting, financing.
Education/workshops can help to assist property owners to navigate these successfully. Juneau granted funds to homeowners to help develop ADUs.



Sightline Institute ADU article is here:

<https://www.sightline.org/2021/02/17/anchorage-needs-more-moderately-priced-housing-lets-start-with-adus/>

Business:

1. Review draft proposed Girdwood ADU regulation updates with Jeannette & Nisma
Draft proposal for Girdwood ADU regulation is presented.

- Removing Minimum lot size to allow more owners to build on any lots, allow site layout to determine if detached ADU works. Original code was larger than 16,800 SF, only about 15% of lots in Girdwood would be large enough. Nisma encourages review of other residential building code.
 - Minimum size 300 changed to no minimum.
 - Maximum size: 900 SF or 50-75% of primary dwelling size – this would match current Anchorage code. Matching Anchorage code may be wise unless there is a reason to do something different.
 - Parking: Girdwood leaning in opposite direction than other communities. Girdwood doesn't have ideal on-street parking, no pedestrian walkways. Parking in Girdwood not required to be paved. Concern in other locations studied is the cost of creation of formal parking area.
Consider flexibility to current proposal of 1 spot per bedroom. This may be too restrictive and discourage rental to families.
 - Setbacks: change side setback flexibility for taller ADUs (those +15ft high)
General suggestion is not to make more restriction to ADU than is on primary residence.
 - Bed and Breakfast (B&B): Currently only 1 unit may be used for B&B. Recommended change allows multiple units could be used as B&B. B&B is not the same as Short Term Rental, which is a larger problem in Girdwood.
 - Dry Cabins: Currently not discussed in code, recommend change to require full utilities for ADU. Perhaps change to require electric, water and sewer, maybe not require gas.
 - Appearance – not included in the reviewed table but draft document discusses exterior compatible with primary dwelling. It is not recommended to require extra design features.
 - Owner Occupancy: This really relates to Short Term Rentals (STR) and concern about amount of STR and management of those properties. STR are unregulated. Other communities handle STR through specific regulation and some limits of number of units. Portland has a substantial "impact" fee. Group discusses ways to incentivize long term rental with property tax exemption. This would likely be Areawide and could have larger implications and resistance throughout the MOA. Possible public/private partnership to provide "perks" to property owners who rent to long term to employees (ie season pass, restaurant privileges, etc).
Group discusses that there may be a way to incentivize private business to do this.
Group discusses possible deed restrictions.
58% of single family homes are not claimed as primary homes by home owner, possible over-restriction of owner occupy could keep these owners from developing ADU.
 - Floor Area Ratio – recommend considering exempting ADUs from FAR. Additional research to determine how FAR could change to create more housing.
 - Intent is to bring non-conforming ADUs into legal conforming.
 - Variances are not currently allowed. Current proposal is to allow variances. Group also discusses allowing planning director to allow specific changes under their authority.
2. Propose changes and assign any follow up work
Mike to work on Floor Area Ratio
Make changes to draft as discussed
3. Next steps and timeline: Land Use and GBOS process in April and submit to planning to initiate full public process.
4. Confirm next meeting date/time: April 14, 2021 – Regular meeting

Adjourn 9PM