

Cottage Grove City Council
Work Session Minutes
November 14, 2016

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Thomas Munroe called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

ROLL CALL

COUNCIL PRESENT: Mayor Thomas Munroe, City Councilors Kenneth Michael Roberts, Jake Boone, Jeff Gowing, Garland Burbach, Amy Slay and Mike Fleck

YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE: MJ Raade

STAFF PRESENT: City Manager Richard Meyers, City Recorder Trudy Borrevik, Finance Director Bert Likens, Community Development Director Howard Schesser, City Planner Amanda Ferguson, Community Services Director Pete Barrell and Captain Conrad Gagner

MEDIA PRESENT: Cameron Reiten, KNND Radio; Jon Stinnett, The Sentinel

Sharon Jean, 33914 Row River Road, Cottage Grove congratulated all the newly elected officials. She thanked the Council for the opportunity to make the presentation on Cottage Village Coalition. She said they were meeting once a week and had given many presentations around town to various non-profit organizations and businesses. She said their goal was to inform and educate the community, not only about the population in general but their proposal in particular. She said they thought they had a solid project to present and their goal tonight was to inform the council about the project. She said they were partners with Square One Villages on the project and some of their staff would be providing information to the Council.

Members from the committee handed out notebooks to the councilors containing information about the coalition.

Dan Bryant, Executive Director of Square One Villages, said they were requesting the Councilors support in securing a grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust which could be anywhere from \$250,000 to \$300,000 or more for the project which would pay for 1/3 to 1/2 of the project cost. He said the project they were proposing was approximately \$1 million for 14 households, which was less than \$70,000 per household. He said they were trying to create a new model for

affordable housing for smaller households. He talked about how he had been involved with Opportunity Village and outlined how they came upon the proposed model for Cottage Village. He talked about the need for affordable housing. He said HASCA (Housing and Community Services Agency of Lane County) had a five year waiting period for housing for single individuals. He talked about the Emerald Village Project in Eugene and the sizes and costs of the tiny homes. He said the rent varied from \$250 to \$350 a month depending on the size of the tiny house. He said they were looking at a piece of property to build 14 tiny homes on that could serve individuals or small families. He hoped the project would qualify for Section 8 housing.

Alicia Ginsberg, Project Coordinator, talked about the residents that were in Opportunity Village and said about 10 of them were moving to Emerald Village. She said they had a wide range of individuals in the housing units and over half were over 60 and a lot of them were on SSI Disability or Social Security.

Andrew Heben, Project Director, went over the notebooks given to council. He talked about a \$150,000 grant they received from Meyer Memorial Trust which was used to pilot and improve the version of their village model in a small community with few resources. Originally they were working with a group in Veneta but changed to Cottage Grove once they saw their vision. He said part of the funding was to do the planning, pre-development work for the project and they had been working the CVC (Cottage Village Coalition) to do that. He said the other piece of the grant was it was being packaged in a tool kit so what the process they were following could be applied to lowering costs for affordable housing throughout Oregon. He said federal and state funding for affordable housing was in short supply. He said their model was a way to provide decent housing within the local community by bringing people skills and materials that were in the community together. He said they had been working with the CVC since June and they had been helping them go through the steps to develop and manage the village. He said they were looking at 12 to 20 tiny houses ranging from 160 to 250 square feet in size. He said with the Emerald Village Project in Eugene was that they had 14 different local architects sign on to design, source materials and lead the construction for one of the houses which left them with construction documents for 14 unique designs which they could use for projects throughout Oregon. He said they would be also be interested if there were any local groups interested in coming up with designs in Cottage Grove. He said there would also be a common building that had a larger kitchen and meeting space for weekly or monthly village meetings. He said people living in the village would have a say about how the housing was operated and managed. He said there would be a basic community agreement and samples were provided in the information provided to Council.

Dan Bryant said in order to receive the Meyer Memorial Trust Grant, it would be helpful to have support from the council in the form of a resolution or letter. He said when they did develop the plans, assistance in paying the SDC charges would be most helpful to show the City supported the project. He shared a story about a couple he became very close with at Opportunity Village.

Lise Colgan, spoke as a Cottage Grove resident and said they were fortunate to have the support and technical assistance of Square One Villages but wanted to make sure everyone understood it was a Cottage Grove project. She said the model was something that people who lived in Cottage Grove could support. She said it was something that could give the residents a real feeling of

ownership and something the community would be proud of. She said when they started the discussions; they wanted to get a feeling from the people who were unhoused in the community as well as the community itself. She said what they heard from their discussions was anything would help which confirmed they were on the right track. She said they also turned to Beds for Freezing Nights, which she was an officer and one of the founders, and asked donors and volunteers a series of questions about whether they could support the effort and they were overwhelming in favor of the model or even the Conestoga hut model. She said the consensus was there needed to be rules and the support for families. She said the group wanted to provide the Council with the understanding that they had been doing due diligence and vetting the idea with the homeless community and broader community.

Councilor Fleck said the housing first model was what Eugene was adopting and he looked at it extensively and it was a valuable program where it saved communities money by getting the homeless into housing and working on the services they need. He said he supported it in premise. He asked Howard if the Code currently allowed the model or if modifications would have to be done to the Code?

Howard said they would have to have some modifications and they already had preliminary discussions with the group regarding that.

Councilor Slay asked who held the residents accountable to the rules.

Dan Bryant commented and gave an example of the first night in Opportunity Village of how a situation was dealt with. He said it was self-managed with assistance and there was a board that helped the local council to make sure they were keeping the rules. He said the model also included a part-time administrator who was onsite to aid with the administrative tasks.

Councilor Slay asked if there were programs to make it transitional to other housing.

Dan said the program could be designed to meet whatever the need was.

Councilor Gowing asked if the houses were stick built with foundations.

Dan said they were using a couple of different models. He said at Emerald Village, some were stick built and they were also using structurally integrated panels which were pre-manufactured wall. He said some of the architects involved in the project were using other techniques. He said the advantage of using stick built structures was that you could use a lot of volunteer labor, they didn't need high skilled.

Councilor Boone said because it was a work session no decisions could be made tonight. He asked if this would be coming back to Council. He said he liked the idea a lot and was very supportive of it.

Richard said it would come back to Council at the next Council meeting

Councilor Roberts asked if they could tour Opportunity Village and see plans for Emerald Village. He said the notebook was very well put together and answered all his questions.

Dan said they were welcome to tour, however Opportunity Village wasn't what they were suggesting for Cottage Grove. He said there was a display for Emerald Village at Opportunity Village.

Councilor Burback asked how it was determined if tenants could pay and if background checks were done. He asked if they ever had any issues with someone not being able to pay.

Dan said they did background checks just like any landlords would do however their threshold was lower. He said if they didn't have a Section 8 voucher, they would have to show what their income was and they could make the payments. He said rent was only \$30 at Opportunity Village so it hadn't been an issue.

Andrew Heben, Project Director, said rents ranged from \$250 to \$350 and over half of the initial applicants were over the age of 60 and on Social Security and making around \$733 a month. He said that didn't allow them to be able to save for first and last month's rent plus a deposit. He said they were looking at serving people around 30% of their median income or under.

Councilor Burback said the project was more than transitional housing, it was permanent.

Andrew said there had been a big shift towards focusing more on permanent housing rather than transitional housing.

Mayor Munroe said when they talked about someone paying \$30 a month, he got the feeling that there is no first, last or cleaning deposit.

Andrew said Opportunity Village was designed to be as accessible as possible and an intermediary solution.

Dan said there wouldn't be a need for someone to transition out of the project with the exception of a younger family. He said older individuals could live out their life in the housing as long as they desired to live there. He talked about how Emerald Village was structured and how tenants owned a share of the project to help them eventually transition out.

Councilor Fleck said HUD property inspections were pretty tight and asked if the tiny houses would pass inspection from HUD.

Andrew said they were privately funded so they hadn't had to meet HUD standards.

Councilor Fleck asked if the proposal was for half baths in each of the units. He said the SDC fees were based on the number of fixtures.

Andrew said there hadn't been a hard decision made yet on what they would have. He said they would meet the definition of permanent definition of housing. He said all 22 units in Emerald Village would have a shower, toilet and a kitchenette with a sink, refrigerator and hot plate.

Mayor Munroe congratulated the group for their hard work on the project.

Sharon Jean said it was nice that the Mayor and Councilor Fleck had attended some meetings. Said it was a project that was important to the community.

Richard said it would be on the November 28th agenda for council to consider a resolution and other issues such as SDC's, locations, etc.

There being no further business, Mayor Munroe adjourned the meeting at 6:44 pm.

Trudy Borrevik, City Recorder

Thomas C. Munroe, Mayor