

Housing Affordability Public Forum

February 24, 2018 10:30 am - 12:30 pm

West Penn Hospital School of Nursing Auditorium, 4900 Friendship Avenue

- Speakers:** Christina Howell (CH), Executive Director, Bloomfield Development Corporation
Linda Metropulos (LM), Deputy Director of Sustainability / Housing Development, Action Housing
Demi Kolke (DK), Senior Planner, Office of City Planning
Randall Taylor (RT), Penn Plaza Support & Action Coalition
- Notetaker:** Sarah Loser, Program Coordinator, Bloomfield Development Corporation

Section I: Welcome and Ground Rules

Speaker: Christina Howell

- Introduction of Speakers
- About Bloomfield Development Corporation
 - Our Projects:
 - Community process meetings (e.g., [4401 Liberty Ave.](#), [4520 Penn Ave.](#))
 - [Bloomfield Saturday Market](#)
 - [Vacant lot rehabilitation](#)
 - [Small business support](#)
- Meeting Goal: Education
 - How do you advocate for affordable housing?
 - What does affordability look like?
 - How can neighbors shape development in their neighborhood?
- Further meetings will cover topics such as land banks and tax credits
- Review of ground rules

Section II: Overview of Housing in Bloomfield

Speaker: Christina Howell

- Why are we having this meeting?
 - Significant raises in rentals and taxes
 - Similar increases in prices in surrounding neighborhoods
 - Nowhere in the US has enough affordable housing
- What is affordable housing?
 - Historically, section 8 (housing choice voucher) high rises
 - Ex: Penn Circle Towers
 - More mixed residences are the norm today
 - Neighborhood-scale, walkable-scale development
 - Ex: [New Pennley Place](#)
 - 38/102 (37%) units are public housing
 - Ex: [Fairmont Apartments](#)
 - 50/60 (83%) units are public housing

- All are for 62+ aged older adults
 - Full list of mixed public housing residences available [online](#)
- Bloomfield by Numbers

Note: Data taken from 2015 Housing & Urban Development (HUD) for ZIP code 15224, more up-to-date information than 2010 census, but does include some areas outside Bloomfield

 - Average age: 33 (14.2% aged 65+)
 - Average household size: 2 people

Note: the following points refer to maps from our PowerPoint presentation of low-moderate income census tracts from 2010 and 2015. Map data comes from HUD and is used to determine which areas receive funding to make improvements and help neighborhoods

 - Low-Moderate Income: an area's median income is 80% of the overall median income for the 7-county region
 - Eligible low-moderate income tracts are highlighted in pink on 2010 map, in green on 2015 map
- Challenges Surrounding Housing
 - Upkeep
 - Rising taxes & rents
 - Accessibility
 - Transportation
- Recent developments in Bloomfield (last 5 years)
 - Morrow Park Apartments
 - 213 units, “nano” to penthouse
 - Pricing: \$2,000 for 1-bedroom rental
 - Bloomfield Lofts (condos)
 - 18 units
 - Pricing: \$300,000 for 900 sq. feet
 - Empire on Liberty (office & retail)
 - 5 units in a variety of sizes
 - Penthouse priced over \$1 million
 - ShurSave proposal (from 1/29/18 meeting)
 - Proposed unit mix
 - Pricing: \$1012 for 37 affordable efficiency (avg. 450 sq. ft.) units
- Challenges surrounding new developments
 - Infill - constraints in an urban environment make it difficult to build.
 - Infill housing contributes to greater density, which supports a thriving business district
 - Infill housing can also offer some newer and more variety in price points to allow for more choice in a neighborhood
 - Typical Bloomfield buildings 3-4 stories; new developments range 1-6 stories
 - Generally, those buying high-end units aren't buying from small neighborhood businesses

