

Commissioner Reina Saco

Regular City Commission Meeting 08/04/2022

Recommendation for amendments to the recommended draft ordinance:

While I wholeheartedly support changing our code to allow a broader diversity of housing in our neighborhood, I am proposing an amendment in the hopes of assuaging some of the fears of our neighbors. Many have voiced concerns over a lack of data, and there is a wealth of data¹ from the past couple decades that have tracked the impacts on surrounding property values. That said, very few places are like Gainesville and we won't know with 100% certainty how something will impact Gainesville until it is tested in Gainesville.

I want to vote in favor of the staff proposals before us. But I ask that my colleagues consider:

- (1) Adding a sunset date for the new Neighborhood Residential zoning (three or five years) until which
- (2) City staff and our neighbors can track publicly available data (new construction, demolitions, the location of new construction, the size and specs of the new construction, etc.).
- (3) A single extension of the sunset date if data is deemed inconclusive or incomplete
- (4) If this measure sunsets and reverts, that all properties already developed or permitted to that date be grandfathered in

With real data at hand, a future City Commission will be able to make the changes permanent or allow the changes to revert to the way they are today. I hope that this exercise will give us and our neighbors time to collect data and see the true potential and limitations of these changes in practice. We can share data with the public and continue these conversations in real time.

¹ CENTER FOR HOUSING POLICY, "DON'T PUT IT HERE!" DOES AFFORDABLE HOUSING CAUSE NEARBY PROPERTY VALUES TO DECLINE? 1-2 (Insights from Housing Policy Research, 2009). See also Len Albright et al., Do Affordable Housing Projects Harm Suburban Communities? Crime, Property Values, and Taxes in Mount Laurel, NJ, CITY COMMUNITY, June, 2013, at 89-112 ("In the end, we find no evidence that the opening of ELH caused an increase in crime rates, a decline in property values, or an increase in property taxes in Mount Laurel after the project opened in late 2000."); Lan Deng, The External Neighborhood Effects of Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Projects Built by Three Sectors, 33 J. URB. AFF., May, 2011, at 143-66 ("Using a difference-in-difference hedonic regression approach, this study finds that almost all the LIHTC [low-income housing tax credit] projects examined have generated significantly positive impacts on nearby property value.").