



Sonoma Valley Collaborative Council Meeting
April 13, 2022, 3:00 – 4:30 pm
La Luz Center

Calls to action are in yellow.

WELCOME

- Thank you La Luz Center for hosting!
- Desired meeting outcomes: Informed positions, identify consensus, so SVC and individual members can influence housing decisions
- Welcome guest housing advocates Cal Weeks (Generation Housing) and Kaitlyn Garfield (Housing Land Trust of Sonoma County). Providing context for discussion of draft 2022 housing policy platform for Sonoma Valley Collaborative.

So many housing decisions in the next 8 months!

- Sonoma County Housing Element – draft being written April/May
- Sonoma City Housing Element – draft being written April/May
- Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan – draft EIR out in June or so
- Springs Specific Plan – timeline unknown
- State legislation – see update below

Reviewing today a draft 2022 housing policy platform for SVC. First...

UPDATES AND CONTEXT

Sonoma County Housing Element

Sonoma County Planning Commission hearing on high-level strategy, April 21. **SVC plans to comment—you should too!**

Sonoma City

- California Housing & Community Development is investigating whether City of Sonoma is trying to evade intent of infill state housing legislation SB9. See [CalMatters article](#). It's good for SVC's goals that City of Sonoma knows HCD is paying attention.
- Plaza hotel deal may lead to annexation of land on Broadway where required housing would go. See [IT article](#).
- Housing Element draft out soon
- Get voices out there from developers who couldn't work with city's process and subjective design standards. **Staff need help to organize press, op-eds, etc.**

City of Sonoma Housing Element Survey

- Take it!
 - [Survey in English](#)
 - [Survey in Spanish](#)
- [Share it!](#)

Sonoma Developmental Center Specific Plan

Proposal: SVC focus on where we have consensus: 1. Achieve maximum % of housing at SDC that is affordable to middle and lower income households and 2. An integrated community, meaning affordability housing isn't segregated from market rate.

Discussion:

- Council wants to include in SVC's advocacy other areas that have support: Environmental protections, some jobs, community services (grocery, transit, childcare, etc)—don't reduce SDC platform to only % of affordable housing, instead look to larger platform.
- Diversity across race, incomes, etc. but also people at different points in their lives.
- [counter argument] Keep platform short and direct and focus on things that larger community isn't already pushing hard for.

Springs Specific Plan

City/Springs governance: SVC promoting idea, county gave \$ to increase city/county gov coordination, SVC staff would need help to create an event. Timing TBD. Susan Gorin doesn't seem interested, discourages work on it, time to do it anyway. Previous city managers Cathy and Garrett said they'd study this.

Who is knowledgeable about the Springs Specific Plan? Tom Conlon somewhat, Beth Thompson is the consultant planner, same as consultant on City Housing Element.

State legislation

Bills to be aware of, Cal Weeks, Generation Housing

- SCA 2 to amend California constitution. Would remove a requirement (Article 34) still on the books from explicitly racist past that affordable housing projects have to go before voters. It will pass legislature, but because it's a constitutional amendment, it will still need to be voted on by all of California. Campaign needs funding, hard to do.
- Bill AB2295 would allow affordable housing to be developed for occupation by teachers on surplus lands owned by educational institutions.

- Legislative leaders on housing have departed, so no major bills will come up this year.
- [Plan Bay Area 2050](#) is the guiding land use plan for the Bay Area. Plan recommends \$17.5B for housing and homelessness, but this year only \$4B was allocated. **SVC could advocate for higher amount as Generation Housing is.**
- More is being shared in Generation Housing newsletter.

Other topics of ongoing interest

- Emergency prep (water conservation, evacuation, fire communications)
 - April 18 10am: The Great Shake Out
 - April 30 noon: Test of SoCoAlert’s ability to reach Spanish speakers
 - May 22: evacuation drill, Grove Street area
- Who would be good on the Springs MAC?
- Who would be good on Sonoma County Community Development Commission (decides what housing projects to give public money to)?

Closing.

- Next meeting May 11.



**Sonoma Valley Collaborative
Council**
April 13, 2022

Draft Sonoma Valley Collaborative 2022 Housing Policy Platform

Italics below are Council comments. Non-italics is draft platform they commented on.

Sonoma Valley Collaborative’s Housing Declaration: “...working together across boundaries to increase, improve, and preserve housing that is affordable for people who work or live in Sonoma Valley, within already developed areas, to create diverse, safe, complete neighborhoods.”

	INTENT	DETAILS
1	“Preserve”	Find legal criteria regarding wealth, not just income.

	<p>Assure that people living in subsidized homes are the needy.</p>	<p>Result must be less paperwork, not more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Addressed at local or higher level? Possible there is already a bill out there that addresses this, Cal will research.</i> ● <i>Need more research on this: who is being left out? Don't want to tighten the screws on retired people.</i> ● <i>What is the size of the problem compared to other problems? We don't seem to know enough to make sure how not to cause more problems.</i> ● <i>SF deals with this by looking at total assets, counts 2% per year.</i> ● <i>Housing developers for low-income seniors would know how to parse this. Also need to consider how those types of homes play into this.</i> ● <i>Conclusion: Not part of platform for now.</i>
2	<p>“Preserve” Rescue expiring subsidies for dozens of homes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Can meet up to 25% in each category of RHNA by preserving units expiring in next 10 years. ● Transfer ownership units to Housing Land Trust for perpetual affordability. ● City or nonprofits own rentals. City of Sonoma join Essential Workforce Housing program with Rohnert Park and Burbank. ● Right now county manages city's affordable rentals. ● Takes money. ● <i>Look at the policy in Healdsburg that gives nonprofits first right of refusal. On any building??</i> ● <i>Conclusion: many unknowns about the how. All thumbs up.</i>
3	<p>“Increase” Remove barriers.</p>	<p>Promote affordable infill development “by right” (faster, cheaper, more predictable, more appeal-proof). Scrutinize housing sites inventory and “objective standards” (meet our housing declaration).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Yes. One thumbs sideways on areas that are outside city but inside urban service areas because of development burden on the county.</i> ● <i>Next RHNA will remove areas with high fire risk or hard to evacuate.</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Within city yes, might be worth a vote on non-city USA. This impacts SDC, which is an urban service area but outside the City.</i>
4	<p>“Increase” Relax rules for projects that meet Housing Declaration standards.</p>	<p>Reduced or waived fees, parking requirements, setbacks, height limits, minimum lot sizes, lot shape, and other development standards for very-high-% affordable infill projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Should result in a workforce overlay or affordable housing overlay. “Gentle density”. Plaza has historically had 3-4 story buildings, can be done in a way that maintains historic character. SVC needs to advocate hard for this (to City Council) for this to happen.</i> • <i>We don’t want Steamboat Springs (unaffordable condos, lost small town charm, did not house local workers). How to avoid it being rich people in the country, poor downtown. Response: no we don’t Steamboat we want people who work to be able to afford to stay.</i> • <i>“Community character” isn’t more precious than people who need a place to live. It’s a selfish and invalid argument. Foothill areas making themselves immune from integration by putting all development in center.</i> • <i>Density and community character are not mutually exclusive goals.</i> • <i>Where? along Broadway, on W. Napa St, at intersections, “downtown” Glen Ellen and Kenwood?</i>
5	<p>“Increase” At SDC.</p>	<p>Maximize the proportion of planned housing at SDC that is affordable to households making middle-income and less. Physically and visually integrate households of varying incomes and sizes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>See other notes above.</i>
6	<p>“Increase” Limit vacation rentals and/or increase tax.</p>	<p>Existing tax: Return revenue to affordable housing. Cap: ?% of homes in an area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Caitlin can talk about vacation rentals, but will be sitting as Planning Commissioner on this topic, so can’t bring it forward in official capacity from SVC.</i>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Now is a good time for people to get involved with this issue.</i>
7	“Increase” Increase tax on second/empty homes.	<p>New tax: requires campaign.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>What is the timeline? Would take several months before putting on ballot.</i> • <i>Has been done in some major Cities like Vancouver, but is challenging to get more taxes passed, takes lots of political will. Perhaps focus this on 2nd home tax? Not likely in City of Sonoma? Maybe more likely in County?</i>
8	“Increase” Expand inclusionary requirement	<p>Let smaller projects trigger requirement. Limit in-lieu fees and offsite; provide assurances. Physically integrated and invisible. Assure that in-lieu fees are enough. <i>(Did not have time to discuss. What is Housing Land Trust of Sonoma County advocating for on this?)</i></p>
9	“Increase” Allow small plexes (2-9 units) in all residential zones	<p>Below market? <i>(Did not have time to discuss.)</i></p>
10	“Increase” City annex land to build 100% affordable homes.	<p>Where? <i>(Did not have time to discuss.)</i></p>

Attending Council

Fred Allebach (Sonoma Valley Housing Group)
 Suzanne Ashimine (Sotheby’s International Realty)
 Harry Boone (Homeless Action Sonoma)
 Ann Colichidas (Golden State Manufactured-Home Owners League)
 Tom Conlon (Transition Sonoma Valley, Sierra Club, Climate Coalition)
 Celia Kruse de la Rosa (Sonoma Valley Hospital)
 Leonardo Lobato (La Luz Center)
 Renee Scott (Vintage House)
 Collin Thoma (Disability Services & Legal Center)

Steering Committee

Kimberly Blattner (La Luz Center Board, Valley of the Moon Music Festival, Impact 100)
 Richard Dale (Sonoma Ecology Center)

Guests

Cal Weeks (Generation Housing)
 Kaitlyn Garfield (Housing Land Trust of Sonoma County)

Staff

Caitlin Cornwall, Project Director

Kim Jones, Coordinator