

HOUSING FOR ALL

STATE OF HOUSING IN LAWRENCEVILLE 9/24/2018

Discussion Questions

Question: 1.

- A. What's your personal experience around housing in Lawrenceville?
- B. What is your experience with what was presented tonight?

Break – out Group 1.

- Speaker 1 & 2 – Been in home for 47 years, right next to new house. Synergy Capital made millions plus, but house next door not maintained because it's an easement, but no sidewalk. "For all that money why not put a slab of concrete in there?"
- 400 apartments only 300 parking spaces.
- Speaker 3 Student: "My rent right now is reasonable but worried about rising prices"
- Speaker 4 "I rented in upper Lawrenceville. My rent went up \$200 in a year"
- Lotta changes in Lawrenceville. My house built in 1880. House next door now \$700,000.
- Now developers not building same quality.

Break – out Group 2.

- growth good,- things have been cleaned up (drugs, crime)
- more Veteran housing; should be proposed as housing
- neighborhood when full of low – income housing doesn't work
- people not necessarily pushed out, but now can sell houses for nicer houses elsewhere
- where is there room left to construct affordable housing in neighborhood?
 - By riverfront properties that are warehouses may become multi – family.
 - Unless developers forced to do it, they're not going to build affordable units.
- Not necessarily fair to force developers to build affordable units.
 - But could build elsewhere where there aren't requirements
 - Hardship wavers

Break – out Group 3.

- Moved into house in 1982; got good deal through a friend at the time when neighborhood was rough. Landlord (a friend) moved 4 years ago; couldn't get a bank loan to buy the place; instead, new buyer came in & doubled the rent. Not much thanks for work helping to keep the place safe during the drug years.
- son moved here 4 years ago w/2 roommates (3bedrooms).
- just moved out of Lawrenceville; had six roommates, now in 2 Bedroom in Friendship
- seen the neighborhood go from modest families to the super – rich
- if you want people to stay here, you need community institutions = churches, schools, etc
- just moved from NYC 4 months ago; total rent in 3 bedroom row house is cheaper than 1 bedroom in 4 room/1 bath in Brooklyn. Many U.S. cities are dealing with these challenges, & for those folks, Pittsburgh still seems cheap, even as the visual/anecdotal evidence of displacement is similar, as is % growth is average rent for Lawrenceville

Break – out Group 4.

- same unit for 20 years pushed out in 2018; wants to stay in community
- lack of HCV's huge wait list
- housing units dilapidated because of popularity; prices only going up
- new home buyers, love community + neighbors
- \$500 month 1 bedroom, stove doesn't work, but rent hasn't gone up

Break – out Group 5.

- Concerns for senior housing.
- Lack of options for seniors who may not be able to live in their homes because of physical limitations, such as steps.
- Why not construct multi – level new housing with small elevators?
- Why not build “Senior – Condos” with amenities and facilities for seniors, and minimal monthly fees?

Break – out Group 6.

- new comer (4 months)
- Relative to NYC the rents/home prices are still cheap.
- responsibilities w/developers
- a shared apartment is the way to affordability
- Traffic/affordability/green

Question: 2.

Who is being left out of Lawrenceville’s growth?

Break – out Group 1.

- Speaker # 1 & 2 I don’t know.
- Right here used to be Steel mills.
 - Now you go in there and there’s no more inn city.
 - I don’t know what these people do that buy them.
 - Next door being sold for \$749,000.00
 - But they won’t even pull their own weeds.

Break – out Group 2.

- Facilitator’s name: Jesse Perkins
Note – Taker: Jason Beery
- Seniors
 - Middle Class
 - people who grew up here

Break – out Group 3.

- Facilitator’s name: Cat Sheane
Note – Taker: James O’Toole
- Seniors on fixed income, both renters and those preyed on by flippers?
 - blue collar folks
 - We need inclusionary zoning, rent control, accessible housing along racial lines.
 - Prioritize families w/children; more kids displaced, more schools suffer, community vibrancy declines.

Break – out Group 4.

- Facilitator’s name: Marie
Note – Taker: name not entered
- fixed income elderly & seniors
 - immigrants 7 refugees
 - families
 - single parent households
 - children impacted most radically

Break – out Group 5.

-Seniors have not been considered in new housing plans.

Break – out Group 6.

Rentals for:

- Veterans
- Single parents
- Families
- Workers
- Seniors w/fixed incomes

Question 3.

- A. As the neighborhood grows, what are your aspirations for Lawrenceville in terms of housing?**
- B. What should we strive for as a community?**

Break – out Group 1.

-Speaker 1 – “This new affordable housing will lower/mid income people really be able to buy these CLT houses?”

-“Will low income people be able to take care of the home?”

-“Will they know how when they have never owned a house?”

-“They aren’t building enough CLT houses to meet the demand.”

Break – out Group 2.

-more diversity w/working class families

-connects to what jobs are available for working class

Break – out Group 3.

Question not addressed.

Break – out Group 4.

-diversity

-fewer luxury apartments

-more non – profits, Community Driven Organizations

-Not UPMC

-LGBTQ centers and services

*business district should reflect residents

Break – out Group 5.

-A lot of seniors are long – time homeowners whose places have become too large and difficult to manage.

-What are the options to support them in decision – making, and possible relocation?

Break – out Group 6.

- Diverse representation
- Churches
- Good schools
- Block watch
- Require developers to engage with the community and the residents they are building for.
- Aging in place
- Community spaces
- Rent control
- Equitable access across racial lines

Question 4

A. What additional questions dose the group have?

Break – out Group 1.

- Why not use more of the houses that are already here?
- “How can you even afford the land to build housing with such rapidly escalating prices?”
- Have property taxes increased in ways that affect people’s affordability?

Break – out Group 2.

- land trust w/more than 35 units
- housing cooperative (multi – family)
- It would be nice if the city passed something to ensure affordable housing.

Break – out Group 3.

Question not addressed.

Break – out Group 4.

- How can I get involved in the process of affordable housing?
- How specific will parameters be w/inclusionary zoning?

Break – out Group 5.

Question not addressed.

Break – out Group 6.

Question not addressed.