



Planning Commission

Public Hearing on an Ordinance for Emergency (Homeless) Housing Facilities Hosted by Faith- Based Organizations, Not-for-Profit Organizations or Units of Government

Agenda Date: 10/15/2018
Agenda Item Number:
File Number: 18-0979

Type: public hearing **Version:** 1 **Status:** Filed

Title

Public Hearing on an Ordinance for Emergency (Homeless) Housing Facilities Hosted by Faith-Based Organizations, Not-for-Profit Organizations or Units of Government

Recommended Action

The Land Use and Environment Committee considered the proposed amendments to the City's Emergency (Homeless) Housing regulations on May 17, 2018 and unanimously recommended that City Council move forward with amendments as proposed by staff on an emergency basis. The City Council approved the attached ordinance as an emergency ordinance on June 5, 2018 and asked that the Planning Commission consider these revisions, hold a public hearing and provide recommendations to City Council for action by the end of 2018.

Report

Issue:

A briefing by staff, followed by a public hearing on the Ordinance for Emergency Housing Facilities Hosted by Faith-Based Organizations, Not-for-Profit Organizations or Units of Government adopted on June 5, 2018 by City Council as an emergency ordinance.

Staff Contact:

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager, Community Planning & Development,
abuckler@ci.olympia.wa.us <<mailto:abuckler@ci.olympia.wa.us>>, 360.570.5847

Presenter(s):

Amy Buckler, Downtown Programs Manager

Background and Analysis:

On June 5, the City Council adopted amendments to the City's Emergency Housing Ordinance to provide more flexibility for faith based organizations, not-for-profits and government entities to host emergency housing facilities on their sites. The Council adopted the amendments on an emergency (interim) basis, which meant the changes went into effect immediately. This also required the City Council to hold a public hearing within 60 days, which they did on July 24, 2018. The Council also

asked that the Planning Commission hold a public hearing and make a recommendation regarding the changes. Council must consider and vote on the recommendation by the end of the year.

The City of Olympia adopted its first Emergency Housing Ordinance (formally known as the Temporary Encampment Ordinance) in 2008. These land use regulations were adopted largely as a response to Camp Quixote's occupation of City-owned property in downtown. The regulations were amended in 2011 to provide for a permanent encampment on County-owned property in Mottman Industrial Park known as Quixote Village. A single temporary encampment hosted by a faith-based organization was also allowed. However, no temporary encampments have been hosted by faith-based organizations since Quixote Village was established.

Emergency Housing Facilities in the form of tiny house villages are now a commonly accepted practice for responding to homelessness with emergency and transitional housing. Both the City of Seattle and the City of Eugene have seen multiple emergency housing facilities established in the past three years.

Prior to June 5, the City of Olympia's Temporary Homeless Encampment regulations were very limiting when it came to these types of facilities. Only one facility on County property plus one additional facility that could move from church site to church site in the entire City was allowed. Based on the number of unsheltered people living in and around Olympia there appears to be a need for multiple facilities.

Staff is actively working with religious institutions to create opportunities for siting emergency housing facilities on their property. Having regulations in place that allow for the creation of emergency housing facilities would help to facilitate these conversations.

Proposed Ordinance

The ordinance amended on an interim basis on June 5 and currently under consideration is **attached**. Amendments include:

- Changing the name of the regulations to Emergency Housing Facility Regulations
- Eliminating the differentiation between types of Emergency Housing Facilities
- Increasing the number of Emergency Housing Facilities allowed
- Allow facilities to be operated by or hosted on faith based, not-for-profit organizations and governmental entities
- Reducing barriers for clients
- Reducing barriers for host organizations

A fact sheet that summarizes the ordinance is **attached**. An additional amendment to the zoning code is also **attached**. This is a housekeeping amendment to clarify the difference between Emergency (Homeless) Housing and Emergency (Disaster) Housing regulations.

Public Outreach

Staff has been in discussion with faith community coalitions about this ordinance. Briefings were

provided to the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations (10/8) and the PBIA Advisory Board (7/12); the ordinance update has also been mentioned at various other community meetings where the topic of homelessness has been discussed.

A public information meeting was held on October 11. Notice of the info meeting was provided to the media, neighborhood association contacts, advisory board members, the e-newsletter contact list, the Olympia Downtown Association, the Martin Way ad hoc neighborhood group, Just Housing and parties of record (*when contact info was provided*) from the June 24 City Council public hearing.

Public comments received to date are **attached**.

Next Steps

The Planning Commission is asked to make their recommendation in November, in order to have the City Council consider it and make a final decision in December.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Homelessness is of significant public concern.

Options:

Following a briefing by staff, hold a public hearing on the Ordinance for Emergency Housing Facilities Hosted by Faith-Based Organizations, Not-for-Profit Organizations or Units of Government adopted on June 5, 2018 by City Council as an emergency ordinance.

Financial Impact:

None at this point; however, the City may be asked to play a role in managing these facilities and in providing ongoing support services.

Attachments:

Draft Ordinance
Related Zoning Code Amendment
Public Comments as of 10/5/18
Fact Sheet