

OHIO CITY DESIGN GUIDELINES #18045

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Client: Ohio City, Inc.

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Steering Committee #2 – Affordability/ Density Conversation Summary**AFFORDABILITY****Group Question: How is affordable housing defined by Ohio City terms?**DISCUSSION TOPICS / POINTS MADE IN GROUP SETTING:

- We need to provide **both** affordable housing (naturally occurring) and low income housing (potentially subsidized housing)
 - First goal is to retain Ohio City residents at varying income levels
 - We should have housing stock, providing options for residents
 - Not all individuals in need of affordable housing are necessarily low income; with factors such as student debt, people can't dedicate the same amount of their income towards housing costs as their parents or grandparents did
- Affordable options should address both renters and home owners
- We need tools put in place to retain the residents we already have
 - We spend a lot of energy into attracting new residents, but we don't want to lose the people already living and investing in Ohio City
 - Are there ways to provide rent "caps" to ensure people are not priced out
 - Are there mechanisms that can be explored / adopted to limit property taxes for some residents as values (specifically increased because of new developments' price points) increase in the neighborhood?
- Tax abatements should be used strategically to improve affordable housing and a diverse housing stock
 - Tax abatements should not be given to projects of exorbitant cost or projects that would precede regardless of the assistance of a tax abatement
 - How can we encourage / promote developers to use subsidies or abatements to make housing costs lower on the consumer end?
 - Example discussed: providing additional development rights (increased density, height, etc.) for developments that include allocated affordable units

DENSITY

Group Question: What can density be defined as for the neighborhood and where does higher density / development belong in Ohio City?

DISCUSSION TOPICS / POINTS MADE IN GROUP SETTING:

- High density should be on major corridors – Lorain, Detroit and West 25th
 - Should still respect that there are residential homes
 - Height should reflect historic height of these corridors, not “11 story buildings”
 - Heights should transition from the highest point on corridors gradually to lower heights at residential streets (stepping down to transition to single family homes)
- Historic density was higher than current density as allowed by City of Cleveland Zoning Code – buildings on corridors used to reach 45-60 feet on average (approximately, should look into historic context)
 - History reference: much of Ohio City was developed in the 19th Century while the code was adopted in 1929; much of Ohio City was already constructed and, in many cases, is in direct conflict (non-conforming) with the City’s code
- Corridors should still retain specific character; Lorain doesn’t have to look like West 25th, etc.
- Market demand should not solely control density in Ohio City – density can reflect the heritage / past development of the neighborhood
 - Led to the question: Should development be limited by zoning or should it be maximized to capture current market trends?
 - Question was not fully answered and should be topic of future conversations
 - General consensus is that market should not be sole determining factor of development (trends v. longevity)
- Do not want to see monolithic, single use buildings
 - Would rather see more diverse set of buildings with multiple uses
- We are currently losing density in residential areas where zoning is forcing duplexes (smaller scale multi-family) to become single family homes when they are torn down
 - Would like to see more duplexes, triplexes of moderate scale on residential streets to increase housing stock and only creating large apartment complexes
- Where do we not want density/ what is “too much” density?
 - We want to increase density in residential areas without obstructing single family homes or disrupting character; need to identify what that level of density is
- With more density – in both residential and commercial corridors – how to best accommodate resident parking?
 - Residents already have difficulty finding on-street parking on the fringes of higher density corridors, where patrons of commercial businesses / new residents of new developments are parking on side streets
 - Conversation on supply and demand – importance of locating parking where people can use it (not large, isolated parking lots)
 - Some comments stressed the importance of minimizing parking impacts so as to not negatively affect the neighborhood’s walkable nature
 - A more robust transit system could cut down on the amount of cars parked in this area
 - If we build this neighborhood to rely on public transit, what will happen to the people who **need** cars? (i.e. disabled, elderly, etc.)
 - Should consider permit parking or another system to guarantee parking for Ohio City residents
 - This could lead to parking issues for businesses; how do we allocate such a scarce resource?