

Elsen, Nikki

From: Elsenn@cityoflacrosse.org
Subject: FW: Resolution regarding ADUs

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From: melissa crook <crook6@att.net>
Sent: Thursday, November 30, 2023 2:20 PM
To: Acklin, Tim <Acklint@cityoflacrosse.org>; Jacob Sciammas <jacobsciammas@gmail.com>
Subject: Resolution regarding ADUs

Hi Tim and Jacob,

I am writing today because I'm concerned about the long term effects of ADU's in LaCrosse neighborhoods. It's evident that both of you care deeply about this community as reflected in your input on the most recent comprehensive plan. I respect your perspective and knowledge on this issue and hope foresight has been given to how blanket legislation allowing ADUs in all residential districts could ultimately undermine the stated goal that "the city should work to attract and retain more family households."

While the current housing needs in LaCrosse are extremely important, so is preserving and protecting the neighborhoods that make this City unique. The upcoming Resolution 23-1243 on the agenda at next week's J&A meeting seeks to fulfill a demand for more rentals and provide "housing units that are appropriate for people at a variety of stages of life" within existing neighborhoods. Certainly on a case by case basis ADUs are beneficial and can meet these needs. However, a general policy such as this would be difficult to monitor long term....what happens 5, 10 or 20 years after an ADU is built? Initially there is a requirement for the home owner to live in either the existing home or in the ADU, but once a property is sold how will this stipulation be enforced to insure that both structures don't become rentals? If there is no long term plan in place, these ADUs will allow landlords to increase profits on smaller pieces of property. As each square foot of land becomes more desirable this makes home ownership less and less affordable for the average person driving potential long term residents out of LaCrosse neighborhoods and schools. As more city blocks become primarily rental units with cars lining the streets and few residents maintaining properties with pride derived from homeownership, individuals looking to purchase look elsewhere.

If the goal of our civic leaders is to have a city centered on a transient community of college students and healthcare workers then this policy makes sense. However, if the long term stability of LaCrosse neighborhoods is the primary focus, passing a resolution such as this will cause irrevocable harm. The current trajectory of growth in LaCrosse does not encourage the sought after diversity of households. It enables and encourages landlords to buy up single family homes to be demolished or split apart to provide rental units. This lessens the supply of this valuable commodity for individual purchase thus increasing property values and making homeownership unaffordable. Lower income families that might otherwise have been able to realize a dream of homeownership are forced to become renters or are driven out of the community in search of affordable housing. The residents of LaCrosse deserve protection from short-sited policies that are allowing landlords and developers to take over neighborhoods.

The best urban development must keep a cautious eye on the future and assess how the solutions of today could become the problems of tomorrow. Thank you for taking time to read my letter. I appreciate your consideration of my concerns.

Sincerely,

Melissa Crook