



The Housing Advocacy Committee is a collaboration of dedicated individuals concerned about affordable housing. This group is led by Habitat for Humanity La Crosse Area and includes 31 representatives from 23 key employers and non-profit organizations. The committee works together to bring attention to challenges people in our community face regarding affordable housing and tenant’s rights as well as advocating for legislation and policy changes that address these challenges locally and at the state level.



In 2022, the League of Wisconsin Municipalities partnered with the Congress for the New Urbanism and other Wisconsin organizations to publish “Enabling Better Places: A Users Guide to Neighborhood Affordability.” This publication reviews common zoning codes throughout Wisconsin municipalities and provides recommendations for making zoning changes to better enable more workforce and affordable housing options in our communities.



Following the recommendations of this publication, Advocacy Committee members reviewed the City of La Crosse’s zoning code for amendments which would support and promote housing development within our community.

Therefore, members of the Housing Advocacy Committee strongly recommend the following changes to the City of La Crosse’s Zoning Code:

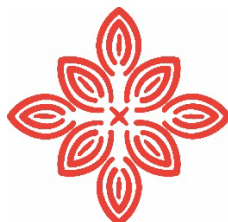


Zoning Code 17.04(2)(f)1

Current Language: One family, 2 family or multiple family dwellings shall provide 2 parking stalls for every dwelling unit.

Requested Language: One family, 2 family or multiple family dwellings shall provide .75 parking stall for every dwelling unit.

Justification: Parking requirements create significant costs to housing development and do not reflect the needs of the occupants. Additionally, parking surfaces take away from green space and contribute to flooding conditions and groundwater contamination.



Cia Siab, Inc.

Zoning Code 17.05(1)(a)1

Current Language: One family dwellings as principal or temporary residences.

Requested Language: Combine Residential District “A” and “B” to allow for 1-6 units.



Justification: Density restrictions create barriers to the development of the thoughtful development of right sized, right priced housing and require lengthy and costly variance requests. Green space is restricted to individual properties, rather than developing options for shared space.

Zoning Code 17.05(1)(c)

Amend the following lot size and set back standards:



- Amend minimum width from 75 to 50 feet.
- Amend minimum side yard width from 20 to 8 feet.
- Amend minimum rear yard width from 25 to 12 feet.
- Amend minimum front yard width from 25 to 8 feet unless otherwise required by DOT.



Justification: This will allow for development of housing on currently non-conforming lots and will allow for a range of affordable and varied housing types.

Allow for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

Permit use in any zoning district that permits single-family dwellings.

- Property owner must occupy the primary or accessory dwelling as their primary residence.
- One ADU per residential lot.
- The ADU may be incorporated into an existing dwelling or building, including garages.
- If a separate structure, it will comply with the following:
 - The ADU must be set back at least 20 farther from the primary dwelling.
 - The ADU cannot exceed 60% of the width of the primary dwelling.
 - The height of the ADU cannot exceed 80% of the primary dwelling.
 - These requirements do not apply to existing buildings.
- ADUs cannot exceed 50% of the total area of the primary dwelling.
- No additional parking required.

Justification: ADUs are a very simple option for adding density and housing options with minimal impact. This is especially important for families requiring additional living space for aging parents or caregivers and adults who require family support to thrive.

Members of the Housing Advocacy Committee are available to speak more about these recommendations. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kahya Fox, Executive Director
Habitat for Humanity La Crosse Area

Hetti Brown, Executive Director
Couleecap, Inc.

Lauren Journot, Executive Director
YWCA La Crosse

Marvin Wanders, CEO
360 Real Estate

Dr. Xong Xiong, Executive Director
Cia Siab, Inc.

Kevin Hundt, Chair
Coulee Tenants United

Mark Etrheim, President
Mastercraft Homes, Inc.

James N. Szymalak, JD, PhD
Ass't Prof. of Public Administration
Board President, HfH La Crosse Area

La Crosse Area Builders Association