

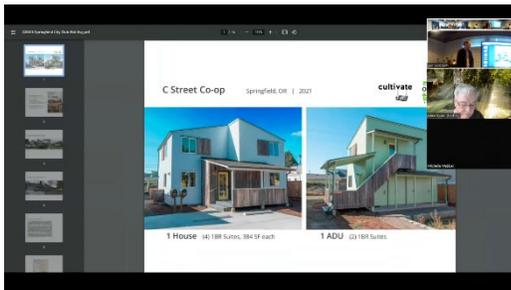


Although Springfield has modified its development code to meet the requirements of House Bill 2001, approved in 2019 with the intent of increasing the stock of affordable housing, it appears the current actions may be too little to actually achieve that goal, according to Kaarin Knudson, President of Better Housing Together and Dylan Lamar, owner and Architect-Developer at Cultivate, Inc. Their presentation at

the June 16 Springfield City Club program pointed to numerous impediments to success that are not addressed by the changes adopted to comply with HB 20-01.

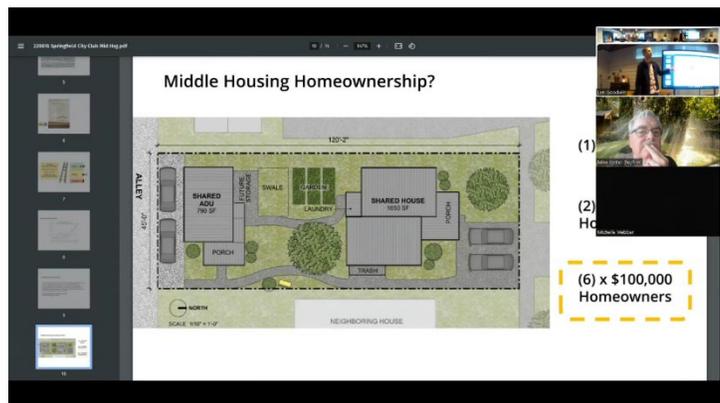
It will take concerted direct action to change over 80 years of development under a process which emphasizes minimal diversity in housing types and encourages production of what both presenters described as luxury housing. Almost a century ago this area, like many areas in the country, shifted from a diversity of housing types to focus on only two – single family residences for the privileged and apartment buildings for all the rest. This structure, they said, was enforced by limiting density, exclusionary zoning practices, large minimum lot sizes, and restrictions on subdivision and partition of land. This was all exacerbated by a focus on the goal of supporting an automobile-based culture which demanded that a great deal of buildable space be taken up for parking and garages for private vehicles.

While HB 2001 and the development code changes address a small part of this – by permitting the development of multiplexes and town homes on what have been single family lots, many other issues remain to be addressed. Both presenters turned repeatedly to the issue of minimum parking requirements which may well frustrate any developer who attempts to develop the newly re-permitted middle housing which was common a century ago.



Mr. Lamar described a project he completed recently on C Street – a house with an auxiliary dwelling unit. Rather than market the development as two residential units, he created two “suites” in the ADU and four “suites” in the house. He was able to market these units for \$10,000 each with a total cost of ownership of around \$800 a month, a price he said truly fit into affordable housing.

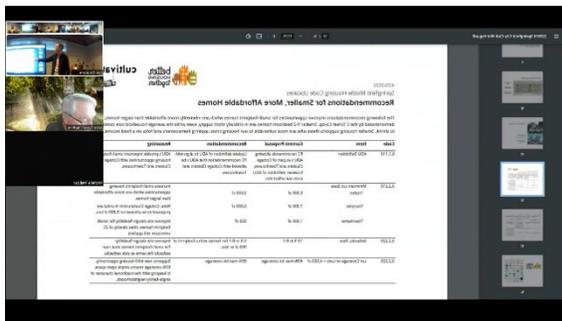
This development was atypical, however, he said. It was structured as a coop with each resident owning their own suite, but the land being held by a cooperative. Although this form of development presents challenges for financing, it was necessary to avoid prohibitions in the zoning ordinances. Ms. Knudson added that the suites were not typical residences – having only a small wet bar instead of a full kitchen. Mr. Lamar added that he could not complete this development at those costs today, because of the growth in building materials



costs. He added that under current codes, even after the changes, he could not develop that property as individual ownership, because the density exceeds the maximum density for even high-density residential zoning.

Mr. Lamar said that the middle housing which was sought to be encouraged under HB 2001 cannot currently effectively be developed as private ownership but must develop as either rental space or as a condominium or cooperative. He said this is because even though the Legislature passed bills authorizing the division of lots into small spaces, the cost of partition, about \$15,000, presents a major obstacle. In addition, he said that many properties are subject to covenants and conditions of record (CCRs) which specifically set minimum lot sizes and prohibit subdivision or partition of lots. Even though the Legislature has prospectively prohibited such provision, a large number of restrictions exist and cannot easily be removed.

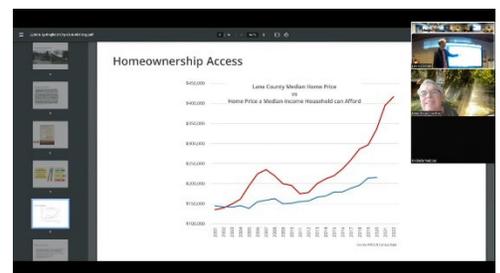
Both speakers noted that there is a subtext of diversity, equity and inclusion in the discussion of middle housing. When the design paradigm shifted over a century ago from a flexible approach to housing to one strongly encouraging (and even mandating) single family detached units, the benefits went to the majority white community while people of color and other minorities were excluded, in some cases intentionally through racial CCRs, which still exist but have been unenforceable for some years.



Mr. Lamar cautioned that it is unwise to focus attention on “affordable housing developers.” Rather, he said the effort should be to develop conditions where market rate developers can be engaged and able to profit while developing a broader range of housing types. Here again, he focused on the existing off street parking requirements which, he said, make development of units on small lots challenging. He pointed to the C

Street project and said that were he required to provide off-street parking for all six units in the development, there simply would not have been enough land.

The real need, the speakers said, is to change the concept of how housing is provided – by abandoning the single family separated home as the predominant model and returning to what they described as the much more flexible concept of multiple housing types that existed a century ago. In response to a question, they said that the draft Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities regulations that the Land Conservation and Development commission is now considering would be a step in the right direction. Mr. Lamar pointed to statistics which show that increasingly the price of homes is exponentially exceeding the ability of Lane County residents to afford a home.



Ms. Knudson also pointed to the approval of House Bill 2003, also in the 2019 session, which requires cities to conduct a Housing Needs Analysis and, thereafter, adopt a Housing Production Strategy to outline a list of specific tools, actions, and policies that the city plans to take to address

the housing need identified in the Housing Needs Analysis. Springfield must complete the analysis by 2025 and update it every eight years.