

# More context on affordable housing

The Bethlehem Gadfly Affordable Housing March 29, 2021

 Latest post in a series on Affordable Housing 

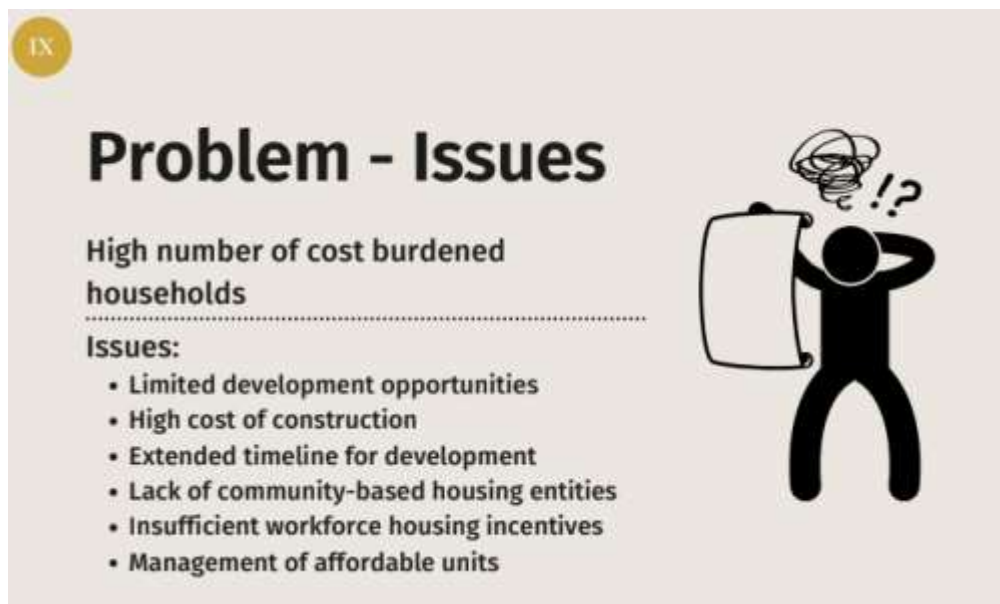
*“If you’ve been in South Bethlehem for 5 seconds, you know it’s not affordable housing over here.”*

*Rachel Leon, candidate for City Council*

Gadfly working through the March 23 Community Development Committee meeting on affordable housing.

There’s a lot of inside baseball here today, but we should be trying to get as much of a grip as we can on this important issue that seems to be getting legs.

So here’s Alicia Karner, Director of Community and Economic Development, laying out some aspects of the “problem” of affordable housing.



IX

## Problem - Issues

High number of cost burdened households

Issues:

- Limited development opportunities
- High cost of construction
- Extended timeline for development
- Lack of community-based housing entities
- Insufficient workforce housing incentives
- Management of affordable units

The slide features a cartoon illustration of a person holding a scroll, with a lightbulb and question marks above their head, symbolizing a problem or issue.

Audio Player not available in this archive


And here's Darlene Heller, Director of Planning, surveying the tools we have to address the problem of affordable housing.

## XI Existing Tools

### City Incentives Currently In Place

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| ✓ <b>SALDO</b><br>New affordable units are not subject to recreation fees. | ✓ <b>Stormwater Impact Fees</b><br>Allows a decrease in the stormwater impact fees for low income residents. | ✓ <b>Zoning</b><br>Workforce Housing Incentive provides a density bonus for projects of 20 units or more in certain zones. |
|--|--|--|

## Policy Considerations

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|  | <b><u>Simplicity</u></b><br>Enable simple ways to get developer participation                  | <b><u>Location</u></b><br>Target neighborhoods with strong housing markets  |
|   | <b><u>Flexibility</u></b><br>Provide developers with participation options that fit the market | <b><u>Incentives</u></b><br>Provide a sufficient range of incentives to off-set reduced rents or home sale costs. |

30

XIII

## Regulatory Incentive Opportunities



- Inclusionary zoning
- Parking
- Building height
- Density
- Permit accessory units
- Reduce activities requiring Zoning Hearing Board
- Reduce development fees
- Permitted by-right
- Design flexibility



New Bethany Ministries, Energy Makeover, 2017

CITY OF BETHLEHEM - AFFORDABLE HOUSING

XIV



## Funding Incentives



### Existing Funding Sources/Programs

- CDBG and HOME
- Bethlehem Housing Assistance Program-1st Time Homebuyer Program
- Lehigh Valley Community Land Trust
- Bethlehem Housing Rehabilitation Program
- Bethlehem Housing Emergency Repair Program
- CACLV Weatherization Program

### Potential Funding Sources

- LERTA Tax Abatement
- Tax Increment Financing
- Establish an affordable housing fund

