



Judi Short <judi.short@gmail.com>

Misconceptions About New Housing Units in Sugar House

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Mon, Dec 7, 2020 at 7:49 PM

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I just wanted to comment on what I think are **misconceptions** about adding **Shared Housing** and **RMF 30** housing in Sugar House. Using the map that came out today in the City Council District Newsletters, the areas where shared housing will allowed are the most expensive parcels in Salt Lake City, except maybe for a few places downtown. I will be surprised if anyone wants to put in a shared housing unit in Sugar House.

In the map of RMF-30 parcels for Sugar House, there are some on 700 East and some on 900 East. Those could be possible. But the two big green squares along Highland and east of Fairmont and along Elizabeth Street are three big senior condo developments. One is the Elizabeth Street condos, another are the Fairmont Condos, and the third are the Graystone Condos. All are in excellent shape, owner occupied, and have very strong condo associations. Don't count on them adding any housing units.

However, we are doing our fair share for expensive apartment units. We have five buildings that I know of, one coming on line this winter one next summer, and two just beginning construction, and one just approved by the Planning Commission last week.

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Judi Short, Vice Chair and Land Use Chair
Sugar House Community Council
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to dan.dugan, Ana, Andrew, Chris, Erin, Amy, Charlie, James, bcc: me, bcc: Lynn, bcc: cindy

I have attached the letter I wrote to the Planning Commission, along with comments from Sugar House residents, when we discussed this in November of 2018. I don't want you to have to find it in the 1200-page Staff Report and I want to be sure you read it.

In general, the concept is a good one, and this provides a good stepping point for someone, or a family, as they transition from homeless to independent living. I suppose for some, it might become permanent housing.

There are some flaws in your plan. First, you clearly have no idea what the cost of land is in Sugar House, or you wouldn't have included these parcels. Here are a few examples:

Park Ave MF 1.77 acres sold for \$90 a square foot.

Dreyers purchase was a little less but similar.

24 hour fitness will sell for north of \$140 per square foot dirt. Holy crap it's expensive. That equates to \$4-\$6 million an acre.--

Sizzler \$200 a foot \$7 million. .80 of an acre

If these are built by an agency, they should not be spending that kind of money because they will never recoup that expense. So they won't be building them, and no developer in her right mind will not build an SRO either. Any SRO built in Sugar House will NOT be affordable.

And, I don't see much in the draft ordinance, or the existing ordinance that talks about the care and upkeep of these facilities, and the behavior expected of the tenants. The only thing is there needs to be a full time manager on site 24/7. These things notoriously turn into slums, and you need to have some sort of active participation by the city to see that these stay clean and nice facilities at all times, so the tenants learn how to be responsible citizens. I want to see in writing how that will happen. There must be a reason why we used to have a lot of these in town, and now we are down to two. We don't want these run by landlords looking to make a buck who spend nothing to maintain the spaces. There are enough of these in town.

A former fire chief provided a comment (attached)that said these places have good intentions but usually are places of drug use and interpersonal violence, requiring frequent visits from police or paramedics. That should be not allowed in the code of conduct for admission as a resident of the building.

I think these should be a conditional use with design review, to make sure they are well designed to serve the purpose. Maybe they need support services included. Or the population is screened, and those that need services go in certain buildings, and the college student who is dead broke is allowed in another building. Maybe there needs to be compliance with the Utah fit Premises Act, and the landlord and renter each sign saying they will comply with their part of the bargain.

You know that this is premature, you need to get all the rules and regulations written BEFORE you approve this, And you need to use the people who are doing the Rio Grande to help you and train others, to do this right. All human beings deserve a decent place to live, and we don't want to be building tomorrow's slums today.

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November 8, 2018

TO: Salt Lake City Planning Commission
PLNPCM2018-00066 Single Room Occupancy Dwellings Text

FROM: Judi Short, Vice Chair and Land Use Chair
Sugar House Community Council



Thank you for having another public hearing so we can comment on this proposal.

Because we didn't have our usual timeframe, this was not reviewed by the LUZ committee, This was sent by email to two different groups, both near the proposed areas for SRO as an approved use. We also emailed it to the SHCC Trustees and members of the LUZ committee. I received comments (attached), and I know that some were mailed directly to the planner, Ashley Scaife.

I have lived or traveled in a number of cities, and all have had SROs, usually in the business core. My impression is itsomething we don't want in our neighborhoods. They always look dirty, even the sidewalks outside, and the lobby inside. They give off the feeling that whoever lives there, or is in charge of the building, doesn't care about the neighborhood or those who live in it. And, I have a family member who has lived in these off and on and has bad stories to tell.

At the same time, we have a BIG housing crisis in this town, and it will only get worse as more people come, and rents keep increasing. This gives us one more tool in our arsenal. However, we need to pay attention to how they are implemented. Many of these places function as a halfway house, from prison, or a substance abuse treatment program, and these people may need more supervision than the average person renting an apartment. They may not have ever lived on their own, and need a set of rules. Perhaps there are rules regarding visitors, whether they can meet in the lobby or go up to their rooms, based on good behavior. Who cleans and maintains the premises? Some of these people may need a job , or will do this chores in exchange for rent.

There are also families or people who couldn't afford their rent any more, who may not have first and last month's rent plus a cleaning deposit saved up, who need to live in less expensive housing until they can save some money, or get a better job. There may be medically frail people who live on assistance, who can't afford more than this but don't deserve to live on the street.

These facilities are very important for those people that need them. I have a member of my family who is homeless, and has been in an SRO. To listen to him talk about all that he has to go through just to get what he needs each day, to make a trip to lock up his belongings, to not want to be in the shelter because if he falls asleep at night someone will steal what he hid under the mattress while he is sleeping. And I'm sure some of you have seen the KUED documentary in the past year about how people have to get up really early in the shelter to take a child to school and spend an hour on the bus to do that, and then get back downtown for their job, an back out to the school to pick up the child or maybe take them to day care. They spend half their time on public transit getting around, how can they hold a real job?

Where I am going with all of this is that we need to have a structure for these. Much like the homeless shelters, these are one step above, but still need some services and integration. Many people raised in difficult circumstances may not have had parents or adequate training in how to behave, and we need to set a standard for our citizens.

Here is my recommendation:

- Approve these, in a few sections only, like you did with Accessory Dwelling Units. See how they perform. Put them in a very public place, where how they perform will be obvious, and visit these buildings, unannounced, every few weeks.
- In the meantime, work on some regulations, like the Utah Landlord Tenant Laws described here: <http://www.joetenant.com/utah-landlord-tenant-laws/>. Use the YWCA and The Rio Grande Hotel as examples,

have them help you write some regulations, and then have them train the staff in each facility, as new ones are open. In return, give them some extra funding.

- Develop a system of enforcement, to make sure these work. We are going to be a very crowded city, very soon. When we cram 50,000 more people in, unless we use up every bit of our open space to do it (NOT!) things could be really ugly, unless we have some high standards. These standards need to spell out what landowners, property managers, and renters, and homeowners can do, and what is expected of them.
- We need to make this city the best example that we can, in the state and in the country.
- Without some sort of enforcement, and actions like financial penalties or withdrawal of licenses, this won't work. Pony up for some funding for our Civil Enforcement Team. Make Salt Lake City a place to be proud of.

<https://www.deseretnews.com/article/900029595/us-cities-used-to-have-low-rent-short-term-dorm-style-housing-is-that-what-utahs-homeless-need.html> <https://www.evernote.com/shard/s72/nl/8152754/6a3e7347-b55a-473d-bcbb-3c120393e4e9/>