

#### **7.04: Review and Respond to the Metropolitan Council Regional Housing Policy Plan 2015 Amendment**

Community Development Director Gladhill presented the draft response to the Metropolitan Council Regional Housing Policy Plan and recommended authorization to send it to the Metropolitan Council.

Councilmember Riley stated support for considering a general statement that Ramsey is comfortable with the concept of promoting affordable housing but not that the Metropolitan Council can force a city to accept more affordable housing than they choose. He referenced the following sentence as contained in the Metropolitan Council's Proposed Amendment to the 2040 Housing Policy Plan (redlined version): Page 8 *"As a result, it is both politically and financially challenging to leverage SAC to promote affordable housing."* Councilmember Riley stated this sentence acknowledges the Metropolitan Council will use political and financial means and sewer access to promote affordable housing. The second sentence of concern was on Page 13, *"Collaboratively explore opportunities to promote affordable housing production through its handling of Sewer Availability Charge..."* Councilmember Riley stated the Metropolitan Council is again making reference to using sewer access to push affordable housing. He would like this addressed to create a singular purpose to promote affordable housing but not through sewer access.

Mayor Strommen asked what the Metropolitan Council is trying to achieve through those two statements and suggested the City ask for clarification.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated his understanding is that it has to do with credits or reductions in SAC infrastructure for affordable housing projects. He stated the policy question is whether the Council supports reducing fees for infrastructure costs for affordable housing. He stated this consideration can be delayed to the April 28, 2015, if the Council would like staff to obtain that clarification.

Mayor Strommen supported a postponement to gain a more informed position.

Councilmember Riley stated staff's explanation sounds good and his concern is that the Metropolitan Council would hold it over a city that straddles the MUSA line so it cannot expand unless it accepts additional affordable housing.

Mayor Strommen asked if other City Boards and Commissions have reviewed this response and provided recommendation.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated unfortunately there was not time to gain that input but he will bring it before the Planning Commission and Environmental Policy Board at their next meetings.

Mayor Strommen supported gaining that input. She stated her other question was with respect to the relationship with the City's Housing Assistance Policy, SAC charges, and reduction of fees, noting the City already has a policy in how to address affordable housing goals and who's in the

‘driver’s seat.’ Mayor Strommen stated the City also has its own Housing Assistance Goals, some of which relate to affordable housing. She asked staff to add reference to that Policy and indicate the Council supports those defined City goals.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated he will make those revisions.

Mayor Strommen asked staff to determine the specific Metropolitan Council staff to whom the City’s response should be submitted.

Motion by Councilmember Kuzma, seconded by Councilmember Johns, to table consideration of the City’s response to the Metropolitan Council Regional Housing Policy Plan to the April 28, 2015, Council meeting to allow time for revisions and staff to obtain the requested clarification.

Further discussion: Councilmember Shryock suggested the City’s response be mailed to the Metropolitan Council Director. Community Development Director Gladhill recommended mailing the response to the Metropolitan Council Interim Community Development Director and copied to Ramsey’s Metropolitan Council representative.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Strommen, Councilmembers Kuzma, Johns, LeTourneau, Riley, Shryock, and Williams. Voting No: None.