

Connected Communities response: Gerry Kraus, Bond Place

Description

Dear Vice Mayor Kearney and members of Cincinnati City Council:

As a 60+ year student of Cincinnati's zoning and land use, I implore you to reject the proposed Connected Communities ordinance in its current form for the following reasons:

1. There is not a single mention of Affordable Housing in this proposed ordinance although its supporters state that it is to provide affordable housing. However, there are many references about how this Ordinance will make it easier (i.e. more profitable) for the builders and related real estate interests; nor does it address the different needs of home buyers and renters.

2. The proposed ordinance will do away with single family housing as we know it. The current zoning code provides 12 land use districts including single-family, multi-family, commercial, urban mix, manufacturing, etc. including land use for affordable housing.

"The 2012 PLAN CINCINNATI – a comprehensive plan for the future," adopted by City Council on November 21, 2012, includes the current zoning and also addresses affordable housing. Equity means inclusion: single-family homes on large and small lots, multi-family housing as well as affordable housing for renters and buyers. The proposed ordinance will result in "inharmonious" land uses and reductions in health and safety requirements.

3. I question the need to change the current zoning code to provide additional housing. As I drive around Cincinnati neighborhoods, I see many new housing developments like DeSales Flats (300+ units) off DeSales Corner, Woodburn Exchange (300 units), McMillan Ave from Peoples Corner west to Mt. Auburn and Clifton, Delta Ave. from Columbia Parkway west to Mt. Lookout Square, Madison Road from O'Bryonville to Madisonville, Hamilton Ave. at North Bend in College Hill, even around Hyde Park Square to name a few developments. Can't some units in these developments be made affordable with City help, especially if they are getting tax abatement or other city enhancements? Check with the City's Permit Department to see just how many new residential developments/dwelling units permits have been issued the last 3-5 years.

4. The current zoning code does not cause racial segregation as stated by Councilmember Reggie Harris. Yet he supports the real estate interests who invented Redlining to keep Black people from buying/renting housing in many neighborhoods. Indeed, it is strict enforcement of the present zoning code that have kept racially integrated neighborhoods like North Avondale, Kennedy Heights, College Hill from turning into Black ghettos.

5. In short, the proposed Connected Communities ordinance will only benefit real estate interests and drive many homeowners who like green space out of the City.

I believe this proposed ordinance is illegal as it violates Article VII, Section 7 of the Cincinnati Charter.

Gerry Kraus

Bond Place

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