

Agenda
Ottawa County Housing Commission
West Olive Administration Building – Conference Room F
12220 Fillmore Street, West Olive, MI 49460
Thursday, September 5, 2024, 10:00 am



1. Call to Order
2. Establish Quorum
3. Approval of the Agenda for the September 5, 2024 Meeting
4. Approval of the [Minutes](#) from the July 11, 2024 Meeting
5. Old Business
 - A. MicroHomes Concept
6. New Business
 - A. 2025 Ottawa County Housing Needs Assessment
 - B. Land Use Vision Pilot Project (Presentation)
7. Public Comments
8. Other Business/Discussion Items
 - A. [FYI Articles](#) - *the inclusion of the FYI list of articles does not in any way imply endorsement or approval by the Ottawa County Housing Commission of the items contained therein*
 - B. Next Meeting: October 3, 2024 (10:00 a.m.)
9. Adjournment

UNOFFICIAL MINUTES

OTTAWA COUNTY HOUSING COMMISSION

DATE: July 11, 2024

PLACE: Ottawa County Fillmore Complex, Board Room

PRESENT: Holly Cole, Pat Harmon, Klynt Marcusse, Jared Schuitema

ABSENT: Jon Anderson

STAFF: Paul Sachs, Pam VanderMolen

PUBLIC: David Barnosky, Chris Crothers, Steve Grose

CALL TO ORDER

Vice President Schuitema called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. A quorum was present to do business.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

HC 24-26 Marcusse moved to approve the Agenda for July 11, 2024. The motion passed.
UNANIMOUS

HC 24-27 Cole moved to approve the Minutes from June 6, 2024. The motion passed.
UNANIMOUS

RATIFY ELECTION OF OFFICERS

HC 24-28 Harmon nominated Jared Schuitema as President.
There were no additional nominations.
The motion passes as shown by the following roll call votes: Yeas: Cole, Harmon, Marcusse, Schuitema (4)
UNANIMOUS

HC 24-29 Harmon nominated Klynt Marcusse as Vice President.
There were no additional nominations.
The motion passes as shown by the following roll call votes: Yeas: Cole, Harmon, Schuitema, Marcusse (4)
UNANIMOUS

OLD BUSINESS

Chris Uhl (IFF) presented an update on the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and clarified questions that arose during the Commission's previous meeting about selling loans to federal home loan banks. Uhl informed the Commission that IFF sells the loans as a source of equity that allows them to recycle capital faster which is not a loss, its capital gained. Uhl further asked the Staff and Commission for procedures on future groundbreaking events and how often IFF should provide updates to the Commission. It was determined that IFF will notify County staff of any groundbreaking events and staff will extend an invite to the appropriate Board of Commissioner representative, and share with Housing Commission members. Going forward, IFF will present quarterly to the Commission, as opposed to the currently monthly rotation, but will attend additional meetings if the need arises.

UNOFFICIAL MINUTES

Sachs informed the Commission that, besides the approved Terra Station brownfield housing project, there are two new brownfield housing TIF projects that were approved by the Board of Commissioners earlier this week (Winsor Place and Prospect Flats). Sachs mentioned the possibility of forming a Review/Vetting Committee for Housing TIF projects involving cross-representation from both the Housing Commission and County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.

President Schuitema, Sachs, and Harmon briefly reviewed the outcome of the first MicroHomes Concept Work. Staff will begin sharing the work group meeting notes in the Housing Commission's meeting packets.

NEW BUSINESS

Sachs informed the Commission of recent legislation on mobile home parks that is making its way through the legislature.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments were made by the following:

1. David Barnosky

OTHER BUSINESS/DISCUSSION ITEMS

President Schuitema stated that the next Housing Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 1, 2024 at 10:00 am. The Commission discussed and determined to hold this date tentatively on their calendars for now. President Schuitema requested scheduling the next work group meeting after Labor Day.

ADJOURNMENT

HC 24-30 Schuitema moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:49 a.m. The motion passed.

UNANIMOUS

REAL-ESTATE

Ottawa County home sellers asked for less money in June

USA TODAY Network

Published 3:03 a.m. ET July 13, 2024 | Updated 3:03 a.m. ET July 13, 2024

OTTAWA COUNTY — The median home in Ottawa County was listed for \$495,450 in June, down 4% from the previous month's \$516,000, an analysis of data from Realtor.com shows.

Compared to June 2023, the median home list price increased 5.3% from \$470,714.

The statistics in this article only pertain to houses listed for sale in Ottawa County, not houses that were sold. Information on your local housing market, along with other useful community data, is available at data.hollandsentinel.com.

Ottawa County's median home was 2,206 square feet, listed at \$225 per square foot. The price per square foot of homes for sale is up 5.2% from June 2023.

Listings in Ottawa County moved briskly, at a median 30 days listed compared to the June national median of 45 days on the market. In the previous month, homes had a median of 30 days on the market. Around 364 homes were newly listed on the market in June, a 2.8% increase from 354 new listings in June 2023.

The median home prices issued by Realtor.com may exclude many, or even most, of a market's homes. The price and volume represent only single-family homes, condominiums or townhomes. They include existing homes, but exclude most new construction, as well as pending and contingent sales.

Across the Holland metro area, median home prices rose to \$474,900, slightly higher than a month earlier. The median home had 2,150 square feet, at a list price of \$227 per square foot.

In Michigan, median home prices were \$309,900, a slight increase from May. The median Michigan home listed for sale had 1,645 square feet, with a price of \$183 per square foot.

Throughout the United States, the median home price was \$445,000, a slight increase from the month prior. The median American home for sale was listed at 1,868 square feet, with a price of \$233 per square foot.

The median home list price used in this report represents the midway point of all the houses or units listed over the given period of time. Experts say the median offers a more accurate view of what's happening in a market than the average list price, which would mean taking the sum of all listing prices then dividing by the number of homes sold. The average can be skewed by one particularly low or high price.

The USA TODAY Network is publishing localized versions of this story on its news sites across the country, generated with data from Realtor.com. Please leave any feedback or corrections for this story here. This story was written by Ozge Terzioglu.

Young people in Ottawa Co. could own micro homes through this program

by: [Madalyn Buursma](#)

Posted: Jul 30, 2024 / 03:31 PM EDT

Updated: Jul 30, 2024 / 03:31 PM EDT

WEST OLIVE, Mich. (WOOD) — An Ottawa County team is working to address the community’s housing need by bringing small-footprint homes to the area.

The Ottawa County Housing Commission and the county’s Department of Strategic Impact is working on a [MicroHome Development Concept](#) project, with a goal of bringing more for-sale starter homes into the county that range in size from 450 square feet to 950 square feet.

Paul Sachs, the director of strategic impact for Ottawa County, said a better way to describe the “micro homes” would be “practical homes.”

“We used to build these types of starter homes regularly, and that just doesn’t occur anymore,” he told News 8. “Some of the conversations we’ve had with developers and young professionals, aging seniors, they would love this type of product to become available.”

Like [many communities in West Michigan](#) and across the country, housing is one of the top issues Ottawa County is facing, Sachs said.

“Ottawa County is special in my heart because it’s so vibrant and beautiful and thriving, and people want to live here,” Sachs said. “Our biggest challenge is that continued growth rate.”

He added that to accommodate a growing workforce, the county needs more housing. Otherwise, people may take their skills elsewhere.

“That headwind, if you will, will strengthen, where we’ll lose that local talent and labor force and that next vibrant generation of Ottawa County residents,” Sachs said. “So we need to address this now to have our kids and our friends’ kids and everyone else come and move into this area and to give them a home — and not an apartment.”

A [2021 Housing Next assessment](#) found Ottawa County needs 15,500 more housing units. That’s a mix of rental and for-sale units; the county needs around 1,300 entry-level, for-sale homes.

But while the county is building housing units like rentable apartments, there isn’t a lot of development activity to fulfill the community’s housing need for those 1,300 entry-level homes, Sachs said.

So his team has set out to create four designs, to show that the county can have small-footprint homes that are aesthetically beautiful and blend into the fabric of the community, but can also be built at a price point that’s accessible to young professionals and aging seniors.

They’re also working to educate people about the reality of these smaller homes.

“There’s also some misconceptions, often amongst the general public, that a small-footprint home is for low-income or transitional housing: ‘It will bring down my property values,’ ‘It won’t look good,’” he said. “Those are all false misconceptions that we want to address through education.”

Sachs said his team is also working with local municipalities to adjust local regulations and **zoning** that don’t allow for small-footprint homes, in order to pave the way for builders and developers who would be interested in working on a small-footprint home project.

“(Developers) recognize the need for this housing type. It’s also known that this housing type has small margins for profitability,” he explained. “With those tight margins, it makes it difficult for a developer to expend some resources into designing this product type and then to move it forward to local government approval.”

There’s already a handful of developers and builders interested in partnering with the county, Sachs said, and his team is working with them to find potential properties for small-footprint homes.

The goal is to build the small-footprint homes without relying on government subsidies and grant dollars.

“Across the state of Michigan, **housing is an issue** and there are lots of **funds available** to help subsidize construction of housing units. Those are great tools to use,” Sachs said. “That housing ecosystem right now is very, very active. We’re very intentional with this product, so we don’t want to rely on grants that won’t always be there. How do we build a quality, sustainable and scalable product that can be embraced by the community that we can continue to build at a cost effective rate for (those who) need it?”

The Ottawa County Housing Commission has **put out a survey** for residents on the project. So far, the majority of responses has been in favor of the small-footprint homes, Sachs said.

“Many of the conversations that I’ve been having since we launched this project, with local officials, home builders and just residents in general, they validate the need for us to do this work. Because they believe in it, they know we need it and that keeps us going,” Sachs said.

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Detroit Free Press

MICHIGAN

West Michigan beachfront town works to ban short-term vacation rentals



Kylie Martin

Detroit Free Press

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Over on the west side of the state, discourse between short-term rental property owners and the cities in which they reside is brewing up a storm.

Park Township, a beach town 5 miles west of Holland that's home to Holland State Park, is one of several vacation towns on the west Michigan coast attempting to ban short-term rentals, like those that are booked with rental services like Airbnb and VRBO.

Property owners claim that short-term rentals are significantly more profitable — accruing between \$10,000 to \$50,000 a year — than long-term rentals, and the additional tourism and competitive accommodation prices benefits the local economy as well. However, the township claims that short-term rentals ruin the local housing market, driving up housing and rent prices, while simultaneously bringing in guests that disrupt the peace of the neighborhood and its permanent residents.

Related: A boat rental platform ranked Michigan's boat cities: Where Detroit falls

In November 2022, commissioners took a unanimous vote to cease operations for short-term rentals in residential zones. The motion took effect on Oct. 1, 2023, enforcing that all existing short-term rentals had to either stop operating or convert to long-term rentals.

However, the ban was followed by a lawsuit against the township from Park Township Neighbors, a nonprofit group of short-term rental owners in the community, who accused the township of not properly amending the zoning ordinance in accordance with Michigan Zoning Enabling Act. On Dec. 1, 2023, Ottawa County Circuit Judge Jon Hulsing ruled in the group's favor, granting a preliminary injunction to lift the ban and dismiss the fines that the short-term rental owners had gathered.

On March 14, 2024, the township's Board of Trustees approved a moratorium on new short-term rentals as well as a zoning amendment to clarify that rentals for fewer than 28 days are prohibited outside of the township's resort district, although the enforcement of those two actions is still blocked by the preliminary injunction. The next hearing at Ottawa County Circuit Court is expected to take place Nov. 21.

More: 5th-graders appeal to Legislature to make stonefly Michigan's insect

In a contract with Park Township Neighbors, the Frost Center for Social Science Research at Hope College randomly surveyed local west Michigan business owners to study the impact of short-term rentals on Holland's local economy. The study found that 69% of local business owners believe that short-term rentals had a positive effect on past business, and 63% of local business owners believe that a ban on short-term rentals would create potential negative long-term effects on business due to a decrease in tourism.

Additionally, in the survey, 33% of short-term rental owners said they would sell their property if the ban was enforced, while 64% said they would not continue to invest in the area if the ban was enforced.