

Parks, Timothy

From: Murphy, Brad
Sent: Thursday, August 05, 2010 8:33 AM
To: Parks, Timothy
Cc: Roll, Rick
Subject: FW: ZCRAC-support coop zoning

Tim, please provide this to the Plan Commission. Thanks.

Brad Murphy
Planning Division Director
Dept. of Planning & Community & Economic Development
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215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Madison, WI 53701
608 266 4635

From: Rummel, Marsha
Sent: Thursday, August 05, 2010 12:16 AM
To: Murphy, Brad
Subject: ZCRAC-support coop zoning

Plan Commissioners-

I am on vacation and unable to attend the meeting. I urge you to support reconsideration of the vote re coop zoning and support the expansion of zones where coops can locate.

My district has several housing coops. I have never had any complaints about them from neighbors or the city.

Coops provide an important niche and there appears to be a significant demand for this type of housing among younger working people. We say we want young people to stay in our city, this is one piece of the puzzle. I believe allowing the conversion of multi-unit rental properties into coop housing would be a good thing for my district. There are numerous appropriate buildings in both the R4 and R4A portions of the district. Currently MCC is interested in purchasing and converting a 4 unit that is in foreclosure near the Marquette Elementary school and turn it into an 8-12 room coop. Everyone in the neighborhood I've talked to about this project supports it.

Thanks for re-considering.

Marsha

8/9/10

Re: Zoning rewrite for co-op housing

Dear Commissioners,

I write to ask that you please include significant edits to allow and encourage co-operative housing where possible.

As a long time resident of several downtown neighborhoods, and thirteen years as a direct neighbor to Syntropy Housing Co-op, I can say without a doubt that the housing co-ops have benefited the neighborhoods in which they're located.

They have provided a vibrancy and life above and beyond expectations. Their diverse residents, whose varied interests and broad and sometimes international backgrounds are an asset to the neighborhood. Their dinners, events and drop-by conversations on the porch or in the garden have been great for enhancing the rapport among neighbors and building a sense of community.

We need a lot more housing co-ops to help stabilize and enrich our neighborhoods. Please do what you can to enable their establishment and nurture their growth.

Respectfully,

Gary Tipler
807 Jenifer Street
Madison, WI

Housing Cooperatives

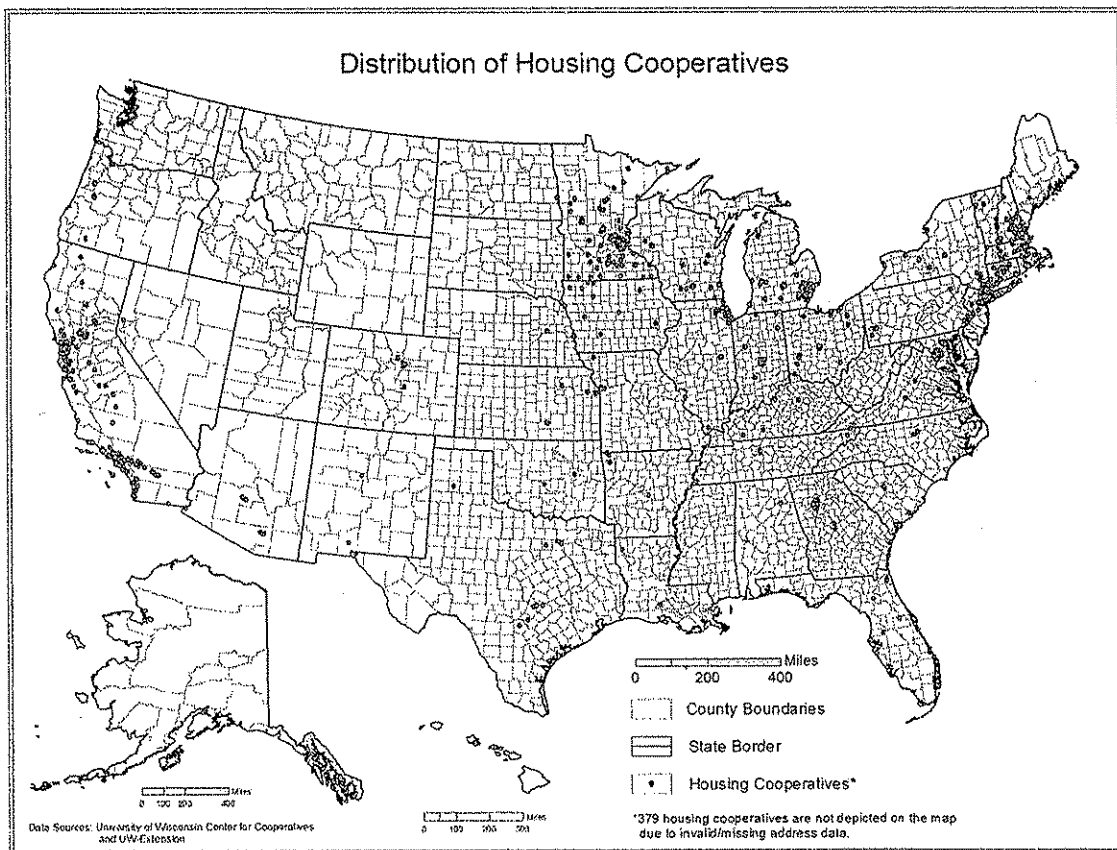
Anne Reynolds, atreynol@wisc.edu

August 9, 2010

I'm the Assistant Director of the University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives, which is part of University of Wisconsin Extension on the UW campus. We teach and do research on the cooperative model, and offer training and information to cooperatives of all types. I'd like to support the proposed zoning re-write by offering some information on housing cooperatives.

There are three major types of housing in the United States: rental, single-family ownership, and owner-occupied multi-family dwellings. Housing cooperatives, like condominiums, are owner-occupied multi-family dwellings. This means that the people who live in the building are owners of the building. They don't rent, but they pay their share of the costs of living in the building, which may include mortgage payments, taxes, and building upkeep. The first cooperative was built in New York City in 1876. Housing cooperatives have been a small but important sub-set of our housing choices ever since.

According the 2005 U.S. Census, there are 775,000 housing cooperative units in the United States. Here's a map that shows where many of these cooperatives are located:



This map is part of our ongoing study of the economic impact of cooperatives of all types. It's hard to measure the economic impact of housing, once it's been built, but research shows that cooperative living encourages social networks, which contribute to civic life, health and well-being.

In Wisconsin, both housing and business cooperatives are organized under the same statute, Chapter 185. This statute defines the building blocks of cooperative corporations, but cooperatives vary widely in size and scope.

In Madison, we have a small number of housing co-ops that are organized similarly to condominiums, where everyone has their own unit. We also have several popular co-housing developments, which offer separate living spaces plus shared amenities like a kitchen, community space, and gardens. On a smaller scale, we have a successful network of group living cooperatives, where people have their own bedroom and then share the kitchen and living spaces.

I actually live 5 doors away from one of these cooperatives, the Yahara Linden Cooperative on Linden Avenue. Our neighborhood is mostly single-family houses, with a few 2 or 3 flats. I doubt that most of the neighbors have any idea that it's a cooperative – there's nothing to distinguish the large, well kept house from any other. On the other hand, I'm glad to know that if there were ever any problems, the owners of the house actually live in the house.

Lastly, it's important to note that Madison has a strong support network for cooperatives of all types. We have the largest state trade association for cooperatives in a downtown office, we have the UW Center, we have attorneys and accountants that understand cooperatives, and we have a strong peer-to-peer network of co-ops. These networks contribute to the success of cooperatives in Wisconsin, and the City, and these networks help new cooperatives flourish.

I hope that you'll support this important addition to "housing choice" for our community.