



January 2021 Newsletter



MHC Wants to Hear From You!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2020MHCSurvey>

SAVE THE DATE!

2021 MHC Virtual Annual Meeting
Thursday, June 10, 2021
6:00 P.M.

Keynote Speaker:
Dr. Matthew Desmond



Pulitzer Prize Winning Author of *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*

Maurice P. Daring Professor of Sociology at Princeton University

Principal Investigator of Princeton's Eviction Lab

Land Development Code Reform: Where Things Stand and How to Remain Engaged

The initial recommendations to the Louisville Land Development Code have been released. These recommendations represent only the first set of recommendations that will ultimately be proposed to the Planning Commission and Metro Council. MHC remains committed to the process of reforming the Land Development Code and to ensuring that the community is informed about recommendations being proposed, progress in the process, and how every

resident can have their voice heard regarding recommendations that are important to them. Below is a summary of the reform process and where things stand now.

Why is Making Reforms to the Land Development Code so Important?

Where we live matters. Our homes are what connects us to schools, to good quality jobs, to healthy environments. Conversely, it is also what exposes us to disproportionate risks like air or water pollution or to overcrowding that can place us at greater risk for exposure, illness and fatality from viruses such as COVID-19. Perhaps nowhere is the critical impact of housing more pervasive than in the disparities in life expectancies seen across Louisville Metro, which show that some areas in the city have a 12.6 year difference in life expectancy.

Zoning plays a huge role in how neighborhoods, cities and regions develop. If done well, zoning can help encourage economic growth while also providing affordable housing for households that would otherwise be displaced or unable to access a particular neighborhood or community. If done without adequate consideration, however, zoning can produce or deepen inequities across cities and allow unwanted development to threaten the stability of communities.

Zoning in Louisville, like in many other cities across the United States, has produced severe economic and racial segregation, inequitable neighborhood investment and has made the development of affordable housing economically infeasible. Poverty continues to be concentrated in Louisville's west and south central areas. Subsidized housing units are also highly concentrated in west Louisville, with one-third of all subsidized housing units located in just two districts alone. The black/African American population predominantly lives in west Louisville and east of the Airport, while the majority of the white population of Louisville/Jefferson County continues to reside in east Louisville.¹

Even before the pandemic, Louisville faced a severe housing shortage. In Louisville, over 46% of renter households are cost burdened, meaning that they pay more than 30% of their income for rent. Moreover, there is an estimated shortage of 31,412 units for those with the lowest incomes, causing an overall affordability gap that affects all families whose income is lower than the area median, severely limiting housing choice for many Louisvillians.

Ensuring that all of our citizens have access to safe and affordable housing in all areas across the city requires that we imagine a new future where our neighborhoods make room for more people. Recognizing the unsustainable nature of our existing housing practices, cities and states across the country are starting to challenge the idea that our neighborhoods need to be made up primarily of single family homes. In 2019, for example, Minneapolis legalized triplexes in areas where only one home was allowed before. Similarly, in 2019, Oregon became the first state to allow fourplexes in areas where only single family zoning was allowed before.

What Reforms are Being Recommended in the First Round?

A number of initial reforms are being recommended in this first round. The important point to remember is that these are just the first round of reforms. More reforms will be coming in the next 6-12 months. It is critical that citizens remain informed and engaged as the process continues.

Initial Housing and Neighborhood Related Recommended Reforms include:

- Allow Accessory Dwelling units as a permitted use with standards rather than with a Conditional Use Permit; this would allow staff to approve the use.
- Revise residential setbacks such as front yard and easement overlap in rear yard in Neighborhood Form District to reduce the need for waivers and variances and to reduce the cost of housing.
- Review notice requirements for equity. Amend to notice residents as well as owners.
- Permit duplexes as a use of right like single family dwelling not subject to maximum density restrictions.
- Remove Floor Area Ratio in residential zones to reduce obstacles to development and redevelopment of residential lots.
- Revise current zoning requirements for uses like market gardens, community gardens, etc. to reduce obstacles to development of these uses.

What Are the Next Steps in the Process?

The initial recommendations will be sent to the Planning Commission for review. A public hearing will be held in February, which will be a great opportunity for the public to weigh in on these initial recommendations as well as on recommendations that you would like to see in the future. Once the Planning Commission has incorporated public opinion about the recommendations, they will be sent to Metro Council for a vote. You can contact your Metro Council member directly or testify at a Metro Council meeting to have your opinion heard.

How Can I Get Involved?

- Contact Planning and Design Services at (502) 574-4PDS from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, or emailing LDCreform@louisvilleky.gov
- Share Your opinion at the Planning Commission Public Meeting- Follow MHC on social media to stay informed about the date and time of this meeting.
- Contact Your Metro Council Members to Share Your Opinion - Find their contact information here: <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/metro-council/email-council-member>
- Throughout this process, MHC will be providing ongoing information about recommendations to the Land Development Code that can reduce the cost of affordable housing development, increase the availability of affordable housing in areas across the city and allow for greater housing choice for those with the lowest incomes. Sign up here for MHC's mailing list to receive the latest information - <http://www.metropolitanhousing.org/resources/newsletters/>

Where Can I Learn More about the History of the LDC in Louisville?

- See the interactive story map about the history of racism in zoning in Louisville here: <https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design/confronting-racism-zoning>
- Listen back to all of the public meetings that have been held thus far

regarding LDC reform - They can be accessed here:

<https://louisvilleky.gov/government/planning-design/equity-review-land-development-code>

¹ http://www.metropolitanhousing.org/wp-content/uploads/member_docs/2019%20State%20of%20Metropolitan%20Housing%20Report_LR.pdf

LG&E Proposes Rate Increase Just When Residents are Struggling the Most: MHC Intervenes

Once again, the Metropolitan Housing Coalition is intervening in LG&E's latest rate case. Safe housing means having access to reliable, affordable utilities, particularly in a time when we are immersed in a global health crisis. MHC has a long history of intervening to protect the interests of residential customers in ensuring that they have access to affordable utilities and we are extremely pleased to be playing this critical role again in this latest case.

In addition to the very unfortunate timing of this proposed rate increase, there are a number of other problematic features associated with the LG&E proposal. First, the sheer magnitude of the proposed rate increase will certainly put many more people in jeopardy of losing their homes. LG&E proposes an average rate increase of over \$200 per year, which for those on fixed incomes or who are suffering due to the economic fallout associated with the pandemic, could mean the difference between maintaining housing stability and losing their homes. Even before the pandemic, over 46% of renters paid more than 30% of their income on rent, which puts them at greater risk for housing instability and eviction. Now, due to the pandemic, thousands of residential customers are behind not only on their rental payments, but also on their utility bills. A utility rate increase of this magnitude will undoubtedly lead to even greater housing instability for many Louisville residents. Moreover, the trauma associated with receiving ongoing threats of a shut off or worse, coming home from school or work to no heat or electricity has lingering impacts on the wellbeing of adults and children.

LG&E's recent proposal is also inherently unfair from an economic and racial justice perspective. In this proposal, LG&E is continuing its trend of transferring a greater percentage of the overall bill to a fixed meter fee, a practice which is unfair for a number of reasons. First, it can be argued that low and fixed-income customers generally use less energy, so paying a higher fixed charge has a disproportionate impact on those customers. Secondly, neighborhoods where housing is more dense have, in turn, more meters. Thus, when a greater proportion of one's bill is a fixed meter fee, the people who are living in areas with high density housing, (which often tend to be lower income and racially segregated), are essentially subsidizing the utility expenses of those living in more geographically dispersed areas with fewer meters, (which tend to be higher income and whiter). With this lens, the economic and racial inequity associated with this fee structure is difficult to ignore.

LG&E also includes a number of features that discourage energy efficiency practices by the consumer. For example, because the fixed meter fee is the portion of the bill that is completely outside of the control of the customer, engaging in energy efficient behaviors has less impact on one's bill. In this

way, the proposed rate structure acts as a disincentive for customers to implement energy efficiency practices in their homes. Furthermore, under this proposal, net-metering customers who have invested in solar panels or other distributed energy sources will receive less value for the electricity that they put back on the grid, a clear disincentive for people who are interested in clean energy technologies.

MHC is extremely proud to be represented by Tom (Fitz) Fitzgerald from the Kentucky Resources Council and to be partnering with Kentuckians for the Commonwealth and Kentucky Solar Energy Society in this intervention. This unique collaboration allows nonprofit agencies who are interested in protecting the interests of residential rate payers to maximize limited resources in order to ensure the best possible outcome for all Louisville residents.

MHC encourages all residents to get involved in this rate case. Follow MHC on social media to keep up with the latest information. You can also contact the Public Service Officer at the Kentucky Public Services Commission at psc.info@ky.gov to share your opinion about this rate case and to ask for a public hearing in Louisville. Include the case number (2020-00350) within the subject line of your email and provide your full name and place of residence in the body of the e-mail.

Thank You for Celebrating "It's Cathy Hinko Day!" with us!

Colleagues, friends, and families gathered virtually on Tuesday, January 12, 2021 to celebrate super housing advocate Cathy Hinko's retirement, following 15 years as executive director of MHC and 40 of housing advocacy work. Local and state officials, community members, colleagues, friends, and family recognized Cathy's contributions to fair housing and affordable housing issues in Louisville and her commitment to racial justice and social justice across our community. Local and state officials, including Councilman Bill Hollander, Mayor Greg Fischer, and Governor Andy Beshear, honored Cathy Hinko with special remarks.

In addition to the community coming together to celebrate Cathy Hinko and her work for housing justice, we joined together to recommitment to the work for fair, accessible, and affordable housing FOR ALL in our community. Finally, we raise funds to support MHC's mission and to continue Cathy Hinko's legacy of housing advocacy.

Thank you to all of our sponsors who made this event possible and joined us in celebrating Cathy Hinko—the person and the advocate!

"It's Cathy Hinko Day" Sponsors



We strive to Enhance Lives,
Build on Strengths and
Create Community.



Louisville
Urban League



Robin Bray Property Management
Susan Hinko & Carl Batlin



DONATE TODAY

to become a member and
strengthen the voice of
MHC in the community!



2021 Virtual Learning Series

A free, bi-monthly forum focused on finding solutions to vacant and abandoned properties in Louisville. Presented by the Louisville Vacant Properties Campaign.

Zoom registration and speaker details coming soon!



UNDERSTANDING VACANT AND ABANDONED PROPERTIES 2021 VIRTUAL LEARNING SERIES

A FREE, BI-MONTHLY FORUM FOCUSED ON FINDING SOLUTIONS TO VACANT AND ABANDONED PROPERTIES IN LOUISVILLE PRESENTED BY THE LOUISVILLE VACANT PROPERTIES CAMPAIGN

SESSION 1

February 16, 2021
5:30-6:30 PM

What is the Role of Metro Government in Alleviating Vacant and Abandoned Properties?

SESSION 2

April 20, 2021
5:30-6:30 PM

How Do We Improve Compliance Rates with City Codes? What Resources Exist to Help Homeowners Remain in Compliance?

SESSION 3

June 15, 2021
5:30-6:30 PM

How Does the Affordable Housing Trust Fund and the Community Land Trust Prevent and Address Vacant and Abandoned Properties in Louisville?

SESSION 4

August 14, 2021
5:30-6:30 PM

What Strategies Exist to Help People Age in Place and Prevent Properties from Becoming Vacant and Abandoned?

SESSION 5

October 19, 2021
5:30-6:30 PM

What are Other Cities Successfully Doing in Regard to Vacant and Abandoned Property Resolution? How can Kentucky Mirror Those Practices?

SESSION 6

December 21, 2021
5:30-6:30 PM

Lessons Learned, Policy Recommendations and Next Steps

ZOOM REGISTRATION AND SPEAKER DETAILS COMING SOON!

**MHC and the University of Louisville Oral History Center
are Partnering on an Oral History Project**

Unfair Housing in Louisville: A Legacy Project focuses on documenting, understanding, and preserving the history of housing discrimination in Louisville.

Are you interested in documenting your family story?

If so, contact Tony Curtis at tony@metropolitanhousing.org.

WHAT IS YOUR FAMILY STORY?

UNFAIR HOUSING IN LOUISVILLE: A LEGACY PROJECT

An oral history project focused on documenting, understanding, and preserving the history of housing discrimination in Louisville.



**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN
PARTICIPATING IN AN INTERVIEW
TO DOCUMENT YOUR HISTORY
WITH HOUSING DISCRIMINATION
IN LOUISVILLE?**

**CONTACT US @
TONY@METROPOLITANHOUSING.ORG
502-584-6858**

Photo Credit:
Photographic Archives University of Louisville



Community Calendar

Due to COVID-19, meetings are being held virtually. Virtual meeting links will be sent out monthly to each groups email list.

Fair Housing Coalition

meets at 2:00 P.M.

on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at New Directions,
1615 Maple St.

Louisville Vacant Property Campaign

meets at 5:30 P.M.

on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at the
Western Library
604 South Tenth Street

Do you have an event for the Community Calendar?

Email Tony Curtis at

tony@metropolitanhousing.org



Click [HERE](#) to Register
January 28, 2021
12:00-1:00 P.M.

Community Housing Resources

"As Louisville develops, fears of gentrification persist, but what does it all mean?" words by JUSTIN PRICE design by MYA CUMMINS

On The Record Newsmagazine (duPont Manual High School)

<https://spark.adobe.com/page/CGqHVjib6izLD/>

Webinar: Louisville's New Fair Housing Laws for 2021

<https://vimeo.com/502319898>

This video covers the new fair housing ordinance passed by Louisville Metro Council that goes into effect on March 1st, 2021. Recording was made January 12, 2021.

Presenters are JD Carey, Executive Director, Louisville Apartment Association; and Art Crosby, Executive Director, Lexington Fair Housing Council.



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- (3) Search "Metropolitan Housing Coalition" and click "Select" to support.



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MHC would like to thank Louisville Metro Government for its continuing support of our outreach efforts.