



HOURGLASS FIRST FRIDAY FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

September 2019 Forum

Housing in Lancaster County Part II

This First Friday Forum was a sequel to the extremely popular Housing Forum the Hourglass held in April 2019 which focused on the housing challenges the County faces. The three challenges identified were: land acquisition/land planning costs; cost of construction; and income to be able to afford housing. The August 2019 Forum focused on the solutions to some of these challenges.

One of the biggest cost drivers to building housing is adhering to the onerous regulations surrounding homebuilding. Regulations are estimated to account for roughly 30% of a project's cost. A systematic evaluation to reduce, eliminate, or simplify these regulations would help to reduce cost.

East Lampeter Township has established Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as "by right" zoning. This means that a homeowner can convert a garage or build a small unit on their property to rent out to someone else. This not only provides income to the property owner, but provides an affordable housing opportunity to someone in need of a home. Adopting this important zoning change took the Township five years, a testament to the difficulty of making substantive change in zoning.

Another possible solutions comes from the state of Oregon. Oregon passed a statewide law to abolish single-family zoning. This sends a message that they prefer high-density, multi-family housing as opposed to large-lot, single-family homes. Adopting similar legislation would allow for higher density housing in PA.



Moderator

Ray D'Agostino

CEO of Lancaster Housing Opportunity Partnership (LHOP)

Panelists

Richard Boas - Realtor with Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices, President of Lancaster County Realtors Association

Ethan Demme - CEO of Demme Learning, East Lampeter Township Supervisor

Randy Hess - President of Hess Home Builders

Rick Jackson - VP at ELA Group, Co-Chair Coalition for Sustainable Housing

Randy Patterson - CEO CRIZ Authority

"Some of the solutions are out there, but we haven't tried them here."

- Randy Patterson

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