

NOAH Public Meeting – October 28, 2018

NOAH Affordable Housing Questions with Mayor Briley's Answers (*italics*)

Video at <https://www.facebook.com/thegrovenash/videos/1181550468659773/>

1. Mayor Briley, we need you to address issues of affordability at the root cause, creating long term solutions for increasing the housing supply, preserving our existing units, expanding housing opportunities, and addressing systemic failures in the rental market. In the past, Metro government has organized all sectors of the city to take on big projects like the convention center, a transit plan and a soccer stadium. **Will you pull together key leaders from business, government, and the community to create a comprehensive affordable housing plan within 12 months to engage public and private sectors?** We must have a plan that includes:

- Where we are as a city with affordable housing
- What our goals and timeline are
- How to secure the needed resources
- The framework for decision-making that will get us to these goals.

Will you do this?

How could I say no? I share NOAH's desire to address the root causes of displacement and gentrification and homelessness in our community. I share that sense deeply.

I believe that we do need to have a concrete objective reasonable rational reachable plan to deal with affordability in our community. I, however, believe that the root cause is not just the cost of housing. It is also 40 years of wage stagnation in our community and our country. As much as we work on affordable housing, we have to also work on wage stagnation which is critically important to changing the direction of our community.

2. We recognize that there is no one policy or subsidy that can fully address the affordable housing situation in Nashville. We know we need a diverse set of tools and programs. But, we also know there is no greater need than to **identify a long-term dedicated and recurring funding source for affordable housing that is commensurate with the need as well as the prosperity of our city.** Will you do this?

I agree and I share the belief that in order for this community to make a difference when it comes to affordable housing, we have to be persistent. During the Purcell administration, the city was very focused on this issue. We got a little off focus, probably because we were in the middle of a great recession and housing costs weren't really rising like they were before.

I do believe that if we are going to look back in 10 or 20 years and say we did the right thing, we have to have a consistent source of revenue. This year, even in a very tight budget, we kept the \$10 million for the Barnes Fund to keep us moving forward. Also, in the capital spending plan that the Council approved just a couple of weeks ago, continue to spend \$25 million on affordable housing that is going to be put out for RFP and we are waiting to hear the good ideas in the community about how we can build housing in this community that is needed, especially for people at 0 to 30% of AMI. Because that is really where the truest crisis is in our community. I am in favor of finding some sort of way to identify a source of revenue that can meet that goal of persistence. However, as you have seen from the presentation on our tax structure, we are limited in terms of how we can tax, and we will probably have to go to the state legislature to do that and I am ready, willing and able to go up to the legislature with NOAH to create a source of revenue that is persistent, that will not go away, so that we can focus on affordable housing for the next decade.

3. In order to preserve our ability to develop affordable housing in the future, Metro needs to **extend the operational support of the Community Land Trust for three additional years and create a Municipal Land Bank with clearly defined processes, policies and procedures.** This will ensure that as property values continue to rise, there will still be land available for building new affordable housing. Will you do this?

I share the sense and the belief that we've got to extend the community land trust. It's totally clear to me that that's something we have to do. I was on the board of the housing fund for a decade before I became mayor, so I'm completely committed to making sure that we focus on those kind of efforts going forward. We haven't waited for the request to look at how Metro disposes of land that it controls, because we frankly own more land that is potentially useful for these purposes than probably anybody else in town. So internally in the Mayor's office we are in the midst of discussions about how to create an objective, understandable, transparent, and fair process to make sure that as Metro land becomes available, everybody has a chance to participate, it's used in a way that is effective and makes a difference in the community for decades to come.

Thank you, Mayor. To summarize, you have the passion and the willingness and you at some level appreciate the issues that we have raised. However, we still didn't hear what you would do in terms of the plan within a 12-month period. If there are ways that NOAH can help, if you would articulate those. It's good to have the passion but we have to have some action behind the passion. We appreciate your comments and your willingness to engage.

I don't think it will take 12 months. As you know, as part of the unprecedented transition that we've had in executive leadership in the city, we've also had some significant transition in staffing in the mayor's office. So it slowed us down. We were pretty far along the process on this and without some staffing changes we probably would have already announced something very like this. So it won't take us 12 months. We will definitely get with all of the interested parties in town and move forward in this regard. I will say I don't think we need another study, we just need action.