

Affordable Housing Committee Meeting

Minutes

January 17, 2020 | 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Puget Sound Regional Council | 1011 Western Ave #500, Seattle, WA 98104

Agenda

Goal: Understand the scope, schedule and process of the affordable housing dashboard and give direction to the Housing Interjurisdictional Team (HIJT) for writing a draft update of the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) Housing Chapter.

- Work Plan Update
- Briefing: Affordable Housing Dashboard
- Study Session: Countywide Planning Policies Housing Chapter
- Equitable Stakeholder Engagement

Attendance

Members & Voting Alternates	Present	Phone	Alternate	Members & Voting Alternates	Present	Phone	Alternate
Emily Alvarado	X			Chelsea Hicks	X		
CC Claudia Balducci	X			CM Jeanne Kohl-Welles	X		
Brooke Belman (for Don Billen)			X	CM Ryan McIrvin	X		
Susan Boyd	X			Stephen Norman	X		
Jane Broom	X			Michael Ramos	X		
Kate Brunette (for Bryce Yadon)			X	Mayor Lynne Robinson	X		
Caia Caldwell	X			CM Nancy Tosta	X		
Kelly Coughlin		X		Brett Waller			
CM Claude DaCorsi	X						

Non-Voting Alternates

CM Zach Hall	X	
CM Marli Larimer	X	
Mayor Rob McFarland	X	
CP Tanika Padhye	X	

* CC = Council Chair, CM = Councilmember, CP = Council President,

Decisions

- The Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) decided to hold a special meeting within the following month to continue the CPP discussion

Approved January 30th, 2020

Action Items

Action Item	Assigned	Due
Schedule special Affordable Housing Committee meeting	Staff	Jan 24
Consult with Susan Boyd and Stephen Norman on metrics for tracking affordable housing units in the pipeline	Staff	Jan 24
Confirm that a 2025 year to create 44,000 units of affordable housing aligns with the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force (RAHTF) recommendations	HIJT	Feb 6
Ensure CPP data tables strike a balance between the most current and accurate data	HIJT	March 30
Research incentives and consequences for encouraging jurisdictions to meet affordable housing goals	HIJT	March 30

Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

- Council Chair Claudia Balducci welcomed the AHC members and announced provisional membership:
 - Caia Caldwell, Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties
 - Councilmember Ryan McIrvine, City of Renton
 - Mayor Lynne Robinson, City of Bellevue
 - Council President Tanika Padhye, City of Redmond (alternate)
 - Councilmember Zach Hall, City of Issaquah (alternate)
 - Mayor Rob McFarland, City of North Bend (alternate)
 - Vice Chair Nicole Vallesterro Keenan-Lai resigned from the Committee in November and her alternate, Michael Ramos of the Church Council of Greater Seattle, will be taking her seat
 - King County Council is working on an appointment
 - Seattle City Council appointed Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda
- Council Chair Balducci announced that provisional members will participate in meetings until formal appointment by the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) in February
- Council Chair Balducci announced that a new Vice Chair will be selected at the March meeting
- AHC members introduced themselves
- Council Chair Balducci reviewed the meeting agenda

Meeting Minutes

- Councilmember Nancy Tosta motioned to approve the November 15th, 2019 AHC meeting minutes and Stephen Norman seconded the motion
- The minutes were approved 16-0

Work Plan Update

- McCaela Daffern reviewed the adopted work plan and provided updates for each area

Briefing: Affordable Housing Dashboard

- Janet Lee provided an overview of the scope, metrics, format, audience, and schedule of the affordable housing dashboard
- Janet opened the floor for questions on the scope, schedule and process for standing up the affordable housing dashboard
- Susan Boyd stated she would reach out to Janet about a technical data question
- Stephen asked how dashboard metrics could evaluate the Committee's effectiveness. He expressed interest in knowing what the status quo five-year unit production/preservation number would look without Committee action. He suggested scoring AHC policy recommendations based on how well they move the needle to creating 44,000 affordable units in the next five years.
 - Council Chair Balducci stated that the dashboard resulted as a recommendation from the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force process. She stated that she believes the dashboard is meant to easily show the general public progress made towards reaching high-level goals such as the 44,000-unit goal, not necessarily that the goals were achieved due to certain efforts. She communicated that the annual report is another venue for highlighting the efforts of the Committee. Council Chair Balducci also said that the CPP discussion will result in accountability measures that will further inform the contents of the dashboard. She echoed Stephen's desire to find ways to reasonably measure the Committee's impact.
- Councilmember Tosta emphasized that the quality and accuracy of the data should be prioritized over the display of the data
 - Janet explained that large, vetted data sets such as the American Community Survey, Puget Sound Regional Council, and Office of Fiscal Management are prioritized for the dashboard. She explained that one of the reasons the dashboard is being released in two parts is because of the need to vet the smaller data sets. She stated that staff requires more time to compile the best quality data possible.
- McCaela explained that staff are interested in tracking units in the pipeline. She stated that the process of units showing up in data sets is slow and shared that staff will reach out to Susan and Stephen to see how to best capture the efforts of the development community.
- Councilmember Kohl-Welles questioned what year the Committee should use when communicating the goal of producing or preserving 44,000 units in five years
 - Council Chair Balducci shared that a specific year has not been stated and asked the Committee whether a year should be designated to provide credibility and transparency
 - Councilmember McIrvine advocated for flexibility in ensuring that a year is set where the Committee has time to report progress but said the time frame should fit in within the larger goal to produce or preserve 244,000 units by 2040
 - Council Chair Balducci recalled that the 5-year goal was an increment of the 2040 goal, making 2025 the year to accomplish the 44,000-unit goal
 - Mayor Lynne Robinson acknowledged the fact that it takes time to implement housing strategies and produce units, so the five-year metric may not show considerable progress

- Michael Ramos stated that for accountability and transparency, a starting date should be articulated that could be trackable for the general public. He stated that it is okay to have a robust goal that may not be reached as long as there is communication around what helps or hinders the progress.
- Councilmember Larimer asked if loss of affordable units will be tracked and visualized
- Mayor McFarland agreed that a date should be set
- Council Chair Balducci recommended setting the year at 2025 for 44,000 affordable units since it is proportionate to the 2040 goal of 244,000 units. She asked staff to confirm if that aligns with RAHTF recommendations.
- Stephen Norman asked for clarification on whether the 44,000-unit goal incorporates existing efforts (i.e. if 10,000 units are projected to be built/preserved in five years, the Committee would work towards creating the remaining 34,000 units.)
 - Council Chair Balducci believed there should be a differentiation between existing efforts and the Committee’s affordable housing unit count goal
 - Stephen and Council Chair Balducci agreed calculating the actual gap would be a daunting task
 - Janet stated it may be difficult to track the number of units the Committee would solely be responsible for creating. Janet shared that she is planning to track outcomes from recommendations issued by the Committee (i.e. track how many jurisdictions are pooling House Bill 1406 funds as recommended by the Committee). As the work plan moves forward, she plans to continue monitoring outcomes of recommendations issued by the AHC to highlight the Committee’s effectiveness.

Study Session: Countywide Planning Policies: Issue One

Issue Summary

- McCaela gave an overview of the CPPs, including the structure of the Growth Management Act (GMA), the timeline for recommending updates to the Housing Chapter, key takeaways from GMPC and AHC discussions on CPPs from November, opportunities for incorporating equity policies in the update, and the differences between the 1992 and 2012 CPPs
 - Councilmember Kohl-Welles asked when 2018 data for affordable rental unit supply will be available.
 - McCaela stated that she believes McKinsey & Company is working on data projections for 2018-2019
 - Janet stated her preference of waiting for five-year American Community Survey data because the one-year data excludes cities with populations under 60,000, which in turn excludes many King County cities. She explained that the data work group will bring forward data tables that strike a balance between the most current and accurate data.

Discussion

- The Chair posed two questions to the Committee and opened the floor for discussion:
 1. To improve accountability, should the AHC oversee monitoring of regional progress towards meeting the affordable housing need and should the AHC dashboard serve as the CPP Housing Chapter monitoring tool?

2. If the AHC and dashboard will serve as the region's new monitoring body and tool, should the CPPs require monitoring of jurisdictional progress towards meeting affordable housing needs?

- Council Chair Balducci stated that the AHC should oversee monitoring of regional progress towards meeting the affordable housing need and the dashboard should serve as CPP Housing Chapter monitoring tool. She emphasized that the Committee exists as a place for regional coordination around affordable housing and that staff are already working on metrics and accountability measures. She questioned whether the dashboard data will be granular enough for monitoring purposes, but nonetheless believed it should serve as the monitoring tool. She stated that jurisdictional measurements may be more impactful but understands the hesitance of cities to articulate a target and get blamed for not meeting it.
- Councilmember Tosta, on behalf of Sound Cities Association, questioned the definition of oversight and stated that the capacity to track housing amounts and types varies by jurisdiction. She asked if jurisdictions will get support or resources in doing this work (i.e. staff to focus on unique funding mechanisms or public-private partnerships). She emphasized that measuring affordable housing need and tracking progress towards meeting the need is important, but more energy should be put into making sure units get built.
- Mayor Robinson echoed Councilmember Tosta's sentiment in recognizing the importance to measure and track progress and jurisdictional variances in capacity to do the work. She expressed interest in tracking actions cities could take to implement an affordable housing plan that is suited to the needs of that city. She also expressed interest in comparing each city's goal to the countywide affordable housing need.
- Kate Brunette stated that she agreed with the AHC overseeing monitoring of regional progress towards meeting the affordable housing need and the dashboard serving as the monitoring tool in some capacity. She expressed a desire to have more robust data than the dashboard is currently offering. She was in favor of monitoring jurisdictional progress but explained that monitoring is not necessarily the same thing as accountability. She expressed interest in having a conversation on possible incentives to implement policies or consequences to ensure targets are being met.
- Chelsea Hicks acknowledged the importance of collecting and displaying data because it makes for a more compelling story and motivates people to produce better results
- Emily Alvarado stated that Seattle recently launched a dashboard following Mayor Durkan's strong urging for more visibility and transparency on the production of affordable housing. She explained that the process to obtain, display, and distribute the data was difficult, but the final product was a meaningful tool that had very positive feedback from media and general public.
 - Council Chair Balducci asked Emily if Seattle's dashboard could serve as a useful tool for monitoring progress towards goals
 - Emily responded that the dashboard could certainly be designed that way and that Seattle currently has goals attached to each of the city's funding sources
- Jane Broom stated that the Committee should have ownership of the data, because then they could control the narrative. In regard to the lack of jurisdictional capacity to track progress, Jane suggested cities gather information about resource needs, communicate the ask, and see if the private sector or philanthropy can support.

Wrap Up and HIJT Direction

- Council Chair Balducci summarized discussion items from the Committee:
 - General support for having accountability
 - AHC oversight means evaluating, elevating, and making public the issues discussed by the Committee. She emphasized that the Committee has no authority but does have influence.
 - The Committee coordinates and leverages the power of each member individually for more power collectively
 - Support for the Committee to monitor regional progress through data via a dashboard or something similar
 - Cities would like to dedicate their resources for more providing and less counting of affordable housing. There is a need to find a way to collect and report on data instead of providing an unfunded mandate for cities to create new data capacity, which is not a path for success.
 - Suggestion for cities to assess need, create goals, make plans to meet those goals, and evaluate whether cities are taking steps to be able to implement plans
 - Tracking efforts and outcomes of affordable housing production are both necessary and the HIJT should research how to strike a balance between the two
 - There was a question of whether support can be provided to cities to achieve their affordable housing goals and the goals of the Committee
 - There was a question which incentives and consequences could be provided to ensure progress. One current consequence for cities non-compliant with the CPPs are that comprehensive plans may not get certified. This is a long, iterative process, however, and comprehensive plans generally always get certified so this may not be the greatest tool for accountability.
 - Desire to combine anecdotes and data to make the public case for affordable housing and communicate the challenges in developing it. She suggested adding CPP metrics to the 2021 dashboard once the CPP update is approved and the metrics are defined. She reiterated that philanthropy or the private sector may be able to support cities with resources.
- Councilmember Tosta emphasized that creating units is more important than measuring whether they were created

Study Session: Countywide Planning Policies: Issue Two

Issue Summary

- McCaella gave an overview of VISION 2050's plan to concentrate growth near areas of opportunity and highlighted that the 2012 and 1992 CPPs did not reflect the same intent. She discussed that VISION 2050 policies support housing development in areas well-served by transit, and it may not be appropriate for all jurisdictions to provide the same distribution of housing supply. She also acknowledged prior discussions from the Committee in considering the needs of non-transit communities.

Discussion

- The Chair posed two questions to the Committee and opened the floor for discussion:
 1. Should responsibilities to meet the regional affordable housing need be distributed evenly across the county or should the need be weighted by certain criteria, such as proximity to high-frequency transit, proximity to jobs and wages, and/or projected growth?
 2. Should public affordable housing investments be dispersed equally throughout the county or targeted to areas of opportunity, such as areas with high-frequency transit and proximity to jobs and wages?
- Emily Alvarado stated that the topics at hand relate to Fair Housing law and that Committee work should be rooted in access to opportunity, addressing displacement, and committed to advancing integrated and inclusive communities
- Chelsea Hicks stated the Committee should approach these topics with an equity lens and pay special attention to addressing displacement among communities of color
- Brooke Belman stated that communities with high frequency transit should align policies with land use. Sound Transit has a statute and policy direction to offer 80% of surplus property (usually around transit stations) for affordable housing. She emphasized that one of the biggest barriers to affordable housing production is financing, so alignment of resources around high capacity transit is important. She acknowledged that displacement around transit areas is a big issue and opening access to opportunity for everyone should be a focus for the Committee. This intent also aligns with VISION 2050 and other regional goals.
- Susan Boyd stated that it is easier to build housing efficiently near access to transit and other infrastructure due to lower development costs. She added that families also benefit from lower transportation expenses. She noted that the issue of displacement is much more diffuse than just around high cost transit areas.
- Council Chair Balducci acknowledged that displacement is much broader than just around transit areas and many communities were displaced before major transit stations were in place. She shared that there is a direct link between government actions to site transit stations and the surrounding half mile or more becoming unaffordable to and potentially displacing low-income populations. She shared that transit areas could be a place to target investments to prevent or mitigate displacement. She referenced a study that found the biggest factor in economic mobility is access to consistent, frequent, and reliable transportation.
- Councilmember Tanika Padhye advocated for a balance of targeting affordable housing near areas of opportunity and ensuring affordable housing is available in every community. She shared that Redmond could create more affordable housing with funding assistance for 0-30% AMI units. Without that support, that type of housing is not financially feasible for affordable housing developers. She stated that Redmond has access to opportunity including light rail, proximity to jobs, and urban centers and is equipped to take on more affordable housing with support. She stated a need to also support jurisdictions without access to opportunity in creating affordable housing.
- Mayor Robinson shared that cities are unique and capable of completing their own needs assessments and affordable housing strategies. Examples include serving communities with many older adults on fixed incomes or displaced families who should be near their schools. She explained that retaining existing affordable housing in those areas is another affordable housing strategy.

- Kate Brunette advocated for a balance of targeting affordable housing near areas of opportunity and ensuring affordable housing is available in every community. She expressed appreciation of Emily’s point around practicing Fair Housing law in relation to geographic distribution and siting of affordable housing. She added that high-performing schools and access to green space should also be criteria for areas of opportunity. She questioned how the Committee could set regional need and target investments around the right for displaced communities to return to where they once lived.
- Councilmember McIrvine agreed that responsibilities should not be distributed evenly by geographic area or population and that more nuanced criteria should be set. He emphasized the need to consider equity, high transit areas, opportunities for growth in the long term, and areas with lower land costs for affordable housing production. He suggested incorporating criteria to ensure equitable outcomes when using public dollars.
- Stephen supported striking a balance between driving affordable housing development, emerging mass rail corridors, bringing up density, and addressing equity issues related to gentrification and displacement. He suggested driving a clear set of policies that would keep resources flexible and wouldn’t add additional barriers to affordable housing production. He shared that public supportive housing is already hard to build, and additional criteria may further limit the ability to find viable sites.
- Councilmember Larimer shared that cities should take advantage of Sound Transit’s surplus land policy for transit-oriented development and asked if the Committee will measure whether cities are taking advantage of similar opportunities. She advocated for geographic disbursement of affordable housing and shared that communities thrive when there are housing levels of all economic varieties. She stated that affordable housing should not be exclusive to transit areas.
- Councilmember Kohl-Welles applauded Microsoft’s recent housing efforts. She communicated the importance of having public-private partnerships and expressed interest in creating partnerships with other large corporations.

Wrap Up and HIJT Direction

- Council Chair Balducci summarized discussion items from the Committee:
 - Equity, Fair Housing, displacement, and racial justice need to be a key part of policies developed by the AHC in relation to the geographic spread of where affordable housing goes, where responsibilities are, and where public investments should go
 - Take advantage of developing affordable housing near transit, jobs, schools, and parks/open space but still have a mix of housing countywide
- Michael Ramos advocated for using the term “equitable distribution” instead of “equal distribution” to ensure a racial equity lens is explicitly stated. He shared that the Committee should also think through intersections or incentivization for housing that helps to address homelessness.
- Council Chair Balducci asked the Committee if they would be willing to hold a special meeting in February to finish the CPPs discussion
 - Committee members agreed

Equitable Stakeholder Engagement

- Sunaree Marshall gave an update on the HIJT member recruitment, the HIJT outreach strategy, and next steps for engagement
- Sunaree encouraged Committee members to write down suggestions for community groups to engage and write their name down if they are ready and willing to initiate engagement

Emerging Issues

- Jane Broom announced that Microsoft increased their \$500 million affordable housing investment by \$250 million, bringing the total investment to \$750 million in the form of a line of credit to the Washington State Housing Finance Commission. She announced that \$50 million will go to the Evergreen Impact Housing Fund. She added that Microsoft is granting two philanthropic grants for community-based housing: \$2.5 million will go to HomeSight in Othello and \$2.5 million will go to the Rise Together Collaborative for housing in Central District and White Center.
- Council Chair Balducci shared that King County is considering tenant protection legislation proposed by Councilmember Kohl-Welles. She shared that a focus on model ordinances may pay off in the future.
- Councilmember Kohl-Welles announced that Council Chair Balducci was elected as Chair of the King County Council

Next Steps

- Staff will reach out to Committee members for availability to schedule a follow-up meeting for CPP discussion