

King County Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

June 15, 2023 | 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Location: Teams Meeting

Introductions

Members & Voting Alternates	Present	Alternate	Members & Voting Alternates	Present	Alternate
CM Claudia Balducci	X		Ryan Makinster		
Don Billen			Sunaree Marshall	X	
Susan Boyd			CM Ryan McIrvine	X	
Alex Brennan	X		CM Teresa Mosqueda	X	
Jane Broom	X		Mayor Lynne Robinson	X	
Kelly Coughlin	X		CC Dave Upthegrove		
CM Amy Falcone	X		Robin Walls		
Mayor Nigel Herbig	X	DM Dana Parnello	Maiko Winkler-Chin	X	
Russell Joe	X				

Non-voting Alternates	Present
CM Larry Brown	
CM Joseph Cimaomo Jr.	
CM Dan Strauss	
CP Lindsey Walsh	X

* CC = Council Chair, CM = Councilmember, CP = Council President, DM = Deputy Mayor

Introductions and Agenda Review

- The Chair welcomed Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) members in attendance.

Action Item: Adoption of May 1, 2023 Meeting Minutes

- Vote to approve moved by Councilmember Amy Falcone, seconded by Russell Joe
- Approved

Discussion: Draft AHC Charter Amendments

- McCaela Daffern, Regional Affordable Housing Implementation Manager with King County’s Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), briefed the AHC on:
 - Why the AHC is being asked to consider changes to structure and function
 - Minimum AHC responsibilities
 - Key AHC successes, challenges, and opportunities
 - Ideas for AHC evolution
 - Considerations for future AHC work
 - Timeline for draft AHC charter amendments development
- The Chair asked for an example of AHC evolution idea six “Involve interested parties when priority setting.”

- McCaela shared that the process to advance Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) included Community Partners Table members and the Growth Management Planning Council, and the process to implement the CPPs was really clear. An opposite example is the strategic acquisition of properties recommendation statement released in 2020 which had no implementation plan and unclear impact.
- The Chair added that when the AHC tries to do something besides land use planning, they are less well-positioned to make an impact.
- The Chair reflected that the work to update the CPPs, develop and implement a comprehensive plan review process, and increase accountability is where the AHC will have the most impact. Because of the detailed and technical nature of that work, other people may need to be involved in the AHC. If those work areas are where AHC can have the most influence, does the AHC in the current format continue to make sense?
- The Chair opened the floor for discussion from others:
 - An AHC member expressed appreciation for the work of the AHC and shared that Bellevue is an economic driver, contributes high tax revenues, and is a major job center. Because it is challenging when Bellevue's vote does not replicate Sound Cities Association's (SCA) vote, Bellevue requested their own seat on the AHC. Bellevue values their SCA membership but Bellevue has their own seat at the Growth Management Planning Council. The AHC member requested to revisit membership, giving Bellevue its own seat. They added that SCA partners are supportive of this.
 - An AHC member shared that the SCA caucus agrees that proposed plan looks good. They expressed appreciation for the continued focus on comprehensive plan housing elements. They suggested the AHC provide guidance on creating housing programs or bolstering regional coalitions to focus on financing, material supply, land values, and other housing-related issues to ensure that regulatory side is more effective in producing affordable housing. They believe this type of work may already fall under the scope of the current charter and could be an extra work plan item. They suggested reconsidering membership in the charter to align with this work plan item, such as inviting realtors to join the AHC.
 - An alternate AHC member shared that from a city's perspective, AHC should be a convener of data that can be used by jurisdictions and others. This is similar to how King County Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C) creates model code. Every city is unique and model code won't apply to everyone. The AHC's positionality as a midpoint between cities and the state allow for advocacy upward and downward for policy change. A focus on policy change and implementation is where AHC will have the most success.
 - The Chair shared that at the last King County Regional Homelessness Authority Governing Board meeting, Seattle Councilmember Lewis brought up interest in putting together model codes or permitting pathways in order to streamline and speed up delivery of new housing stock and create affordability.
 - McCaela wrapped up with next steps:
 - AHC staff will confer with the Housing Interjurisdictional Team
 - AHC staff will synthesize input, share it with the AHC Chair and Vice Chair, and figure out how to move this forward
 - The Chair reflected that she heard no disagreement on the presentation findings. AHC staff and AHC leadership can work together to create a couple different options. The AHC could evolve into a Technical Advisory Group focused on comprehensive plan review, data collection, and reporting. There are many housing-focused coalitions working on collaboration, advocacy, and policy discussion, but they are disjointed.

Discussion: Frameworks for Comparing Jurisdictional Progress

- Carson Hartmann, Regional Affordable Housing Planner with King County’s DCHS briefed the AHC on:
 - The CPP accountability framework
 - Comparative standard key principles
 - Comparative standard options
- The Chair reflected that CPPs contain greatly detailed numerical goals for housing need by affordability level. She added that efforts taken in the early years of planning may not manifest immediately in many units on the ground, and the exercise to create comparative standards is a way of tracking progress. She expressed preference for being transparent about efforts jurisdictions are taking to advance housing goals.
- The Chair opened the floor for discussion from others:
 - An AHC member shared that this topic brought the most robust discussion from the SCA caucus. They leaned toward modified Option 1 – list of priorities, with the following modifications:
 - More flexibility – there are differences in each city and there was strong consensus that the option is too prescriptive.
 - Outcomes that will already be tracked on the dashboard tied to the assessment of jurisdictional progress towards planning for and accommodating housing needs
 - An AHC member asked how any of these options would address contributions to A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) properties.
 - Carson replied that each option could incorporate some consideration of contributions to subregional entities. The CPPs have an updated requirement for jurisdictions to provide information about contributions. Regardless if it plays a strong role in the options, there will be an ability to display contributions publicly on a revised Regional Affordable Housing Dashboard. The AHC will decide on these details later, but today’s discussion is focused on options for the high-level comparative standard framework.
 - The AHC member shared that Bellevue often contributes to affordable housing outside of their jurisdiction and hopes to receive credit for that.
 - An AHC member shared that they have similar feedback as the SCA caucus regarding flexibility. They suggested creating a menu of weighted options jurisdictions could choose from (if actions are less impactful, they would need to choose more of them, for example). This could provide direction and flexibility. Even if the results of housing production from policy changes isn’t apparent over five years, it is important to track permitting, how many permits have been applied for, how they are moving through the process, and what types of units are being permitted.
 - Carson added that staff will need to figure out how to incorporate outcomes data. When designing the mid-cycle check-in, outcomes should be a part of the evaluation.
 - An AHC member shared that they also like flexibility but would like to standardize that flexibility so progress could be compared across jurisdictions. Tracking outcomes is important for measuring impact/effectiveness regionally.
 - Carson added that there is also an option to do something more typology-based on cities, which could compare cities of the same type.

- An alternate AHC member appreciated the inclusion of examples, particularly the Human Rights Campaign example. They suggested having a conversation on whether the goal is to call out a jurisdiction for not doing something or highlight what they have done. The member preferred to do the former.
 - The Chair shared that if the job is done right, it will do both – identify efforts being made and efforts not being made.
- The Chair shared that this process could yield a valuable collection of information on collective efforts and allow for adjustment (i.e. 20 jurisdictions implemented inclusionary zoning and yielded these results). She added that nobody loves grading idea.
- Carson shared that as a next step, staff will work with the HIJT to advance the development of options and the AHC will vote next year.

Briefing: Comprehensive Plan Review Update

- Carson Hartmann briefed the AHC on:
 - AHC housing-focused comprehensive plan review
 - Plan review standards
 - Plan review development
 - An adjusted plan review process
 - Tentative plan review schedule
- The Chair opened the floor for questions:
 - An alternate AHC member asked if the letters are intended to be given back to the city before the council adopts, and whether the letters will be a tool to determine if councils should adopt the comprehensive plan?
 - Carson shared that through the letters, the AHC will provide comments before council transmission. There is flexibility to see if jurisdictions have a preference for when to review plans. Currently, AHC staff are reviewing plans when the public review drafts are available.
 - McCaella added that with the state and Puget Sound Regional Council's (PSRC) review, they get plans 60-90 days before the plan is adopted. There is not a lot of time for jurisdictions to respond to comments. PSRC also certifies transportation elements of plans after adoption. This plan review process happens earlier to try and give jurisdictions a long time to make adjustments if they want. Letters could be used by councils or by members of the public if they choose.
 - The Alternate AHC member added that they would find it useful for a third party analyze how jurisdictions are meeting criteria. They expressed concern about published letters on draft plans – plans which are subject to change before adoption.
 - Carson shared that he is talking through the process with jurisdictions and will consider the implications of that comment.
 - The Chair wrapped up by reflecting that this process is ripe for continuous improvement. The AHC should remain open to evolving rapidly over time.

Briefing: Projects Updates

- Melissa Aguilar, Regional Affordable Housing Specialist with King County’s Department of Community and Human Services, briefed the AHC on:
 - Community Partners Table (Table) status
 - A draft Table 2023-2024 work plan
- McCaela briefed the AHC on the transmittal of recommended CPP amendments to King County Council.
 - An AHC member asked if the AHC will address the 4:1 program debate in the CPP amendments with a 30% requirement for affordable housing for 10+ acres
 - The Chair clarified that this debate is occurring at the GMPC regarding King County’s comprehensive plan. A proposal was put out for public comment and should come back in September. Affordability requirements attached to that program will be handled by the GMPC.
- Carson briefed the AHC on new guidance for documenting the local history of racially discriminatory and exclusive land use and housing practices.
- Carson briefed the AHC on staff analysis of May 2023 AHC member requests.
 - In the chat, an AHC member expressed interest in the AHC help with acquiring funding for regional housing land trusts from the State
 - The Chair asked if PSRC could help with data development and tracking. That is a large part of their mission and they have dedicated data staff. The Chair asked staff to package up data requests and send them to her, so she could send them to Craig Hellman for potential support.

Wrap-Up and Next Steps

- The Chair shared next steps, including:
 - The next meeting is on September 21 from 2-4:30 pm via Teams
 - Possible agenda items include:
 - Hearing from members of the Community Partners Table
 - Review and approval of the first comprehensive plan review comment letters
 - Additional input on AHC charter amendment concepts
 - Consideration of 2024 AHC work plan concepts
 - Preliminary scoping of AHC 2024 state and federal legislative priorities
 - Update on King County Council consideration of recommended CPP amendments