

King County Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

September 21, 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	X	
Don Billen		Thatcher Imboden	Sunaree Marshall	X	
Susan Boyd			CM Ryan McIrvin	X	
Alex Brennan	X		CM Teresa Mosqueda	X	
Jane Broom	X		Mayor Lynne Robinson	X	
Kelly Coughlin	X		CC Dave Upthegrove		
CM Amy Falcone		CP Lindsey Walsh	Robin Walls	X	
Mayor Nigel Herbig	X		Maiko Winkler-Chin		
Veronica Shakotko	X				

Non-voting Alternates	Present
CM Larry Brown	
CM Joseph Cimaomo Jr.	
CM Dan Strauss	

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

Introduction and Agenda Review

- The Chair, Councilmember Claudia Balducci, welcomed Affordable Housing Committee (AHC or Committee) members in attendance.
- The Chair introduced and welcomed Veronica Shakotko, replacing Russell Joe as the representative from Master Builders
- The Chair outlined the agenda items.

Action Item: Adopt June 15, 2023, Meeting Minutes

- Chair called for motion to approve minutes
- Motion to approve by Jane Broom, seconded by Sunaree Marshall
- Approved

Briefing: Community Partners Table Update

- The Chair introduced the agenda topic and reminded Committee about the work to create the Community Partners Table (CPT)

- Matt Echohawk-Hayashi, principal organization development and leadership consultant for Headwater People, the consultant that manages the Community Partners Table (CPT), briefed the AHC on:
 - The value and importance of the Community Partners Table
 - the relaunch of the Community Partners Table in August 2023;
 - CPT membership remained unchanged from 2022; and
 - CPT work at the August 2023 and September 2023 meetings, including helping to develop the comparative standard and understand the utility of the AHC dashboard for communities that the CPT members represent.
- The Chair informed the Committee that the AHC will continue to invite the CPT to speak at the beginning of meetings, through 2024.

Action Item: Comprehensive Plan Review Comments

- The Chair introduced the topics for this agenda item. Reminds the Committee that the plan review program and planning for housing at different income levels is new. The Chair thanked the Redmond and King County staff involved in drafting their comprehensive plans and submitting to the plan review program.
- Isaac Horwith, King County Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) Affordable Housing Planning Program Manager, briefed the AHC on process updates to the comprehensive plan review program
- McCaela Daffern, King County DCHS Regional Affordable Housing Implementation Manager, briefed the Committee on King County’s application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Pathways to Removing Obstacles (PRO) to Housing Grant, which would support local comprehensive plan implementation and respond to new state and countywide housing requirements.
- Isaac Horwith briefed the Committee on:
 - review of GMPC-adopted comprehensive plan review standards, structure of the comment letters and
 - draft plan review comments on the public review drafts of King County and the City of Redmond’s comprehensive plans.
- McCaela clarified that Isaac helped develop King County’s Comprehensive Plan and recused himself from the review of King County’s submission to plan review.
- The Chair added that the plan review process is designed to be collaborative and constructive. AHC staff communicated often with Redmond and King County staff during the review process and were shown the letter prior to the AHC posting the draft letter on the AHC website in order to ensure there were no surprises during review.
- The Chair opened the floor for discussion of plan review letters:
 - CP Walsh shared that the AHC staff review process and plan review letters exceeded expectations. Redmond staff communicated at the Sound Cities Association caucus that the plan review process was smooth and AHC staff acted professionally and provided constructive feedback on draft plans. CP Walsh also expressed concerns about AHC staff capacity to complete the work and for cities to respond to letters, especially if a lot of jurisdictions don’t submit plans until the latter end of 2024. CP Walsh had two substantive concerns with letters under review:

1. King County's comment letter asks the County to clarify its intention to adopt or not adopt a Multifamily Tax Exemption program. It's important that we don't tie the hands of elected officials with comments that we make.
 2. Recommendation number four in the Redmond letter reads that "Redmond should explain how the City will increase housing options affordable to households at or below 50 percent of AMI in Neighborhood Residential zones."
This is incredibly difficult to do. CP Walsh had concerns about implementation.
- The Chair thanked CP Walsh for the comments. She noted that the County comment suggested the County clarify whether or not it intends to adopt an Multifamily Tax Exemption program. Recommendations and suggestions in plan review letters are for the jurisdictions' consideration and should not be interpreted as a directive or requirement for cities to act.
 - CP Walsh responded that it is important to carefully word suggestions and recommendations and consider how future councils will interpret them.
 - Alex Brennan, Committee Vice Chair, offered appreciation to the jurisdictions who participated early in the plan review process, particularly the City of Redmond. The Vice Chair also expressed appreciation to AHC staff for their coordination with the jurisdictions. Following a good model in the first iteration of plan review sets a good precedent going forward. The Vice Chair also expressed concerns about capacity when plans are finalized in 2024. The more we can encourage cities to get materials to the AHC sooner than later, the better. Technical assistance materials will be essential. The process may improve as AHC staff review more plans and develop procedures and familiarity around common issues. Both letters did a good job of providing meaningful and important feedback and were conscious of the unique role and authority of the AHC in this process and not overstepping those bounds.
 - Isaac responded to CP Walsh and Vice Chair comments:
 1. It can be tricky to make recommendations for policies that commit actions that require council actions
 2. Concurred with the Chairs comment about asking for clarity about King County pursuing MFTE because the plan identifies the lack of implementation as a gap in its Housing Needs Assessment
 3. Agreed that prioritizing 0-50 AMI housing in traditionally single family neighborhoods is challenging because the market is so expensive
 4. Also concerned about the capacity to review all plans in depth, one reason to add the intake meeting was to get support from the jurisdiction itself in understanding the most impactful parts of their plan...
 - CP Walsh identified more issues from the SCA caucus:
 1. It is difficult to review the letters because they don't reference the city's policies.
 2. Redmond mentioned simplifying the review checklist would help city staff work through it.
 - The Chair reflected hearing good feedback on how we'll make it through the crunch time. Timing and how we get through a lot of plans is important and flexibility will be

important. Add references to the letters to make it easier for people to follow along.
Simplify the checklist.

- The Chair called for a vote to approve draft letters for City of Redmond and to authorize the Chair to send them to Redmond staff. Moved by CP Lindsay Walsh, seconded by Mayor Nigel Herbig.
 - Unanimous vote to approve
- Redmond Director of Planning and Community Development Carol Helland thanked AHC members for their consideration. The AHC process was smooth. Redmond staff appreciated the opportunity to review the draft letter. It led to a greater understanding and gave some opportunity to modify language to improve clarity. Funny that Redmond was one of the first jurisdictions to adopt a Housing Action Plan but that they're already late in submitting implementation details.
- The Chair explained how the dialogue from sharing the preliminary draft letter with Redmond was useful in clarifying the recommendations and ensuring there are no surprises. Thanked Carol Helland for her support in developing the CPPs.
- Carol Helland invited staff from other jurisdictions to reach out if they have questions about the plan review program process.
- The Chair called for a motion to vote to approve draft letters for King County and to authorize the Chair to send them to King County staff moved by Alex Brennan, seconded by Mayor Nigel Herbig.
 - AHC member and King County Deputy Director of the Housing, Homelessness, and Community Development division Sunaree Marshall said King County going early was a great opportunity for King County planning staff to provide AHC staff with early feedback on plan review process.
 - The Chair identified some breaking of silos between housing and planning staff within King County, and said she looks forward to helping with implementing King County's plan from the legislative side.
 - Unanimous vote to approve

Input: Draft 2024 Affordable Housing Committee Work Plan

- McCaela Daffern briefed the AHC on:
 - a preliminary draft 2024 workplan for the AHC; and
 - written feedback from Andrea Akita on behalf of AHC member Maiko Winkler-Chin, Director of the Seattle Office of Housing, who was unable to attend the meeting on the work plan and emailed to AHC staff on September 20:
 - Fewer meetings;
 - Shorter meetings;
 - Exploring different meeting cadence and work outside of meetings;
 - Consolidate work plan items; and
 - Clarify roles and responsibilities.
- McCaela added that:
 - there should be no surprises in the work plan, considering many items focused on implementing the AHC accountability framework and continuing existing programs like plan review and the dashboard;

- She then summarized the seven proposed work plan components
- The Chair reflected that it is difficult to think through what it will take to achieve all items. Plan review will take the most time and thinking. Would it be possible to create a subcommittee or delegates that represent stakeholders, who are members? Could we get a recommendation from a certain group that can result in packaging a lot of letters that could go into a consent agenda? The Chair added that we should respect their time as much as possible. AHC members are not planners and there is only so much feedback members can give.
- Kelly Coughlin added that rural needs are different than those of urban King County jurisdictions. There are not enough people who can represent those interests and perspectives. Could we create a subcommittee to focus on rural issues? There are a lot of things happening there that not all members need to know about. In the next couple of months could we talk about that?
- The Chair suggested that she and Kelly Coughlin have a separate conversation outside of the meeting and that letters were just approved for comment letter that address rural unincorporated King County.
- Nigel Herbig said they like more, shorter meetings scheduled rather than creating ad hoc meetings down the road as a way to get through more work in a more meaningful manner.
- The Chair polled the AHC on whether they are in favor of fewer, long meetings or more frequent short meetings.
 - The majority of AHC members voted in favor of frequent but short meetings.
- The Chair asked McCaela how Committee members could provide written feedback on the work plan after the meeting. McCaela asked for comments by email by September 29 to be able to share that info with the Housing Interjurisdictional Team (HIJT).
- Chair reiterated the recommendation to consider a subcommittee to review draft plan review letters and McCaela said she will share the idea with the HIJT. McCaela suggested a subcommittee of AHC committee members, but heard a preference for that work to happen at the staff level. The Chair concurred.

Input: Draft 2024 State and Federal Legislative Priorities

- The Chair introduced the topic and the importance of involvement by state and federal government to achieve the goals of the committee.
- McCaela briefed the AHC on:
 - the approach staff took to developing the draft federal and 2024 state legislative priorities;
 - the draft priorities;
 - how committee members can provide edits or feedback on the draft priorities; and
 - a suggestion change to the state legislative priorities from City of Seattle Office of Housing staff Andrea Akita on behalf of AHC member Maiko Winkler-Chin.
- The Chair reminded the committee that this is a draft and asked committee members for feedback
- CP Walsh reported input from the SCA caucus, suggesting that staff:
 - clarify the role of the Department of Commerce and if legislation or funding is required;

- consider how much the 1406 0.1% sales tax allocated from recent legislation has contributed to filling the gap in state funding for housing to be able to demonstrate how we've used the most recent new funding from the state.
- Kirkland staff suggested the AHC consider supporting a state level amendment that makes it easier for cities to impose affordable housing nexuses on business because they are the entity most responsible for the lack of affordable housing.
- McCaela said she can look into the revenue data on how much money from 1406 has gone into King County and how it has been spent.
- Thatcher Imboden asked if the AHC should include an item about infrastructure funds, similar to the Department of Commerce's Connecting Housing to Infrastructure (CHIP) money. Or potentially an item that suggests expanding the program, because a lot of affordable housing projects are using that money.
 - Sunaree Marshall supported adding an item about CHIP/infrastructure funds.
- McCaela asked if the AHC would support a modified version of Seattle's suggestions that she presented.
 - The Chair expressed support for incorporating the suggestions into revised 2024 state legislative priorities.
 - CP Walsh voiced support for the suggestions, but also appreciated the simplicity of having only three items on the state legislative agenda. Bundling items from Seattle's suggestion into existing priorities would be preferable.
 - McCaela agreed that bundling the items in this way would be possible.

Briefing: Regional Affordable Housing Dashboard Update

- Carson Hartmann, Regional Affordable Housing Planner, and Jesse Warren, Housing Policy and Finance Lead Evaluator, both with King County DCHS, briefed the AHC on:
 - key findings from updates made to the Regional Affordable Housing Dashboard posted on August 14.
 - next steps on monitoring and reporting work, including updates to be completed by the November 16 AHC meeting and a forthcoming survey to be distributed to in late 2023.
- The Chair invited discussion from members.
 - AHC members had no questions or comments.

Briefing: GMPC Motion 21-1 Status

- McCaela briefed the AHC on progress to adopted recommendations made by the AHC in response to Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) Motion 21-1, including news that:
 - on August 15, 2023, the King County Council adopted CPP amendments recommended by the AHC in December 2022 and approved by the GMPC in May 2023; and
 - amendments are subject to a city ratification period, which ends on November 30, 2023.
- The Chair asked if the AHC needed to do anything else for the motion:
 - McCaela noted that the AHC's work to respond to GMPC Motion 21-1 concluded at the end of 2022 when the AHC Chair transmitted the AHC's recommendations to the GMPC. The CPPs assign new work, including the development and/or execution of a jurisdictional survey, a comparative standard, plan review, annual monitoring, and the

midcycle check in. In a way, after ratification, the AHC is done with its work to respond to GMPC Motion 21-1.

- Chair solicited questions or feedback from Committee members, saw none.

Wrap-up and Next Steps

- The Chair outlined next steps:
 - Will send final letters to King County and Redmond
 - AHC staff will share work plan feedback with HIJT
 - AHC staff will prepare a revised version of the legislative priorities for approval at next AHC meeting, November 16 2023.
 - November meeting will include
 - Community Partners Table update;
 - Charter amendment conversation;
 - Possible adoption of legislative priorities and 2024 work plan; and
 - Another round of dashboard updates.