

King County Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2024 | 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Location: Bellevue City Hall, Room 1E-108

Attendance

Members	Present	Alternate	Members	Present	Alternate
CM Claudia Balducci	X		Ryan Makinster		
Don Billen		Thatcher Imboden	Sunaree Marshall	X	
Susan Boyd	X		CM Ryan McIrvn		CM Larry Brown
Alex Brennan	X		CM Teresa Mosqueda		
Jane Broom			Mayor Lynne Robinson	X	
Kelly Coughlin	X		Veronica Shakotko	X	
CM Amy Falcone		CP Lindsey Walsh	Robin Walls	X	
Mayor Nigel Herbig		DM Dana Parnello			
CM Cathy Moore		CM Tammy Morales			

Non-voting Alternates	Present
CM Joseph Cimaomo Jr.	

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

Welcome and Introductions

- Affordable Housing Committee (AHC) Chair, Councilmember Claudia Balducci, welcomed AHC members in attendance and thanked everyone for showing up in person at Bellevue City Hall.
- Mayor Lynne Robinson welcomed everyone to Bellevue City Hall and expressed gratitude for the work of the AHC. Mayor Robinson shared some of the work the City of Bellevue had been doing in the pursuit of expanding affordable housing in Bellevue.

Briefing: Foundational Briefing

- The Chair briefed the Committee on the history of the Committee, the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force (RAHTF), and the Five Year Action Plan.
 - The Chair explained the range of governance structures the RAHTF considered to carry the work forward, ultimately resulting in the creation of the AHC and a committee of the Growth Management Planning Council.
- The Chair shared some of the successes that the Committee achieved since founded in 2019:
 - Updating the Housing Chapter of the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs)
 - Implementing House Bill 1220
- The Chair shared that the purpose of the meeting: to discuss parts of the AHC charter that the Committee has and has not been effective in implementing over the past five years.
- The Chair invited Vice Chair Alex Brennan to speak further on the history of the AHC:
 - Alex Brennan conveyed his view that the successes of the Committee have come from its focus in land use and planning. He also expressed that one of the key questions to consider

during the meeting was how to address the other Action Plan actions that the Committee had been less effective at implementing, and whether the current structure of the AHC is the best way to advance these actions.

- McCaela Daffern, King County Department of Community and Human Services Regional Affordable Housing Implementation Manager, shared the goals of the meeting and the instructions for the meeting exercises.

Small Group Discussions

- Committee members were seated in tables of groups of 4-5 members and at least one AHC staff member. The tables and their members were:

Table 1

- Chair CM Claudia Balducci
- Mayor Lynne Robinson
- Maiko Winkler-Chin
- Isaac Horwith (staff)

Table 2

- Vice Chair Alex Brennan
- DM Dana Parnello
- Thatcher Imboden
- Xochitl Maykovich (staff)

Table 3

- Sunaree Marshall
- Susan Boyd
- CM Tammy Morales
- Ryan Turner-Brady (staff)
- Jesse Warren (staff)

Table 4

- CP Lindsay Walsh
- Kelly Coughlin
- Veronica Shakotko
- Robin Walls
- DM Larry Brown
- Carson Hartmann (staff)

- Each table introduced themselves, and shared what motivates them to serve of the Committee.
- Over the course of an hour, AHC members responded to a series of questions and wrote their responses on sticky notes that were posted on a flipchart. After each round of questions, each small group nominated a speaker to share the group's responses.
- The questions and responses included the following:
 1. **Where was the Committee successful and why?**

Activities

- Collaborated regionally, a goal in the Five Year Action Plan
- Developed regional capacity through relationships, information sharing, and working together
- Builds knowledge, relationships, and consensus among diverse stakeholders by convening AHC members, the Housing Interjurisdictional Team (HIJT), Community Partners Table
- Produced and published valuable housing data and research
- Established the Regional Affordable Housing Dashboard
- Advanced data-backed housing solutions
- Data for state legislature on HB 1110
- Established housing needs for affordability and special housing and jurisdictional accountability through CPP amendments, including creating the housing needs allocation

- Organized around the number of housing units needed (“big number”)
- Housing needs were successful due to outside influence of a statewide requirement
- Created an accountability framework through the CPPs
- Implementing the CPPs accountability framework, and allocations requirements
- Educated and raised awareness for those at the table (within in the AHC-represented parties)
- Developed and adopted shared principles to guide future revenue decisions
- House Bill 1110 data on middle housing
- Being a recommending authority and a loud voice for affordable housing solutions

Membership

- Broad, diverse representation amongst AHC membership
- Attracted members sincerely devoted to advancing local housing affordability solutions who came together to push things forward and move the needle
- Not just electeds talking to one another
- Membership is not made up of just electeds

Operations

- AHC staff
- HIJT
- The Community Partners Table and other diverse perspectives
- Uplifting community voices through the Community Partners Table

2. Where was the Committee ineffective and why?

Activities

- Members do not have a clear, shared understanding of the AHC’s core purpose (are we a regional accountability body or a vehicle for getting public support?)
- Advancing Five Year Action Plan goals related to:
 - new revenue
 - tenant protections
 - displacement
 - creating model ordinances or legislation to support housing development
 - providing services for 0-50 percent households
- Building support for significant new housing revenue (not structured to do anything about it)
- No funding source or authority
- Operating in a housing silo (success is about more than just housing)
- Data dashboard is:
 - not useful for municipal CPP accountability
 - not current or accurate
 - lacks real time data
 - too neutral to show where we are doing well and not
- Identifying or providing incentives for jurisdictional change

- Minimum salary and AMI levels are not future looking (are we being effective for everyone that needs help?)
- Identifying solutions to support the services to go along with accommodating housing needs (so as to not saddle the jurisdiction with additional burden)
- Implementation of CPPs (jury's still out)
- Educating and raising awareness for people not at the table
- Legislative priorities were ineffective and required significant time and effort
- Bridging the gap between electeds and staff on needs and support
- Facilitating housing development across all jurisdictions
- Finding a path from recommendations to tangible actions
- Addressing rural issues
- Providing services for those making less than 50% AMI

Membership

- Missing perspectives, such as the realtors and community land trusts
- Not all AHC members felt empowered to express their thoughts at AHC meetings
- Challenging to facilitate participation with power dynamics (caucusing has been a good way for SCA to have safe space to voice concerns/ideas)

3. Considering the AHC's key strengths and weaknesses, what should the Committee keep doing, stop doing, and start doing?

Keep Doing: Activities

- Collaboration (regional, interorganizational, interagency)
- Researching and publishing data
- Dashboard/measures progress
- Implementing CPPs (makes sense; powerful advisory body)
- Accountability framework through the CPPS
- Provide place to discuss housing/growth allocations (more places!)
- Housing element review outcomes
- Do more in the land use area
- Keep committee as-is and accept that this where we have the influence on things or should we try and change—did not resolve
- Be willing to push the needle
- Educate and raise awareness (within AHC-represented parties)
- Be a recommending authority and a loud voice for affordable housing solutions

Keep Doing: Membership

- Uplift the voices of the Community Partners Table
- Uplift community voices through the Community Partners Table
- A diverse membership of not just elected officials
- Including diverse representation amongst the members
- Broad representation amongst AHC members

Keep Doing: Operations

- AHC staffing support
- HIJT support
- The Community Partners Table and other diverse perspectives
- Uplifting community voices through the Community Partners Table

Start Doing: Activities

- Dashboard:
 - Refine for municipal accountability
 - Reconsider AMI and minimum salary levels
 - Use to inform and drive better outcomes
 - Update more often
 - Use the most current data possible
 - Ensure the data is accurate
- Research what's currently happening (local, state, national)
- Research best practices (local, national, global)
- Stop solely looking at policies, look at implementation programs (i.e. permits)
- Provide technical assistance, such as model ordinances, with capacity in mind
- Implementation of the CPP (jury out)
- Delegate a large portion of comp plan report to staff
- Research and advocate for best practices
- Best practices around implementation. State does minimum bar. What if we wanted to set the best bar?
- Create small steps that enable larger goals
- Prioritize within Committee resources
- Be honest about our authority and figure out where that conversation happens
- Disconnect between what resources King County staff think cities have and the reality of what resources cities actually have
- Build strong support for significant new revenue
- More call to action on state/federal priorities
- Rethink public communications, branding, and how to communicate a regional approach
- Public education and support building
- Plan for livable communities that include affordable housing
- Emerging issues (not everyone in group in agreement)
- Collect emerging issues from members
- Respond to shifting problems and constraints, e.g., the focus many years ago was making public property available for affordable housing. The constraint now has shifted to the lack of funding for affordable projects on public property
- Build political will for change
- More specificity on homeownership opportunities
- Create achievable affordable housing goals (homeownership, preventing homelessness, etc.)
- Understand rural issues and how to address it

Membership:

- Need representation from right orgs (Relators, land trusts, etc.)
- Bellevue needs its own seat on the AHC
- Empower members to represent disparate interests
- Participation of more members, more engagement
- Add AHC members representing needs of cost-burdened communities
- Improve representation from cost burdened communities
- More community voices
- Bring in larger field of reps to build legislative/other consensus
- More opportunities for caucusing, not just Sound Cities Association

Start Doing: Operations

- Be better about bridging the gap between electeds and staff for needs and support
- More in person meetings
- Streamline agendas

Stop Doing: Activities

- Trying to advance Task Force goals related to tenant protections and displacement
- Trying to oversee the RAHTF Five Year Action Plan or make a new one (too broad for our authority)
- Move on from the RAHTF Five Year Action Plan
- Thinking the AHC is a funding movement for change
- Funding sources or authority
- Providing incentives to make changes
- Broad goals that jurisdictions don't have control over
- Producing legislative agendas
- Advancing tenant protections and displacement issues
- Legislative agendas?

Stop Doing: Operations

- Overpacking the agenda
- Produce fewer staff reports
- Reduce presentations, rely on reports
- Less presentations if information is in reports

Large Group Discussion

- The Chair thanked everyone for participating in the exercise, and then facilitated a discussion on the common themes discussed by each group. The Chair brought up the following topics:
 - a desire to continue and expand a diverse membership;
 - acknowledgment that the data work that has been done is valuable and should be leveraged;
 - the Committee has been effective at implementing the CPPs and broader land use goals; and
 - There was some debate on the best way to address the work the Committee should pursue outside of land use goals.

- The Chair asked if there was anyone in the room with a strong feeling that the legislative agendas were a valuable use of time.
 - Thatcher Imboden supported the idea.
 - Paul Inghram, from Puget Sound Regional Council, shared that the AHC's data work can be effective at pushing legislative agendas, without producing a specific document.
- There was a discussion around the role of the Committee in educating jurisdictions and producing public-facing materials on affordable housing:
 - CP Lindsay Walsh expressed that this line of work may not be an effective use of the Committee's time and could take resources away from other areas of work.
 - The Chair brought up the idea that maybe staff could pursue this work.
 - Alex Brennan said that the point of education and public-facing work was to figure out how to align the rest of the region with the goals of the AHC.
 - The Chair shared an example of how jurisdictional education could help produce more affordable housing, and that this type of work was what they had in mind when they drafted Goal 7 of the Five Year Action Plan.
 - Mayor Lynne Robinson shared that there is value in helping show jurisdictions how to use available tools to promote more affordable housing development.
 - The Chair commented on the possibility of maximizing data efforts to supplement public-facing materials.
- Several members surfaced the idea of the AHC providing technical assistance to jurisdictional staff:
 - The Chair shared that, although the desire might be there, the resources to do so are likely not available to the AHC at this time. Additionally, while some elected officials have expressed interest in the AHC in providing technical assistance, such as model ordinances, some jurisdictional staff opposed the idea.
- The group discussed whether the Committee should stop being the overseeing of the RAHTF Five Year Action Plan.
 - The Chair noted that some members suggested expanding the scope of the AHC to include the Action Plan goals, while others supported dropping those goals and focusing on the current strengths of the Committee.
 - Thatcher Imboden posed the question that if it is not the Committee, then who will be taking on this workload, such as raising revenue?
 - Robin Walls said that power dynamics are heightened once a committee such as the AHC is empowered to allocate revenue and that more groups will want to be involved.
 - An audience member, Cliff Cawthon, from Habitat for Humanity Seattle-King and Kittitas Counties, said there remains a need to raise revenue and set ambitious goals from public agencies at large, in order to address affordable housing issues.
- The Chair then posed the question: if the AHC does narrow its focus, it is important to identify which groups are addressing the gaps left behind from the RAHTF Five Year Action Plan?
 - Xochitl Maykovich, King County DCHS Policy, Planning and Special Projects Manager, asked if it would be helpful for AHC staff to step in and address some of the actions that the Committee moves away from, such as helping develop model codes.
 - Sunaree Marshall, King County DCHS Deputy Division Director, talked about how it was important for the Committee to help jurisdictions understand that they would have to

address more than just land use changes in order to promote more affordable housing development.

- DM Dana Parnello emphasized the need for the AHC dashboard to recognize the work that jurisdictions are doing outside of land use changes, such as contributions to SKHHP and ARCH.
 - Maiko Winkler-Chin expressed the difficulties with showing some of these strategies and contributions on a dashboard.
- The Chair brought up the need to discuss the idea of funding for affordable housing, and that if the Committee is to narrow its focus towards land use and planning, that it would not be in the business of raising revenue.

Wrap-up and What's Next

- The Chair asked staff to draft a memo on the next phase of the conversation towards the adoption of charter amendments, to be presented at the next AHC Meeting.
- Thatcher Imboden shared a call to action to support a federal legislative item that would expand affordable housing built using the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit.
- The Chair once again expressed gratitude for the Committee members' participation and willingness to travel for an in-person meeting.