

King County Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

December 5, 2024 | 2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Location: Teams Meeting

Call to Order and Roll Call

Members	Member Present	Alternates Present
Affordable Housing Committee Chair King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci	X	
Affordable Housing Committee Vice Chair Alex Brennan, Futurewise	X	
Susan Boyd, Bellwether Housing	Absent	
Jane Broom, Microsoft Philanthropies	X	
Allison Butcher, Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties	X	
Kelly Coughlin, SnoValley Chamber of Commerce	X	
Kirkland Councilmember Amy Falcone on behalf of Sound Cities Association	X	
Kenmore Mayor Nigel Herbig on behalf of Sound Cities Association	X	
Thatcher Imboden, Sound Transit	X	
Ryan Makinster, Washington Multi-Family Housing Association	Absent	
Sunaree Marshall, King County Department of Community and Human Services, on behalf of King County Executive Dow Constantine	X	
Renton Councilmember Ryan McIrvine on behalf of Sound Cities Association	X	
Seattle Councilmember Cathy Moore	Absent	
King County Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda	Absent	
Bellevue Mayor Lynne Robinson on behalf of Sound Cities Association	X	
Robin Walls, King County Housing Authority	X	
Maiko Winkler-Chin, Seattle Office of Housing, on behalf of Mayor Bruce Harrell	X	
		City of Shoreline Councilmember Annette Ademasu on behalf of Sound Cities Association
		Issaquah Council President Walsh on behalf of Sound Cities Association

- Affordable Housing Committee (AHC or Committee) Chair King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci welcomed Committee members and called the meeting to order.

- Chair Balducci called the roll and confirmed there was quorum.
- Chair Balducci reflected on the Committee’s work this year, including:
 - participation in a workshop to establish foundational direction for the future of the Committee;
 - providing input on a method to compare jurisdictional progress to plan for housing affordability;
 - reviewing and issuing comments on 24 draft comprehensive plans;
 - piloting peer review for draft comprehensive plans for the first few plans reviewed in 2024 to perfect the process; and
 - concluding its partnership with the Community Partners Table.
- Chair Balducci provided an overview of the meeting agenda which included:
 - staff briefings and opportunities to comment from the cities of Renton, Clyde Hill, and Newcastle on their draft comprehensive plans;
 - staff briefings on letters for jurisdictions which submitted late, did not submit, or are in the process of reconciliation; and
 - possible adoption of 2025 AHC state legislative priorities.

Action Item: Adopt October 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes

- Kirkland Councilmember Amy Falcone moved to approve the November 7, 2024 meeting minutes.
- Microsoft Philanthropies Senior Director Jane Broom seconded the motion.
- The Committee unanimously passed the motion to approve the November 7, 2024 meeting minutes.
 - Sound Transit Community Development Director Thatcher Imboden arrived late to the AHC meeting. He did not vote on the motion.

Action Item: Approve Comprehensive Plan Review Comment Letters

- Chair Balducci shared that AHC staff prepared draft comment letters for Renton, Clyde Hill, and Newcastle for AHC consideration and potential approval and thanked the jurisdictions for their participation. She also noted:
 - the letters for review acknowledge the challenge jurisdictions face in responding to AHC recommendations by the end of 2024 and encouraged jurisdictions to respond to recommendations and bring their plans into alignment with the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) Housing Chapter prior to adopting their plans; and
 - it won’t be possible for some jurisdictions to amend before plan adoption and encouraged these jurisdictions to amend their plans in 2025 as part of an annual comprehensive plan update.
- Chair Balducci outlined the briefing process and invited AHC staff Carson Hartmann to begin the briefing.
- Carson shared the Committee had approved comment letters for over half the jurisdictions in King County, representing 85 percent of the county’s population.
- Carson presented on the City of Renton, providing a city snapshot, outlining comprehensive plan strengths, and recommendations for Renton to align with the CPP Housing Chapter goals and policies.
 - Chair Balducci invited Renton Senior Planner Matthew Herrera to provide comment. He expressed gratitude to the AHC and staff. He shared the City had already begun revising their draft comprehensive plan appendix to respond to draft AHC feedback

prior to anticipated comprehensive plan adoption on December 9. For example, they were correcting their land capacity analysis and had already performed an analysis on emergency housing in response to the draft letter.

- Renton Councilmember Ryan McIrvine expressed enthusiasm for adopting their comprehensive plan with the changes in response to AHC comments.
- AHC staff Skye D'Aquila presented on the City of Clyde Hill, providing a city snapshot, outlining comprehensive plan strengths, and recommendations for Clyde Hill to align with the CPP Housing Chapter goals and policies.
 - Chair Balducci noted that, based on discussions with leaders from small jurisdictions, these jurisdictions are struggling with the complexity of preparing submissions to the AHC's plan review program.
 - Chair Balducci invited Clyde Hill Planning Manager Eric Jensen to provide comment. Eric shared information about the resource and staffing limitations at the City of Clyde Hill. He shared the city has over 30 percent people of color and looks forward to continuing to partner with A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH).
- Skye presented on the City of Newcastle, providing a city snapshot, outlining comprehensive plan strengths, and recommendations for Newcastle to align with the CPP Housing Chapter goals and policies.
 - Chair Balducci invited Newcastle Community Development Director Erin Fitzgibbons to provide comment. Erin shared the comprehensive plan process had been a long and dynamic process and appreciated the support of AHC staff. She shared the City of Newcastle will welcome ARCH to their January Planning Commission meeting about middle housing and subsequently will update their housing element in 2025 or 2026. She shared that the City, with ARCH's support through the Middle Housing Grant, was able to reach out to community-based organizations. Newcastle will update their comprehensive plan to include their community outreach prior to adoption in February.
- Chair Balducci opened the floor for discussion. The AHC did not have any items for a discussion.
- Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) Housing and Community Development Deputy Director Sunaree Marshall moved to approve the comment letters for the cities of Renton, Clyde Hill, and Newcastle.
- Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Senior Policy Analyst Allison Butcher seconded the motion.
- The Committee unanimously passed the motion to approve the Renton, Clyde Hill, and Newcastle comment letters.
 - Thatcher arrived late and did not vote on the motion.
- Carson presented on jurisdictions that submitted late, did not submit, or were in the process of reconciliation as of December 4, 2024.
 - AHC staff prepared draft letters for five cities that submitted late to the AHC between October 4 and December 4, 2024: Lake Forest Park, Black Diamond, Kent, Duvall, and Normandy Park.
 - Black Diamond provided the AHC an updated land capacity analysis recently but submitted their draft comprehensive plan earlier in the year.
 - The AHC meeting packet included a non-submission letter for Normandy Park. Normandy Park staff submitted their comprehensive plan after the packet was distributed, but prior to the December 4 deadline. He shared

Normandy Park will receive a late submission letter rather than a non-submission letter.

- AHC staff prepared draft letters for jurisdictions that did not submit to the Committee, which were the cities of Mercer Island and Pacific and the towns of Skykomish and Yarrow Point.
- AHC staff prepared draft letters for the cities of Carnation and Snoqualmie, who are in the process of growth target reconciliation. Both cities requested deferral of AHC review until the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) decides how to proceed with their reconciliation requests.
- Chair Balducci opened the floor for discussion.
 - Town of Skykomish Consultant Eric Jensen shared the Town will submit their materials to the Committee either December 5 or 6. He requested a late submission letter rather than nonsubmittal letter.
 - Chair shared she will consider his request.
 - Issaquah Council President Walsh shared that Sound Cities Association requested the non-submission letters also be sent to mayors and councilmembers of those cities. Sound Cities Association also requested the AHC send a copy of the letters to other organizations such as the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and the Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce).
 - Carson shared that when the comment letters are emailed, the Committee copies Commerce and PSRC.
 - Chair Balducci shared she sensed jurisdictions were not resistant to submit, but rather confused. She suggested sending a letter with communications Carson described, then revisit where we are with these jurisdictions next year. If they're not moving, maybe we follow up with another letter.
 - Vice Chair Brennan commented that encouraging jurisdictions to adopt a plan by the deadline while it doesn't meet state or CPP requirements is not what he would recommend. He recommended jurisdictions wait and adopt late and do it right rather than do it in a rush and do it wrong. He acknowledged that knowing capacity constraints, it may be challenging for these jurisdictions.
 - Vice Chair Brennan commented on the letters for jurisdictions which didn't submit, noting that he knows it's a challenge to say anything much more than "we can't assess" given we didn't receive a full submission, but it felt like the AHC was letting those folks off the hook. He shared that to him, it set up a situation that was not fair to jurisdictions which took the time and effort to engage in the plan review program. We should recognize the work of the vast majority of jurisdictions that have participated in good faith in the process.
 - PSRC Director of Growth Management Paul Ingraham noted in the chat that PSRC is encouraging jurisdictions to complete the full requirements of the Growth Management Act, even if it means adopting after the deadline.
- Chair Balducci reviewed the proposed amendments she heard.
 - Chair Balducci responded to the Town of Skykomish's request for a late-submission letter rather than a non-submission letter if they submit by the end of day on Monday, December 9.
 - Chair Balducci noted the requests from Issaquah Council President Lindsay Walsh to copy jurisdiction mayors and councilmembers as well as interested parties such as PSRC and Commerce when late, non-submission, and reconciliation letters are distributed.

- Chair Balducci noted Vice Chair Brennan's request to add a sentence to non-submission letters which would recognize that the vast majority of jurisdictions submitted their comprehensive plan, received recommendations from the AHC, and are incorporating AHC recommendations.
- Chair Balducci requested a motion to approve the letters to jurisdictions which submitted late to the AHC.
 - Issaquah Council President Lindsey Walsh moved to approve the letters to jurisdictions that submitted late to the AHC.
 - Sunaree seconded the motion.
 - Council President Walsh offered a friendly amendment to copy jurisdictions' mayors and councilmembers when the AHC sends letters to jurisdictions that submitted late.
 - The AHC unanimously passed the motion to adopt the late submission letters as amended.
 - Thatcher arrived to the AHC meeting late and did not vote on the motion.
- Chair Balducci requested a motion to send the Town of Skykomish a late submission letter rather than a non-submission letter if AHC staff receive their draft comprehensive plan by the end of the day on Monday, December 9. She noted that if AHC staff do not receive Skykomish's submission by the deadline, the AHC will send them a non-submittal letter.
 - Council President Walsh moved.
 - Jane Broom seconded the motion.
 - The AHC unanimously passed the motion to send the Town of Skykomish a late submission letter rather than a non-submission letter should AHC staff receive their application by end of day December 9.
 - Thatcher arrived to the AHC meeting late and did not vote on the motion.
- Chair Balducci requested a motion to approve the letters to jurisdictions which did not submit to the AHC.
 - Sunaree moved to approve the letters to jurisdictions that did not submit to the AHC.
 - City of Seattle Office of Housing Director Maiko Winkler-Chin seconded the motion.
 - Council President Walsh offered a friendly amendment to copy jurisdiction mayors and councilmembers when AHC sends letters to jurisdictions that did not submit to the AHC.
 - Maiko moved to copy Commerce and PSRC when AHC sends letters to jurisdictions which did not submit to the AHC.
 - Councilmember Falcone seconded.
 - The AHC unanimously passed the motion to copy Commerce and PSRC when the AHC sends letters to non-submitting jurisdictions.
 - Thatcher arrived to the AHC meeting late and did not vote on the motion.
 - Chair Balducci suggested staff draft a sentence acknowledging that most jurisdictions have submitted, received comments from the AHC, and have tried to respond to AHC comments.
 - Vice Chair Brennan moved to add a sentence to the letters to jurisdictions that did not submit, which would acknowledge the efforts of jurisdictions that participated in the AHC's plan review program.
 - Mayor Robinson seconded.
 - Carson clarified there is a sentence in the letter noting the jurisdiction is one of four that has not yet submitted. He offered to add a sentence to the letter that is more affirmative of other jurisdictions. Chair Balducci agreed.

- The AHC unanimously passed the amendment to acknowledge the work of jurisdictions that have participated in the AHC's Draft Comprehensive Plan Review Program.
 - Thatcher arrived to the AHC meeting late and did not vote on the motion.
- The AHC unanimously passed the motion to approve non-submittal letters as amended.
 - Thatcher arrived to the AHC meeting late and did not vote on the motion.
- Mayor Herbig moved to approve letters for cities that asked to defer AHC review until the GMPC reaches a decision on their growth target reconciliation requests.
- Vice Chair Brennan seconded the motion.
- The AHC unanimously passed the motion to approve the deferral letters for cities undergoing the GMPC reconciliation process.
 - Thatcher arrived to the AHC meeting late and did not vote on the motion.

Action Item: Approve 2025 Affordable Housing Committee State Legislative Priorities

- Thatcher arrived at the AHC meeting.
- McCaela reminded the AHC about the four categories in the draft 2025 state legislative priorities introduced last month which were to:
 - provide for the stability of affordable housing providers;
 - preserve and increase the supply of affordable housing;
 - help jurisdictions implement their comprehensive plans and housing policies; and
 - strengthen renter rights and protections.
- McCaela shared that AHC staff collected amendments from AHC members who proposed amendment language at the last AHC meeting.
- McCaela walked the AHC through the three amendments AHC members proposed in advance of the AHC meeting.
- McCaela shared that other housing advocacy groups published their state legislative agendas. She shared AHC staff produced a crosswalk comparing the AHC's proposed legislative agenda to those published by:
 - Housing Development Consortium;
 - Sound King Housing and Homelessness Partners;
 - Habitat for Humanity Seattle-King and Kittitas Counties; and
 - Association of Washington Cities.
- McCaela noted significant alignment with the AHC's first three priority areas. She noted other organizations' policy priorities did not include references to tenant protections.
- King County Housing Authority Executive Director Robin Walls left the AHC meeting early. She did not vote on the subsequent motions.
- McCaela encouraged the AHC to adopt the 2025 legislative agenda at the meeting because the next AHC next meeting will be after the state legislative session starts.
- SnoValley Chamber of Commerce Chief Executive Officer Kelly Coughlin shared that unincorporated King County has raised the minimum wage to \$20.29 an hour, or about \$42,000 annually. However, the wage increase causes single-person households to exceed the threshold for 30 percent of AMI. She asked if there was a way to request King County reconsider the AMI.
 - Chair Balducci shared AMI is set federally.

- McCaela shared there is a Commerce work group looking at alternate methods to calculate AMI. She suggested AHC staff could report back to the Committee on the results of the Commerce work group. She shared the work group was working fast and should conclude their work by the middle of 2025.
- DCHS Housing Policy and Finance Lead Evaluator Jesse Warren added the work group would conclude their work by the end of March.
- Sunaree shared King County funded across the spectrum. King County can partner with the King County Housing Authority to buy down rent for lower income households. She observed King County usually has a problem of AMI rising too fast.
- Chair Balducci thanked Kelly for raising the issue.
- Maiko added that AMIs are set federally around April and minimum wage is set in January.
- Maiko commented on amendment one, requesting that any dollars for homeownership be additive to what is available for rental housing. The state has begun to allocate an increasingly larger share of a limited pot of housing capital funding for homeownership.
- Councilmember Falcone thanked Kelly for raising the AMI issue. Councilmember Falcone shared she was also part of the Commerce working group. She shared she was happy to connect with Kelly.
 - Chair Balducci thanked Councilmember Falcone for serving on the Commerce working group.
- Mayor Robinson moved to adopt the draft 2025 AHC draft legislative agenda.
- Thatcher seconded the motion.
- Allison acknowledged that homeownership is on the spectrum of housing choices. She acknowledged the Housing Trust Fund (HTF) already funds homeownership projects. She shared affordable homeownership fell under the umbrella of increasing the supply of affordable housing. She proposed an amendment to add “and homeownership opportunities for first-time homebuyers” to the legislative priorities to note that part of what the HTF does is provide funding for affordable homeownership.
 - Allison moved her amendment.
 - Mayor Robinson seconded.
 - The AHC unanimously passed the amendment to include affordable homeownership in the legislative priorities.
- Allison proposed an amendment to the legislative agenda to expand policy area three, adding a new priority which would expand the agenda to encompass broader housing laws important to increasing the supply of housing. She noted the importance of process reform. She proposed an amendment: “Fund Commerce to provide additional rounds of local project review grants to assist cities and counties with actions related to streamlining residential building permit review and modernizing permitting processes.”
- Allison moved her amendment.
- Councilmember Falcone seconded.
- The Committee unanimously passed the amendment to expand policy priority area three.
- Thatcher noted some mixed-use affordable housing projects being built include services which serve the community. However, he shared there aren’t a lot of resources for the non-housing components of these projects. He proposed an amendment to fund non-housing portions for such projects, stating, “Provide capital funding for the creation of non-housing uses within affordable housing projects that serve low-income residents and the broader community.”

- Chair Balducci clarified the amendment would not expand the uses HTF money could be used for.
- Maiko asked if his amendment would increase capital funding.
- Thatcher responded that the potential for his amendment would be additive money.
- Maiko asked if the amendment would increase an existing pot of money.
- Chair Balducci recollected how hard it was to find funding for the medical clinic portion of the mixed-use affordable housing project on Beacon Hill which also included housing and services. She expressed support for Thatcher's amendment because she wasn't sure there was a lot of new money coming from the State.
- Maiko shared that the Beacon Hill project received five and a half million dollars from Commerce.
- Thatcher moved amendment three.
- Mayor Robinson seconded.
- The Committee unanimously passed the amendment to support capital funding for non-housing uses within affordable housing projects.
- Mayor Robinson proposed an amendment to priority two to include language stating, "Continue and expand state support for tools producing income restricted housing units that help jurisdictions to meet affordable housing needs."
 - Mayor Robinson shared that Sound Cities Association approved her proposed amendment.
- Mayor Robinson moved to approve the amendment.
- Councilmember Falcone seconded.
- The Committee unanimously passed the motion to include language supporting tools for producing income restricted units to the second priority.
- Jane left early. She did not vote in subsequent motions.
- Chair Balducci proposed an amendment to the third priority, adding language which would state, "Support efforts to create and fund a housing research center in Washington state that provides nonpartisan, objective research and analysis to assist policymakers in assessing and adopting policies, regulations, and programs that will most effectively address the need for housing."
 - Allison expressed support for Chair Balducci's proposed amendment.
 - Sunaree moved to include Chair Balducci's proposed amendment in the legislative priorities.
 - Councilmember Falcone seconded.
 - Shoreline Councilmember Annette Ademasu asked where the funding for the research center would come from.
 - Chair Balducci shared she wasn't certain.
 - Maiko clarified that the research center would ask for \$750,000 from the State for its first year of operation. She added the research center would require \$1 million per year for four years, so \$4 million over four years.
 - The Committee unanimously passed the motion to include language supporting a housing research center.
- The AHC unanimously approved the draft 2025 state legislative agenda.

Wrap up and Adjourn

- Chair Balducci reminded AHC members that their terms expire at the end of 2024, but there is no limit to the number of terms they can serve.
 - Chair Balducci shared AHC staff will be in touch with Committee members about if they want to continue serving.
- Chair Balducci shared that the 2025 AHC meetings are not yet scheduled, but staff are working on it.
- Chair Balducci invited Committee members interested in chairmanship to connect with her. The AHC Chair needs to also be a GMPC member. The Committee will elect their Chair and Vice Chair in February.
- Chair Balducci shared AHC staff would like to start publishing 2025 meeting calendars. She proposed the first Thursday of the month from 2:00 P.M. to 3:30 P.M. The AHC will not meet on January, July, and August of 2025.
- Chair Balducci reminded the Committee will hold the first meeting of 2025 on February 6 at 2 P.M.
- Chair Balducci thanked the Committee for their hard work, expressed pride in the Committee's achievements in 2024, and wished all members a lovely and peaceful holiday season.
- Chair Balducci adjourned the meeting.