

King County Affordable Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

March 6, 2025 | 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	
Saghar Amini, Habitat for Humanity Seattle-King and Kittitas Counties	X	
Jane Broom, Microsoft Philanthropies	X	
Allison Butcher, Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish Counties	X	
Kelly Coughlin, Sno-Valley 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	
Sunaree Marshall, King County Department of Community and Human Services, on behalf of King County Executive Dow Constantine	X	
Renton Councilmember Ryan McIrvin on behalf of Sound Cities Association	X	
Seattle Councilmember Cathy Moore	Absent	City of Seattle Councilmember Mark Solomon
King County Councilmember Teresa Mosqueda	Absent	
Bellevue Mayor Lynne Robinson on behalf of Sound Cities Association	Absent	Issaquah Council President Lindsey Walsh on behalf of Sound Cities Association
Robin Walls, King County Housing Authority	X	
Maiko Winkler-Chin, Seattle Office of Housing, on behalf of Mayor Bruce Harrell	X	
	X	Maple Valley Deputy Mayor Dana Parnello
	X	North Bend Councilmember Christina Rustik
	X	Ethan Robinson, Habitat for Humanity Seattle-King and Kittitas Counties
	X	Jazmine Smith, Futurewise

- Affordable Housing Committee (AHC or Committee) Chair King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci (Chair Balducci) welcomed Committee members and called the meeting to order.
- Chair Balducci invited AHC Manager McCaela Daffern to call the roll.
- McCaela shared the Washington Multifamily Housing Authority's Executive Director Nick Marin was in attendance. Nick introduced himself.
- Chair Balducci reviewed the agenda which included:
 - a briefing of the comprehensive plan review program;
 - review and potential approval of Skykomish's comment letter;
 - review and possible action on the AHC's 2025 work plan; and
 - a conversation about the strategic future of the AHC.

Action Item: Adopt February 6, 2025 Meeting Minutes

- Chair Balducci asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes.
- Thatcher Imboden moved to approve the February 6, 2025 meeting minutes.
- Allison Butcher seconded the motion.
- The AHC unanimously passed the motion to approve the February 6, 2025 meeting minutes.

Action Item: Approve Comprehensive Plan Review Comment Letter

- Chair Balducci invited AHC Senior Planner Carson Hartmann to present on the comprehensive plan review procedure, status, and Skykomish's plan review letter,
- Carson presented a status update of the housing-focused draft comprehensive plan review program.
 - He shared the AHC had reviewed the plans of 32 jurisdictions within King County, encompassing over 97 percent of King County's total population.
 - Carson shared the AHC will review Black Diamond and Normandy Park's letters in April. He shared the Town of Yarrow Point and Pacific and the City of Mercer Island had not sent a full submission to AHC staff.
 - Carson reminded the AHC that the cities of Carnation and Snoqualmie were still undergoing the housing growth target reconciliation process with the GMPC.
- Carson presented an overview of the plan review process and standards.
- Carson presented on the Town of Skykomish, providing a city snapshot, outlining comprehensive plan strengths, and recommendations for Skykomish to align with the Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) Housing Chapter goals and policies.
 - Chair Balducci invited Skykomish Planning Consultant Eric Jensen to comment.
 - Carson shared Eric was unable to attend, but requested that Carson relay his comments. Carson relayed that Skykomish was a unique community with limited services, a small population, and unique geography. Carson shared Eric's concerns that applying a countywide approach to such a unique community was difficult, but the Town would endeavor to do its best to align with the countywide requirements.
- Chair Balducci echoed Eric's sentiments of applying a countywide approach to such a small town. She shared her appreciation for the good faith efforts made by King County jurisdictions to align with the countywide planning policies.
- Chair Balducci opened the floor for discussion. The AHC did not have any items for discussion.
- Chair Balducci asked for a motion to approve the Skykomish comment letter.

- Kirkland Councilmember Amy Falcone moved to approve the Skykomish comment letter.
- Issaquah Council President Lindsey Walsh seconded the motion.
- The AHC unanimously passed the motion to approve the Skykomish comment letter.
- Chair Balducci shared that the Growth Management Planning Council (GMPC) will discuss the reconciliation requests from Carnation and Snoqualmie at the next GMPC meeting. She shared hopes King County staff can provide a reconciliation status update by the next AHC meeting.

Action Item: Adopt 2025 AHC Work Plan

- Chair Balducci invited McCaela to brief the AHC on the revised AHC work plan.
- McCaela shared that staff revised the AHC work plan based on AHC member feedback. She briefed the AHC on the feedback staff received.
 - McCaela shared AHC members requested data on jurisdictions' implementation strategies and housing needs.
 - McCaela shared AHC members suggested using implementation data to refine the Committee's strategic focus.
 - McCaela shared AHC members expressed an interest in understanding emerging issues which could impact the supply or ability of jurisdictions to implement their housing elements or inform future advocacy work.
 - McCaela shared AHC members requested time to reflect on the comprehensive plan review process and document insights to inform the five-year midcycle check-in.
- McCaela shared that AHC staff revised the AHC work plan to include the feedback provided by the AHC members. McCaela briefed the AHC on the revised AHC work plan.
- McCaela asked the Committee if it was ready to adopt the work plan or if additional changes were needed.
- Chair Balducci shared her excitement for the proposed work plan. She reminded the AHC of their goal to house more people. She shared concerns about the work plan without a clear strategic direction. She asked the Committee if the AHC was in the right place with the right powers to make progress on the Regional Affordable Housing Task Force's (RAHTF's) recommendations.
- Chair Balducci invited Seattle Office of Housing Director Maiko Winkler Chin to share.
 - Maiko shared it would be more helpful to identify the best impact the AHC can have before building a work plan.
- Chair Balducci invited Councilmember Falcone to speak.
 - Councilmember Falcone shared the Sound Cities Association (SCA) caucus had a discussion around
 - policy and funding;
 - developing a new framework; and
 - building support for significant new revenue.
 - Councilmember Falcone shared that funding is a significant contributor to subsidized housing. She expressed SCA's interest in supporting new revenue to help King County meet its affordable housing needs.
 - Councilmember Falcone shared the SCA caucus was interested in advancing affordable homeownership and not just home rentals.
 - Councilmember Falcone expressed she personally would like to see more countywide effort than individual jurisdictional efforts. She expressed she personally would like to

see the Committee as potential leaders in developing a framework and building support for what is needed.

- Chair Balducci invited Vice Chair Brennan to speak.
 - Vice Chair Brennan shared that many work plan items seemed to mostly include follow up items, such as concluding the comprehensive plan review program. He shared that a strategic direction conversation prior to a work plan conversation would be beneficial.
 - Chair Balducci agreed with Vice Chair Brennan.

Action Item: Establishing a New Strategic Direction for the AHC

- Chair Balducci invited McCaela to begin her briefing.
 - McCaela detailed the RAHTF and its recommendation to create the AHC. McCaela explained the AHC was embedded within the GMPC to quickly stand it up.
 - McCaela presented on the activities the AHC was chartered to perform.
 - McCaela presented on the AHC's accomplishments since 2019. She detailed that the AHC:
 - built support for funding;
 - issued statements during COVID;
 - launched a dashboard to publicly report and track progress towards implementation of the RAHTF;
 - piloted new ways to consult with impacted communities;
 - developed recommended countywide planning policy amendments twice; and
 - reviewed 32 comprehensive plans.
 - McCaela reviewed the AHC's past discussions on the AHC's structure. She summarized the discussion results into what the AHC wanted to continue doing and activities the AHC wanted to consider doing.
 - McCaela shared that the AHC would need to adopt a strategic direction recommendation by June so the GMPC could take formal action in November.
 - McCaela asked the AHC for their input on:
 - what the AHC wanted to pursue that weren't already within their scope; and
 - what alternative governance structure would allow the AHC to pursue those goals.
- Chair Balducci thanked McCaela for her briefing. She praised the AHC's role in the impactful implementation of House Bill 1220. She praised the AHC's affordable housing dashboard. She recalled the difficult discussions surrounding the adoption of the funding principles in the AHC's first year. She shared the AHC's work has had systemic impacts.
- Council President Walsh expressed concerns over timing with the state legislative session. She noted that input for the strategic direction conversation would be provided in April in May, but the state legislative session would not be concluded by then.
- Council President Walsh also expressed concerns over the AHC's goals around the five-year mid-cycle check in for comprehensive plans.
 - Council President Walsh shared if the AHC wanted more power, then the timeline and planning was important. She shared that if jurisdictions were all moving forward in the right direction, the AHC should look more into revenue.
 - Council President Walsh shared that the AHC strategic direction discussion should inform their discussion on the mid comprehensive plan check in.
- Chair Balducci asked Council President Walsh to clarify her first point.

- Council President Walsh clarified there were potential bills at the state level surrounding comprehensive plans and housing elements. She shared their potential passage could impact the AHC's comprehensive plan work.
- Chair Balducci invited Maiko to speak.
 - Maiko recalled the AHC's previous activities around revenue and pondered alternatives to revenue. She recalled Plymouth Housing had a fully funded project in Kenmore that wasn't built.
 - Maiko expressed appreciation that the AHC supported the University of Washington's work to establish a new housing research center.
 - Maiko expressed interest in AHC staff tracking the impacts of large policy decisions across jurisdictions. She shared that the policies Seattle engaged in impacted other cities such as Bellevue and recalled that when Seattle piloted a multi-family tax exempt program Bellevue adopted the program as well.
 - Maiko expressed concerns over inviting additional community participation into the AHC's highly complex discussions without compensation and shared that as elected officials who participate in community engagement, there were already community voices on the AHC.
- Chair Balducci invited Maple Valley Deputy Mayor Dana Parnello to speak.
 - Deputy Mayor Parnello expressed concerns about the logistics of inviting community voices to serve on the AHC.
 - Deputy Mayor Parnello agreed with Maiko's idea of finding new tools for solving the affordable housing problem. He suggested the AHC support community land trusts.
 - Deputy Mayor Parnello noted the majority of affordable housing would be provided through multifamily rentals. He expressed interest in affordable home ownership to create a generational solution to the housing crisis.
 - Deputy Mayor Parnello emphasized the AHC's meaningfulness standard. He expressed interest in identifying reasons for why affordable housing was not being built in King County.
 - Deputy Mayor Parnello echoed Maiko's suggestion that the AHC look at affordable housing solutions outside of funding. He shared other issues impeded affordable housing development including permitting and zoning.
- Chair Balducci invited Sound Transit Community Development Director Thatcher Imboden to speak.
 - Thatcher acknowledged the AHC's work in accountability and documentation of their goals, but emphasized the importance of follow through.
 - Thatcher noted that when multiple jurisdictions use the same tool, such as public property being used to build affordable housing, there are large scale impacts across the region. He shared that tools used at such a large scale solved some problems but created a different set of problems. He expressed interest in collectively reconciling those problems.
- Chair Balducci invited Vice Chair Brennan to speak.
 - Vice Chair Brennan expressed caution with exploring new tools and scope of work. He emphasized the importance of maintaining the AHC's current responsibilities. Such as concluding the plan review process, evaluation of the plan review program, and maintenance of the dashboard.

- Vice Chair Brennan shared that the Committee built up expertise through the plan review program. He shared that there were valuable ways to maintain that expertise between now and the midcycle check in without confining the AHC solely in land use.
- Chair Balducci invited Council President Walsh to share.
 - Council President Walsh echoed Vice Chair Brennan’s point of continuing the work the AHC had committed to. She expressed hope the AHC’s midcycle check in would be effective at moving the needle because of the AHC’s land use proficiency.
- Chair Balducci invited Microsoft Philanthropies Senior Director Jane Broom to share.
 - Jane shared it would be difficult to achieve full consensus and agreement on policy matters. She shared the importance of tracking what was and wasn’t working and why. She shared that even with endless supplies of money, the environment wasn’t right for affordable housing development. She shared the importance of understanding the root cause of why affordable housing development has been so slow and cost prohibitive.
- Chair Balducci suggested creating a pie chart of what the AHC discussed as potential future strategic directions for the Committee.
- Chair Balducci summarized what she heard so far which included;
 - continuing the work the AHC has already established to build its effectiveness, specifically continuing comprehensive planning accountability;
 - continuing the AHC’s role in data and outcome assessment;
 - advocacy for new policy, funding, or regulation changes; and
 - Chair Balducci reminded the Committee that as an advisory committee to an advisory committee, the AHC has a little teeth, particularly around countywide planning. She shared the AHC has historically been most effective in land use and comprehensive planning as a part of the GMPC.
 - creating affordable housing opportunities in rental and homeownership markets.
- Chair Balducci expressed concerns on the effectiveness of the AHC in advocacy. She recalled the funding document the AHC crafted together as an example of advocacy the AHC had done in the past, but hoped the AHC could move the needle on new funding in the future.
 - Chair Balducci shared the AHC convened a variety of interests which made for great discussion and understanding but could detract from advocacy for a specific course of action.
- Chair Balducci asked McCaela if she had any thoughts or questions for the AHC.
 - McCaela shared the strategic direction timeline may need to be slowed down to ensure the AHC gives it enough time. She expressed a desire to finish the strategic direction discussion prior to the end of 2025 to implement it in 2026.
 - McCaela shared that the CPPs provide the GMPC or its designee authority. She shared the Committee’s charter allows recommendations of alternative governance structures. She shared the AHC did not need to be a committee of the GMPC.
- Chair Balducci recalled near the end of the RAHTF when there was a serious discussion and interest in a Sound Transit for housing, essentially a taxing district.
- Chair Balducci suggested the AHC approve the 2025 work plan, review it through the year, and change it when necessary.
 - Chair Balducci heard no dissent and requested McCaela proceed.
- Chair Balducci thanked the AHC for a substantive discussion.

Wrap Up and Adjourn

- Chair Balducci reminded the AHC the next meeting was scheduled for April 3 from 2:00 P.M. to 3:30 P.M. She shared the AHC would review draft comment letters for Black Diamond and Normandy Park. She shared staff would brief the AHC on the GMPC's reconciliation decision.
- Chair Balducci adjourned the AHC meeting.