

**King County Regional Affordable Housing Task Force
Meeting Summary
September 22, 2017**

Mercer Island Community Center, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Participants Task Force

- David Baker, Mayor of Kenmore (Co-Chair)
- Claudia Balducci, King County Council Member, (Co-Chair)
- Jeanne Kohl-Welles, King County Council Member
- Larry Gossett, King County Council Member
- Ken Hearing, Mayor of North Bend
- John Stokes, Mayor of Bellevue
- Rob Johnson, Seattle City Councilmember
- Rod Dembowski, King County Council Member

Standing Advisory Panel

- Hamdi Abdulle, Somali Youth and Family Club
- Patricia Akiyama, Master Builders Association of King and Snohomish County
- Maria Barrientos, Barrientos & Ryan LLC
- Mark Gropper, Renton Housing Authority
- Meghan Hyla on behalf of Stephen Norman, King County Housing Authority
- Marty Kooistra, Housing Development Consortium
- Andrew Lofton, Seattle Housing Authority
- Mónica Mendoza-Castrejón, Community Representative
- Brett Waler, Washington Multi-Family Housing Association
- Bryce Yadon, Futurewise

TASK FORCE ACTIONS

- Standing Advisory Panel members approved
- Task Force Rules approved, as amended

WELCOMING REMARKS

- Co-Chair Baker convened the meeting.
- **Mercer Island Deputy Mayor Debbie Bertlin welcomed the Task Force to Mercer Island.** She noted that rents have increased on the Island by 40% and there is a limited supply of undeveloped land on the Island. She described some activities the City of Mercer Island is taking to address the need for affordable housing in its community, including:
 - Raising its contribution to ARCH (A Regional Coalition for Housing) to \$64,000 this year and expecting to increase to \$96,000 next year.
 - Providing 214 ADUs (accessory dwelling units) through the Mercer Island ADU program.
 - Revising the residential development code and town-center development code in the hopes of building more affordable housing in town-center.
- Facilitator Chris Mefford from Community Attributes, Inc. provided an overview of the July meeting.

A VIEW FROM OLYMPIA

Frank Chopp, Speaker of the Washington House of Representatives, provided an overview of work at the state level on affordable housing, including:

- Helping save the Highline Village apartments in Bellevue from redevelopment;
- Forming a task force to build a legislative agenda to support affordable housing. He is prioritizing funding sources and welcomes ideas from the RAH Task Force;
- Reserving 37% of the Hotel-Motel tax for affordable housing rather than letting it expire;
- Working with Sound Transit to increase the amount of their surplus land available for affordable housing;
- **Passing legislation that allows cities and counties to propose a 1/10 of percent sales tax to fund mental health facilities and affordable housing for vulnerable populations that would raise about \$70 million per year in King County;**
- Home and Hope initiative with funding from City of Seattle and Gates Foundation find underutilized, tax-exempt sites that can be re-purposed.

TASK FORCE BUSINESS ITEMS

- **Task Force Rules**
 - Discussion that consensus was desired, but recognition that it might not be possible in all cases.
 - Agreement that eight of 12 Task Force members represents a quorum and a majority of those present can approve Task Force actions or decisions.

- **Action: Rules approved unanimously.**
- **Approve Standing Advisory Panel (SAP)**
 - The Standing Advisor Panel nominees who were present introduced themselves. (Four nominees were not present.)
 - Agreement that more panelists could be added in the future.
 - **Action: SAP nominees were approved unanimously.**

DRAFT WORK PLAN DISCUSSION

- Task Force reviewed purpose and content of the Work Plan.
- Members highlighted need to understand causes and drivers of unaffordability.
- Refinements to Work Plan language were identified.
- Work Plan will be updated based on Task Force feedback and be ready for adoption at the October 31, 2017 meeting.

DATA GROUNDING

- See [Data Grounding PowerPoint presentation](#).

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THE GAP BETWEEN REGION'S SUPPLY AND DEMAND OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

Guest speakers from the housing authorities were invited to talk about their recent experiences with opening the Housing Choice Voucher waitlist to provide a sense of the gap between supply and demand for subsidized housing, with an emphasis on senior housing.

- **Meghan Hyla - King County Housing Authority (KCHA)**
 - KCHA provides housing for 46,000 individuals, including 14,000 children. It is the largest residential landlord, with 10,000 units.
 - It provides 12,000 vouchers for use on the private rental market.
 - Last April, KCHA opened its wait list and received 20,000 applications for 3,500 slots.
 - Even if someone gets on the wait list, he or she will have to wait years before a slot opens.
 - 60% of applicants were homeless, up from 47% in previous year.
 - Nationwide, 1 in 4 households in need of housing assistance receives it.
 - KCHA operates 34 properties for seniors and people with disabilities.

- KCHA is working in partnership with City of Seattle and Seattle Housing Authority to update the “Quiet Crisis Report” about senior housing need. The 2009 report said 900 new senior units were needed every year to meet the need. The region has not produced units at that pace in the last eight years.
- **Andrew Lofton – Seattle Housing Authority (SHA)**
 - SHA opened its Housing Choice Voucher wait list in February and had 22,000 applicants for 3,500 slots.
 - 90% of applicants were under 30% of Area Median Income
 - 40% of households included children
 - 54% of households were homeless and many of these were unsheltered
 - SHA manages about 11,000 vouchers and 8,000 apartments and single family homes.
 - It is not unusual for people to be on wait list for 3-5 years.
 - SHA manages over 1,000 units for seniors financed by a Seattle Housing bond and another 275 units from the SHA portfolio; extremely low income seniors and have a long waiting list.
 - SHA provides a preference for people who are homeless or earn 30% of Area Median Income or less.
 - The average income of the population SHA serves is \$18,000.
- **Mark Gropper - Renton Housing Authority (RHA)**
 - The RHA has 1,561 people on its Housing Choice Voucher waitlist, but only 20 vouchers turn over a year.
 - The RHA opened its Housing Choice Voucher list electronically in February and had 2,000 applicants.
 - There is a seven year waiting list for people looking for 3-4 bedroom homes.
 - Even if they have a voucher, many people cannot find housing within the limits for the voucher.
 - Low-income families are all competing with one another for the same, limited number of affordable units.
 - About 60% of low-income people are working and often more are than one job.

CLOSING, NEXT STEPS

- Meeting adjourned at 12:00.