

Regional Affordable Housing Task Force Meeting

June 29, 2018

Federal Way Aquatic Center 10AM-12PM

PARTICIPANTS

Task Force

- David Baker, Mayor, City of Kenmore (Co-Chair)
- Claudia Balducci, King County Councilmember (Co-Chair)
- Rod Dembowski, King County Councilmember
- Larry Gossett, King County Councilmember
- Jeanne Kohl-Welles, King County Councilmember (via phone)
- Ryan McIrvin, Renton City Councilmember
- John Stokes, Bellevue City Councilmember
- Pete von Reichbauer, King County Councilmember

Standing Advisory Panel

- Hamdi Abdulle, Somali Youth and Family Club
- Colleen Echohawk, Chief Seattle Club
- Mark Gropper, Renton Housing Authority
- MA Leonard, Enterprise Community Partners
- Andrew Lofton, Seattle Housing Authority
- Villette Nolon, Imagine Housing
- Tony To, HomeSight
- Brett Waller, Washington Multifamily Housing Association
- Bryce Yadon, Futurewise

MEETING NOTES

Welcome

- **Mayor David Baker** called the meeting to order and welcomed the group.
- **Pete von Reichbauer** provided opening remarks on the changes he has seen in his district due to housing displacement and stressed the need to work together as a region to address the challenge.

Standing Advisory Panel Discussion

The SAP attendees then each gave a summary of their thoughts for the Task Force, with major points including:

- The need to push for outcomes, ensure accountability and establish performance metrics. Look toward existing bodies and mechanisms to enforce accountability.
- There is a need for more resources to meet the demand, and they must be reliable and sustained.
- There is a perception that the political will to support affordable housing is growing. Would like to see the same kind of push toward funding housing that happened for transportation with ST3, also tie housing and transportation funding together better. Housing should be viewed as economic infrastructure on par with transportation.
- In addition to being affordable, housing should be provided in mixed income, mixed use communities with access to employment and opportunity.
- It is important to provide the broader community with clear examples and explanations of where policies are coming from, what goals they support and why those goals are useful.
- It is important to provide affordable housing that is culturally relevant to the specific populations being served. We need to address issues of racism that are exacerbating housing challenges.
- There is a need for more on the ground services to support people along with housing units, take a holistic view.

Grounding: Countywide Planning Policies

- **Kelly Rider, Special Projects Manager, King County Department of Community and Human Services**, provided a summary of the [Countywide Planning Policies related to housing](#), including how they were updated in 2012. The current process is based on a continuous improvement cycle and a countywide call to provide 12% of housing people at 0-30% and 30-50% Area Median Income (AMI) and 16% to serve people at 50-80% AMI. Many of the goals and strategies coming up with Task Force are consistent with the current housing CPPs.
- Follow up discussion with the group included:
 - Why haven't these CPPs been as successful as had been hoped? How do we shift toward performing to meet those goals now?
 - Opportunity for jurisdictions to work together to influence federal housing funding policy.

Review: Discussion Draft Goals

Chris Mefford, Community Attributes, Inc., led the group in a discussion of the [draft Task Force goals](#). The goals will serve as a framework to guide development of strategies. This conversation was focused on identifying where the group does and does not have consensus.

- Overall goal: achieve zero cost burdened households, focusing on households below 80% AMI. Discussion included:
 - Suggestion that 80% AMI is served by the market in many parts of the County and the focus for government should be on those below 50% AMI.
 - Reinforcement of the magnitude of the need and that the bulk of it exists today. The private sector must be a part of meeting a challenge of this scale.
 - Specific strategies and clear accountability mechanisms are needed to make sure the goal is being met.
 - Critical need to find new funding resources, particularly to serve the population below 50% AMI. This is not the right year, but we need to figure out how to do it.
- Goal: Support housing stability. No changes to the draft.
- Goal: Prioritize affordability near transit, with emphasis on high capacity transit. Three options for this goal were offered:
 - 25% of station areas should be affordable (inclusive of net preservation). This is the current state, on average, around light rail stations.
 - 50% of new housing in station areas should be affordable below 80% AMI.
 - 80% of station areas should be affordable at less than 80% AMI.

Discussion included:

- Request to provide an estimate of how many housing units would be built through each strategy.
- Several spoke in support of option 3, but also expressed the need to have mixed income communities.
- Need to distinguish between preservation and new housing. Making existing housing affordable around some stations is not feasible. The Enatai neighborhood along EastLink, for example.
- Suggestion to expand focus beyond high capacity transit station areas to also serve feeder route areas, where transit access is still good and development may be more affordable.
- With private sector affordable housing, need to be realistic about long term affordability, anticipating where additional subsidy may be required to preserve beyond an initial period.
- Address bedroom mix along with number of units, ensure the right balance is provided to serve as many households as possible.
- Goal: Preserving access to renters at risk of displacement. No changes to the draft.
- Goal: Protect communities of color and low income communities from displacement. Discussion included:
 - Request for a definition of housing stability and displacement. Many of these communities have seen extensive displacement and change already.
- Goal: Promote greater housing growth and diversity. Discussion with the group included:

- Reminder of the discussion on an appropriate distribution of bedroom sizes.
- Goal: Better engage communities in the creation and preservation of affordable housing. Discussion included:
 - The need to consider cultural context when developing affordable housing, making sure that what is being built actually meets a community's needs.
 - The need for more regional coordination and collaboration, identifying common needs and goals.
 - While engaging communities, need to acknowledge that communities will not always choose options that support housing affordability – city recently put moratorium on affordable housing, for example. How to address cases like this?
 - Recognition that getting community support for affordable housing is key to achieving all the other goals.

Discussion: Funding, Governance and Accountability, Strategies

- Co-Chair Claudia Balducci introduced the conversation on governance and accountability – there is a lot of agreement on what to do, but not on how to do it and how to make sure progress is being made, and that cities are held accountable. How does the work continue after the Task Force sunsets?
- Chris Mefford presented a [draft implementation/accountability statement](#) and a [summary handout](#) showing existing organizations and their authorities.

Discussion included:

- Request to hear from staff if these are things that don't currently exist, how to support implementation.
- Need to be more critical with current rules – cities can claim they're providing enough capacity, but zoning may not be realistic or feasible for the kind of development they're seeing. Need to push on this. An effective governance structure will help bring cities along over time.
- Request for an implementation plan – a step down from goals and strategies, getting to how to actually achieve them?
- There is value in the institutions that have already been built up, start there when looking for a home for this effort.
- Concern that affordable housing could get bogged down in the politics of an existing organization.
- Request to keep affordable housing professionals involved, in the manner that the board of health has health professionals serving on the board.
- Discussion was stopped due to lack of time.

Closing, Next Steps

- Staff requested additional feedback from the Task Force before the next meeting on the strategies, including feedback on priorities/level of specificity.
- The next task force meeting will take place July 26th on Mercer Island.