



Equitable Housing Working Group

Tuesday, June 9, 2015

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Metro Regional Center, Room 401

Working Group Members Present

Councilor Sam Chase	Metro
Councilor Craig Dirksen	Metro
Betty Dominguez	Home Forward, Multnomah County
Sheila Greenlaw-Fink	Community Partners for Affordable Housing (CPAH), Washington County
Rachel Loftin	Homebuilders Association of Metro Portland
Elisa Harrigan	Meyer Memorial Trust (MMT)
Alisa Pyszka	Greater Portland Inc
Margaret Salazar	US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Bill Van Vliet	Network for Oregon Affordable Housing (NOAH)
Gordon Jones	Rose Holdings LLC
Cat Goughnour	Radix Consulting Group
Alma Flores	City of Milwaukie

Metro Staff and Guests

Emily Lieb
Megan Gibb
Laura Dawson Bodner
Nikolai Ursin

Facilitator and Project Partners

Kirstin Greene	Cogan Owens Greene
Ruth Adkins	Oregon Opportunity Network (OPP)
John Miller	Oregon Opportunity Network (OPP)

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councilor Sam Chase welcomed the group and thanked attendees for their participation. He noted that it is time to implement equitable housing actions and that we need to ensure that policy tools are in place. He showed appreciation for Councilor Dirksen and called out his experience with housing issues as the Mayor of the City of Tigard.

After introducing facilitator Kirstin Green and project manager Emily Lieb, he asked working group members to introduce themselves and mention the strengths they can bring to the project.

Metro Councilor Craig Dirksen stated he was involved in starting the affordable housing program in Tigard. He noted that 70% of the Tigard population cannot afford to live near where they work. In addition to creating hardship on individuals and families, this situation is a burden on the transportation system.

Bill Van Vliet, Executive Director of the Network for Oregon Affordable Housing (NOAH), a statewide non-profit that finances non-profit housing projects, said he has been working on the finance side of affordable housing for a long time and has worked in a lot of jurisdictions.

Margaret Salazar, HUD Field Office Director, said her organization serves the state of Oregon and parts of Idaho and southwest Washington. They have a number of tools available related to funding. She has worked in San Francisco Bay area and Washington DC heading up programs to preserve affordable housing. She has worked in high cost housing markets and started out as an affordable housing grass roots advocate in the Bay area.

Alisa Pyszka, VP of Recruitment for Greater Portland Inc., a regional non-profit focusing on economic development, works with new companies in the region whose employees need housing. She can offer lessons learned from the working in the Bay area.

Kirstin Greene of Cogan Owens Greene offered that she works in comprehensive planning and community engagement.

Emily Lieb shared that she served on an innovation team in the Atlanta Mayor's Office, focusing on homelessness issues. She has a background in planning and experience in implementation and partnership building.

Cat Goughnour of Radix Consulting said that she is an affordable housing advocate who does equity consulting and anti-racism trainings. She worked at the Fair Housing Council and is currently working on the housing strategy in North Portland, as well as on the comprehensive plan update.

Gordon Jones is a private developer. His company recently completed construction on the Rose. He worked with various entities to access public funds for the project, which has a percentage of affordable housing units. He would like to see incentives for the private sector supported by sound policies.

Rachel Loftin, Executive & Government Relations Assistant for the Homebuilders Association of Metro Portland, recently completed her degree in community development at Portland State University.

Elisa Harrigan, Affordable Housing Initiative Program Officer at Meyer Memorial Trust (MMT), said the trust has invested in affordable housing throughout the state, including \$15 million towards preserving affordable housing, how it is delivered and how to secure it in future. She may not be able to attend future meetings but will follow the process.

Alma Flores, Community Development Director for the City of Milwaukie, worked on economic development in Beaverton for five years. Previously, she worked at the City of Portland. Her specialty is planning with a focus on housing and equitable access.

Ruth Adkins is a Policy Director at Oregon Opportunity Network (OPP) an association that focuses on community development and nonprofit policy and advocacy at the state level. Two of their roles are convening and organizing.

John Miller, Executive Director of Oregon Opportunity Network (OPP), previously worked with an organization that built homes in NE and SE Portland. He was a member of the Metro Housing Choice Task Force from 2004 to 2006. He would like to see this project take the good results from that task force and make them actionable now.

Betty Dominguez is the East County Program Director with Home Forward, the largest owner and developer of affordable housing in the state. She is the director of policy and equity. She previously served as a regional advisor to Oregon Housing and Community Services. She served on the Metro Housing Choice Task Force and is excited to see something tangible coming out of Metro's past housing work. She added that she was involved in the East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) and is a past president of Portland Habitat for Humanity.

Sheila Greenlaw-Fink is the Executive Director of Community Partners for Affordable Housing (CPAH) in Washington County, which serves Washington County and unincorporated Washington County.

II. EQUITABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND WORK PLAN

Emily introduced the Equitable Housing Initiative. She said the initiative resulted from Metro Council support for a special budget amendment for a two-year program. This working group will advise on three components of the program, which are listed on page one of the meeting packet. They are: to develop a shared understanding of challenges and opportunities, to identify short-term opportunities for Metro to provide technical assistance to jurisdictions seeking to eliminate barriers or create incentives for equitable housing development and to start to develop long-term strategies for supporting equitable housing development.

Alisa asked if there was funding for technical assistance work. Emily replied there is a small budget for a demonstration project.

Emily reviewed the initiative background and definition of equitable housing, detailed on page three of the packet. Kirstin noted that this is a working definition.

Elisa commented that something about stability needs to be added to the definition. People move in and out and chase the next affordable unit, trying to get to something they can afford. Being stable in housing can support employment and educational goals. There are other economic forces at play, such as wages and job growth, in addition to gentrification.

Cat suggested adding that housing sites need to be connected to areas of high opportunity. To be equitable, these approaches need to meet the needs of very low income people, people of color, and others who are excluded. When the equity framework was created, the group used an economic and racial justice bifocal lens; this was used as the driver of prioritization.

Portland Housing Bureau has HEAL (healthy eating active living) maps.

Margaret agreed that there should be an emphasis on very low income populations and people of color. The definition currently is expansive and perhaps it needs to be written more specifically to address people who are not able to access affordable housing.

Sheila noted that access to health care and services is imperative; housing alone does not work.

Alisa mentioned that 'high opportunity' needs to be defined.

Emily noted that staff plans to incorporate the opportunity mapping and the Equity Atlas as part of the technical framework. She welcomes input.

Alma observed that childcare is imperative with family wage jobs. She suggested adding the word 'healthy,' and somehow referencing public health, environmental justice and location recommendations in the policy.

Emily continued her presentation, referring to page four of the packet. She reviewed the initiative timeline.

Elisa asked if Metro has comprehensive data that is the same across all counties. For example, Clackamas County's data is not as comprehensive as the data out of Washington County.

Emily responded that Metro has the Urban Growth Report which contains great data relevant for long-range planning and growth management, but there is a need to package and complement this data in a way that supports immediate implementation efforts.

Emily reviewed the outputs for phase 1 and 2, detailed on page for of the packet.

Elisa commented that she hopes that Metro can synthesize some of the information to a more regional level.

Emily responded that she is looking at the Portland Housing Bureau's neighborhood geographies, which provide a smaller level of sub-area analysis the jurisdiction level.

Elisa suggested coordinating with neighborhood partnerships to align messaging, locally and statewide. Identify short and long term opportunities.

Betty requested that the group take another look at the definition. She shared that Metro's Equity Strategy Advisory Committee has determined that the strategy will focus on ten areas.

Emily replied that she is coordinating closely with the equity strategy team.

Cat would like to see a public health framing.

Kirstin mentioned the Equity Framework Report and said it could be distributed upon request.

Alisa asked about the 2006 committee work. What will be different about the work of this group?

Councilor Chase responded that in 2006, Metro Council agreed to implement the recommendations but decided to hold off until HUD grant opportunities were reviewed. Metro applied twice, but did not get grants, so there was no funding.

Betty noted that there is a real opportunity with the equity work going on now. She suggested that the emphasis be on short term actions.

John added that the 2006 recommendations were great but that they had no teeth. It was Metro making recommendations to the community. This time, we are going taking more of a grass roots approach by going out to the communities to find out what will work for them.

Councilor Dirksen concurred, saying this will be more of a collaborative approach.

Cat asked if the initiative will also include approaching direct service providers and non-profits. Everyone is focusing on housing, yet there is mission creep. We need to ensure that efforts are integrated.

III. WORK GROUP CHARGE, PROCESS AND AGREEMENT

Kirstin referred to page two of the meeting packet, introducing participant roles and expectations. She noted that the summit will take place in January. She asked the group if there are any interests missing at the table. She gave examples of private developers or people with lived experience of affordable housing. Emily added that she will ask the working group for suggestions for the summit and to contribute ideas for opportunities for partnership. Kirstin then presented the starter agreements for group process: listen carefully and deeply, build rather than revisit, explore options with an open mind, represent yourself internally and externally, refer media to staff (Emily) and please let staff know if you can't make a meeting.

IV. OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN AND SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Ruth gave an overview of Oregon ON's role in the process. They will create and administer an online survey; it will go out in the next week or ten days. Anyone interested in equitable housing may fill out the survey. Starting at the end of June, they will host four focus group/round table discussions in Portland, Washington County, Clackamas County and East County/Gresham, primarily for jurisdiction and organization staff. Ruth will send an invitation to working group members and asked that they share the invitation with others. Oregon ON will go to existing committees and groups for feedback. She may ask selected elected officials for their feedback on findings towards the end of the process. She has a draft matrix of tools and will build on work already done.

Councilor Chase asked about narrowing down the tools to the point of adopting one to three tools. How will the options be narrowed down?

Sheila asked if people would be asked what they would like to do, and if they know of tools that have never been used.

Ruth said that developer partners in the group can provide a reality check.

Gordon agreed, saying that developers are under-represented on the working group. He said that agreements and policies need to support the mechanics of financing.

Emily noted that the Portland Business Alliance is looking at convening a group of private sector developers. She has reached out to them about partnering during the engagement process.

Gordon noted that they are going through a similar process at this time.

Margaret offered a suggestion about the survey, saying that the items having to do with funding should be parsed out (predevelopment, development, construction of new units) to yield more refinement in survey responses. She suggested adding a question about lack of capacity amongst developers, and also something around housing obsolescence, older housing stock, repositioning and rehabilitating existing structures.

Betty brought up inadequate purchasing power and how this affects home ownership.

Sheila suggested adding that there are inadequate numbers of local staff who can assist with processes such as permitting.

Cat asked about the lack of political will; where does this fit in the survey?

Elisa asked about defined levels, such as rent restricted and workforce housing. What is the volume? What is the context with equity work? Is there a pre-defined definition? There is not much around the private development component; should this be added?

Margaret asked what type of housing should be prioritized. Do you want to ask about housing types such as workforce housing or single family housing, income levels, or lowest income level?

Elisa suggested that the opinions could be captured in the survey. Recommendations could be prioritized later.

Cat shared that in their report they kept to HUD requirements.

Alisa suggested engaging local communities more broadly and gently to bring them on board, rather than diving in immediately.

Ruth concurred, saying they would go more deeply in the focus groups.

Cat suggested talking about the Fair Housing Act and protected classes to start the conversation.

Elisa wondered if there is a term that is open enough to get people to engage.

Betty responded to Cat, suggesting using the term workforce housing.

Emily said they are trying to think broadly and to use market typology. How can we leverage different tools to support a range of housing opportunities?

Kirstin asked if additional information could be added to the website. There were nods from group and from Emily. Kirstin suggested that Ruth send a reminder and a deadline to the group regarding additional comments.

Alma asked about the capacity of CDCs and how to build capacity in the suburbs.

Margaret asked for clarification on the purpose of question 5.

Ruth suggested deleting question 5. She reviewed questions 6,7, and 8 with the group and invited members to comment by the end of the week.

V. OVERVIEW OF TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Emily asked the group to refer to the last two pages of the packet. She gave a quick review of the technical assessment framework. She has received feedback that a better understanding of market data is needed. Metro maintains an inventory of regulated affordable housing. State and HUD also have databases. Metro tries to capture all housing that has some sort of regulation (i.e. affordable) but does not capture unregulated affordable housing. She said she wants to create full picture of subsidized and unsubsidized affordable housing and asked that the group share good methodologies if they know of any.

Alma said she continues to grapple with what type of housing this initiative will cover; could this be defined more clearly? What are the buckets, for example urban versus rural?

Megan noted that we are trying to have a broader conversation but that we need to figure out a way to include the full range of housing types in one conversation.

Elisa said it may be tricky to meet the same data quality standards with market rate housing. It would be great to have some information even if it's not as detailed as data on regulated units. Catholic Charities looked at equity atlas and overlaid high opportunity, rent reasonableness and other elements using the Equity Atlas.

A member asked if Emily is using the CNT index for combined housing and transportation costs.

Emily replied that Metro uses a similar model for calculated housing and transportation cost burden in the Urban Growth Report (UGR).

VI. LOGISTICS, WRAPUP AND NEXT STEPS

Kirstin reviewed the meeting topics for July and asked that members send feedback. Emily said she is available to meet individually.

VII. ADJOURN

There being no further business, Kirstin adjourned the meeting at 2:02 p.m.

Attachments to the Record

Item	Document Date	Description	Document No.
1	06/09/15	Inventory of housing-related events and discussions planned for 2015-16	060915ehwg - 01
2	06/09/15	Inventory of housing-related planning, policy and research efforts currently underway in the region	060915ehwg - 02

Meeting summary respectfully submitted by:

Laura Dawson Bodner