



Meeting minutes

Meeting: Build Small Coalition
Date/time: Tuesday, Apr. 11, 2017 from 10 a.m. to noon
Place: Metro Regional Center – 600 NE Grand Avenue, Portland, OR 97232 – Council Chambers

Attendees

Elissa Gertler, Metro's Director of Planning and Development, stated that the space efficient housing initiative was an instrumental step in addressing various issues related to housing. Elissa also mentioned that housing is a topic that is regionally relevant and must incorporate creative and effective strategies. Elissa had the workgroup members introduce themselves and share brief updates regarding any space efficient housing policies, projects, efforts, or any other news:

- Emily Lieb, Senior Development Project Manager for Metro, provided an overview of the Equitable Housing Initiative at Metro.
- Jordan Palmeri is a Natural Resource Specialist who specializes in materials management for the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Mr. Palmeri noted that House Bill 2737 would direct the building code division to make better accommodation for building models. He also noted that the next hearing regarding the context of the bill would take place on April 17, 2017.
- Bryce Jacobson is a Senior Solid Waste Manager for Metro Regional Government.
- Ryan Nieto is the Chair of the Home Performance Council of the Oregon Home Builders Association (HBA) and Construction Program Manager with Green Canopy Homes.
- Lina Menard is a consultant who is the founder of Niche Consulting, a firm that focuses on sustainable designing for small homes.
- Jill Cropp is an architect who is the owner of Studio Cropp Architecture.
- Elizabeth Decker is a Land Use Planning Consultant for JET Planning. Elizabeth shared that she worked on zoning code updates and was working on a zoning code audit tool.
- Kol Peterson is a member of Accessory Dwelling Strategies. He indicated that the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Tour would occur on September 9th and 10th 2017 and would possibly be the largest event yet because of the rising interests in small housing options such as ADU's.
- Sean Heynorth is a founder and Principal Planner with Portland Houseworks LLC.
- Eli Spevak is a developer and founder of Orange Spot LLC, a development and general contract company.
- Vahid Brown is a Planning Coordinator for Clackamas County and founder of the Village Coalition. Vahid stated that his focus was on assisting individuals interested in transitioning to smaller housing options and developing zoning codes to accommodate smaller homes.
- Beth Gilden is a program coordinator at the Institute of Sustainability at Portland State University. Beth stated that her focus was on aiding faculty and students in their research on aiding individuals who were trying to maneuver the housing market by making sure housing is equitable and environmentally friendly.

- Shawn Wood is a Construction Waste Specialist with the City of Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.
- Joan Grimm is a co-founder of Portland Alternative Dwellings LLC. Joan highlighted a project where small homes have wheels enabling transportation. Joan expressed small homes that are easily transported would be beneficial for the homeless population, a topic relevant to the region.
- Patty Morgan is a founding partner of Pacific Agenda, a conference and meeting-planning firm.
- Suzanne Zuniga is a Senior Housing Construction Coordinator at the Portland Housing Bureau. Suzanne is currently working on funding measures in order for accessory dwelling units (ADU) to receive financing and developmental contracts.
- Megan Gibb is a Land Use and Urban Development Manager for Metro.
- Derin Williams is a founder and designer for Shelter Wise, a firm that specialized in the development and design of space and energy efficient homes smaller than 800 square feet.
- Kathryn Langstaff conducted research and design for homes though the scope of delivering ecosystem benefits for the local region.
- Frankie Lewington is a Council Policy Coordinator for the office of the Chief Operating Officer at Metro Regional Government.

Context – where we've been and where we are now

Frankie briefed the workgroup on the meeting agenda and then had Jordan provide background on the Space Efficient Housing Workgroup [Build Small Coalition is a proposed title of the current workgroup]. Jordan recalled that he started work for the Oregon DEQ in 2009 for the materials management program. He expressed the department's interest in reducing the environmental impact of building materials over their respective life cycles. In regards to development for housing efficiency and materials management, Jordan shared that research was conducted in association with Earth Advantage Institute and the Oregon Home Builders Association (HBA). The research focused on the environmental impact of systems or products associated with building materials. A single family home designed by the HBA had around 30 green building strategies analyzed in order to investigate the strongest environmental practice. Jordan noted that out of all the strategies related to green building, the best practice was to build a smaller home. A result of the research and collaboration of various stakeholders involved with space efficiency was the Build Small, Live Large conference in 2012. According to Jordan, the conference was meant to communicate efforts taking place to solve various issues related to housing via the notion of building smaller and environmentally safer homes. Jordan showcased a few accomplishments since the workgroup started six years ago:

- Developed building code with size based tiers
- Recalibrated energy efficiency ratings for Earth Advantage based off of the size of homes
- Adoption of ADU zoning codes by the city of Salem
- Accessory Dwelling Unit Survey involving at least 1,000 ADU owners in multiple cities in the metropolitan area

According to Jordan, the Accessory Dwelling Unit Survey indicated that majority of ADU units were being used for housing. In regards to financing, Jordan indicated that research into financing and appraising ADU's was being conducted. Jordan acknowledged that during the 6 year span of the workgroup, the smaller home initiative has taken off and many participants of the workgroup have accelerated the spread of knowledge and development of policy. However, Jordan noted that other emerging issues require the commitment of DEQ, and that Metro's experience in equitable housing would be a great reason to shift the leadership of the workgroup to Metro.

Emily noted that she began work in equitable housing in 2014. Emily then shared four strategies related to housing needs for residents:

- Maximize and optimize resources
- Leverage growth for affordability
- Mitigate displacement and stabilize communities
- Increase and diversify market-rate housing

Emily also mentioned a planning grant program for small cities and counties in order for them to focus more on equitable housing. Potentially, the grant program would assist projects that relate to space efficient housing. Emily indicated that the goal for the coalition was to establish a forum that would work on communicating the goals and ideas among stakeholders and other workgroup members. She indicated that the workgroup should establish a unique mode of developing policy related to space efficiency, in order to avoid overlap with other projects. Emily shared the proposed mission statement for the workgroup. She also proposed changing the name of the workgroup to 'Build Small Coalition'. Emily asked the workgroup to provide feedback on the proposed mission statement and workgroup name.

Build Small, Live Large Summit update

Joan indicated that the first Build Small, Live Large summit occurred in 2012. She conveyed the goal of the summit was to introduce visionary housing policy and space efficient design to community and industry members. Joan also discussed that another summit occurred in 2015; the event attempted to incorporate the ideas of policy developers and the participation of homeowners. Joan noted that providing a strong background to the ideal of space efficient homes to homeowners was an important step for the summit and associated members.

Patty noted that another Build Small, Live Large summit would occur on November 3rd and 4th, 2017. The 2017 summit would attempt to expand its narrative and include a national housing perspective in order to broaden the scope and set of strategies pursued by the associate members of the summit. Also, Patty indicated that the 2017 summit would focus more on ADU's, though they would not be the primary focus of the summit. She also mentioned that the summit would be a good opportunity to distill ideas into concrete framework via the contributions of workgroup members and the input received during the summit.

Review priorities for the coalition

Frankie discussed the background and development of the Accessory Dwelling Unit Survey. Frankie then highlighted the top findings in the survey. The first question involved housing preference. The top three housing interests were (among other proposed options):

- Cottage clusters
- Attached ADU's
- Detached ADU's

The second survey question involved research topics. For this question, the top research opportunities were:

- Study affordability benefits of small housing types and alternative development models
- Study the impact of ADU's and other small housing types in response to the regional housing needs
- Gather case studies for ADU's and other small housing options.

The third question in the survey involved small housing policy innovation and the top responses were:

- Provide workshops for local jurisdictions on how to adopt zoning and code changes to eliminate barriers to smaller homes
- Support local zoning code audits to identify zoning code barriers against small housing options
- Advocate for scaling system development charges (SDC's) based off of home size or waiving SDC for ADU's

The fourth research question related to education and outreach opportunities. Frankie highlighted the top three responses as:

- Continued support and engagement of the Build Small, Live large coalition
- Engage media to highlight importance of small housing options
- Develop tools to allow homeowners understand potential of their property for ADU development

The final survey question related to partnership opportunities and the top responses were:

- Support pilot projects to demonstrate ADU development models that serve affordable housing needs
- Work with local lenders to establish mortgage products that work well with ADU's
- Support pilot projects to demonstrate the possibility of tiny homes serving as transitional housing for the homeless

Frankie then asked the workgroup members for feedback on the five opportunity areas from the Accessory Dwelling Unit Survey.

Feedback and or comments from the workgroup included

- Indication that the Northwest Economic Research Center in association with Portland State University was conducting research on the impact of ADU's on the housing market in the Portland Metropolitan area. When communicating housing options, there was a broad spectrum of options; however, there was more focus on general modes of housing, such as single family homes and apartments, whereas much more innovative options were not discussed during outreach and research opportunities.
- Development of a comprehensive collection of information regarding the financing, affordability, equity and living arrangement for small housing options.
- Research on occupancy rates along with understanding how existing housing stock is being utilized for future housing demands.
- Working with local jurisdictions on smaller housing options that may affect supply of housing.
- Research on financing ADU's at the regional level. Currently, there was more work needed on the development and finance of ADU's and there was a large funding gap for financing of ADU's.
- Workshops for local jurisdictions to allow them an opportunity to interact with technical experts on developing small homes. Currently, there was a lack of technical background for jurisdictions in regards to developing small housing options; this could be a reason more general housing concepts such as apartments and single family homes were more standard.

- Vancouver B.C.'s second unit ready policy would require a single family home to have completed pre-plumbing and pre-electric systems so that the second unit could be converted to an ADU. This policy may influence how the region develops and optimizes the utilization of ADU's.
- Agora Center for Journalism would be starting a new initiative called Open Housing that would attempt to promote better journalism about housing and homelessness. However, the Agora Center for Journalism was not aware of the Build Small Coalition, so establishing communication between the two entities would be vital in spreading knowledge about innovate housing options for those who are struggling with homelessness.
- Development of a worksheet that would allow homeowners to better understand the potential of building ADU's on their property.
- It was recommended that the Build Small Coalition meet at least once a month in order to clarify and strengthen the scope of policy and developmental initiatives for small housing options.
- Sending out the Accessory Dwelling Unit Survey with updated context provided by the discussions and suggestions from the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amaanjit Singh