



Portland Housing Bureau

Portland Housing Advisory Commission
Wednesday, March 9, 2011
 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
 Steel Bridge Conference Room
 421 SW 6th Ave
 Portland, OR 97204

✓ = PHAC public member action item
 ▶ = PHB staff member action item

DRAFT 3-9-11 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Jesse Beason, Andrew Colas, Deborah Imse, Marc Jolin, Christine Lau, Traci Manning, Mark White, Carter MacNichol, Carmen Rubio, Toby Washington

Members Excused: Brian Wilson, Rey Espana

Agenda Item	Discussion Highlights	Outcomes / Next Steps
Welcome & Review Meeting Purpose	<p>The Housing Commission will now have a rotating Chair for the meetings. Through May, Jesse Beason will act at PHAC Chair.</p> <p>Mr. Beason called the meeting to order, and reviewed the meeting agenda.</p> <p>Commissioner Nick Fish was in attendance.</p>	<p>✓ PHAC members reviewed and approved the meeting minutes from February 1, 2011.</p>
Public Comment	<p><i>Additional comments were accepted as part of the Equity Work Session</i></p> <p>Ms. Veronica Bernier, PSU Community Health: Ms. Bernier shared that there is a group of women currently in a safe house that need transitional housing. They need assistance as they are currently in recovery. People in transitional periods in their life need that availability of transitional housing.</p>	

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<p>Public Involvement Plan/Citizen Participation Plan</p>	<p>PHB Staff Beth Kaye reviewed the updated Consolidated Plan section for Citizen Participation. It removes language referring to the Bureau of Housing & Community Development, and creates the Federal Funding Oversight Committee (see next agenda item).</p> <p>PHAC members are invited to review the document, and submit changes or suggestions to Beth Kaye.</p> <p>A draft of the Con Plan, including the Citizen Participation Plan, will be posted on PHB's website on March 22, 2011.</p>	
<p>Consolidated Plan Introduction</p>	<p>PHB Staff Beth Kaye reviewed the Consolidated Plan with PHAC members. The Con Plan is a HUD-required report that lays out how the city and its jurisdictional partners will spend federal funds: CDBG, HOME, HOPWA, ESG.</p> <p>The former Housing and Community Development Commission would approve the Con Plan, but now that the group is no longer meeting, the jurisdictions are forming a new advisory group: the Federal Funding Oversight Committee (FFOC).</p> <p>The FFOC will be made up of two representatives from each jurisdiction, and PHB would like to recruit two members of PHAC to sit on the FFOC.</p> <p>The first role of the FFOC will be to preside over the April 13 County-Wide hearing on the draft Con Plan, FY2011-2012 Action Plans, and Fair Housing Plan.</p>	<p>✓ PHAC members Marc Jolin, Christine Lau, and Carmen Rubio expressed interest in the FFOC, and will check their calendars for availability.</p>

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<p>Equity Work Session</p>	<p>PHB Director Margaret Van Vliet kicked off the equity work session, noting that Equity is at the heart of the work PHB does, recognizing the historic racism that affects Portland and the bureau’s work. Disparities still exist; housing discrimination is a foundational piece and must be acknowledged as an issue to address.</p> <p>PHB considers Equity is all aspects of work, including the formation of PHAC itself. PHB also has Equity goals included in the new Strategic Plan.</p> <p>PHB wants to hear from PHAC, considering the following dimensions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discrimination in the housing market is alive and well. PHB should have an influential role in the market. 2. Look at who accesses the programs PHB funds; this includes shelter, rent assistance, other products. 3. Economic participation – who gets construction projects from PHB? 4. Demographic Equity – we continue to see patterns of segregation. <p>The Work Session seeks to begin answering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are we missing? - How can we better engage to be successful in the Equity agenda? <p>PHB staff reviewed some background materials relating to Equity and the bureau’s work:</p> <p>The PHB Equity & Diversity Council is a cross-functional group of PHB staff that is</p>	<p>► Copies of the Equity Work Session materials are posted online at www.portlandonline.com/phb/phac</p>

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<p>Equity Work Session (cont.)</p>	<p>developing a statement on equity for the bureau. Many E&D Council members were presented for this meeting. PHB staffer Kate Allen presented the latest draft.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The E&D Council first wanted to focus on a statement that will help us ground the equity agenda. - The group looked at other organizations and groups to see what they did; King County in particular was a good guide for crafting the statement. - The statement recognizes input from the community during the Strategic Plan process, and calls out a vision for the community. - The group also reviewed the current Portland Plan definition of Equity. - The first three years of PHB will be focused especially on eliminating housing discrimination based on race/ethnicity. - The Statement will be fully vetted in the community, including with the PHAC. - The Immigrant and Refugee community is included in the larger group of Communities of Color. <p>The Draft Business and Workforce Equity Policy was presented by PHB staff Nate McCoy and Maileen Hamto.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The policy shows a framework for how the bureau will spend contracting dollars. - The goal of the policy will be to ensure that PHB funds are allocated fairly to underserved communities. - There is a 20% reserved goal for MWESB participation. 	

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<p>Equity Work Session (cont.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The bureau wants to ensure contractors hire people of color. - The document discusses the history of PHB and gives suggestions for how to address the historical disparities. - PHB will start with initial assessments, such as NOFAs, and will carry through to document preparation and closing to make sure PHB is meeting its targets. - One of the strongest aspects of the policy is “create an atmosphere to enhance relationships for how to work together.” <p>Commissioner Nick Fish discussed the Disparity Study, which is in its final stages. Work is underway to double-check the data before publishing. Publication is expected sometime this Spring.</p> <p>PHAC Members had some follow-up questions and comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PHB sends funding out the door, but developers are the ones who end up choosing the contractors. Are there other tools to ensure more diverse relationships? <i>With Block49, there was an open meeting held with Walsh Construction. PHB got and received feedback, which helped let the developer know that expectations are high. PHB recognizes that a simple regulatory approach doesn't work for this type of issue.</i> - PHAC member Toby Washington applauded the efforts underway. There 	<p>▶ As soon as the Disparity Study is finalized, PHAC members will receive copies. The study will certainly help this discussion.</p>

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<p>Equity Work Session (cont.)</p>	<p>refer to MWESB because it's easy to measure, but maybe there are better ways to measure success. <i>Measuring success is often tied to funding source, so it's important to note that the focus should be on all funding sources. In addition, the Diversity in Workforce Construction Committee is starting a dialogue to influence training components. There are no hard and fast answers, but PHB is looking for recommendations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The main issue at hand is that there is still a huge disparity in housing. If PHB wants to create a position that focuses on Equity, that person has to have legitimate power to be held accountable. That person needs to be in a position to influence, with power to make change. - Partners need to drive the change, and we have to demand that partners support that change. We see the same players again and again, but we have to start changing how decisions are made to create opportunities for others to take advantage. - When considering the goal, is 20% enough? How is the bureau doing now? That will be a good starting point. Also acknowledge that when it comes to certification, sometimes communities of color are at a disadvantage for achieving that certification. - The timing of the discussion is good, 	

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<p>Public Comment on Equity Work Session</p>	<p><i>Many community members attended to submit testimony about Equity.</i></p> <p>James Posey, former NAMAC Oregon President:</p> <p>There is both good and bad in this conversation. It's good to see leadership focused and attending the Walsh Block 49 Meeting. Still, at the end of the day, there is a big systematic problem, and the policy documents don't adequately reflect the systemic long-term racism. What's written doesn't seem like it will affect change soon. PHB should focus resources where it will best address the problems. We don't need a study to know there's a problem; we haven't seen a difference yet. There is an absence of collaboration to influence the other players, and leadership hasn't quite stepped up to work to change the dynamic. Using the "pass through" model of control from developers to contractors creates a problem that minorities don't necessarily hire minorities. There is an absence of transparency as well; for example, the RAC doesn't seem to have real monitoring, and it's all paperwork. Sometimes you have to go to the physical site to ensure compliance. Talk to the people who are affected by the problem. The challenge will be to do some good, not just good intentions. Reward behavior that we want to see, look at who is achieving the goals already and continue to build upon that.</p>	

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<p>Public Comment on Equity Work Session (cont.)</p>	<p>Alan, Verde I strongly believe that good lawyers can find solutions and avoid legal issues. “Legal can’t do that” should never be an excuse.</p> <p><i>Written Comments:</i></p> <p>Heather Gramp, Habitat for Humanity I concur with the comment that more proactive work by the bureau may be needed to meet the MWESB goals. We’ve really focused on this and developed solicitation lists, contacted NAMCO, OAME, MCIP and others...advertised in the Asian Reporter, The Skanner, etc. Even called people the day before proposals due! But we would like to see much more response. I’d hate funding to hurt a small organization like Habitat, as I fear that unless there’s money to be made (and we’re so lean) we aren’t going to get a lot of traction. Would love and welcome more help.</p> <p>Regarding the Participation Plan, Page 9, Item D, Bullet 1: My concern is that the grant allocation panel be knowledgeable about housing and housing agencies, to make informed decisions. I’d also like award to be made on performance. Last year, Habitat for Humanity said it would sell 26 homes, and we did that on time and on budget to an average MFI of 37% (the neediest) and over 80% people of color. In contrast, other organizations were funded (our education program did not get funded) were delinquent from prior years. Just want a transparent process, objectively scored, and scores shared with community partners. Let’s reward success!</p>	

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<p>Next Steps Agenda Highlights</p>	<p>Commissioner Nick Fish thanked everyone for attending and re-stated the commitment to make the changes necessary for this to be successful. With a new PHB, old habits are inherited, so it's time to do something different. It's time to hit re-set. The hope is that this new leadership will ensure these changes are set forth and successful. It's time to get past diagnosing the condition, and instead focusing on solutions.</p> <p>Margaret Van Vliet also thanked the attendees. PHAC will continue this Equity discussion, and will be sure to follow-up with attendees who want to be in touch for this discussion.</p> <p>PHAC meets the first Tuesday of each month. The next meeting is Tuesday, April 5 2011 at 3:00pm at the Portland Housing Bureau.</p>	<p>✓ PHAC members are invited to attend the PHB Budget Work Session at Portland City Council on April 4 at 1:00PM. PHAC Chair Jesse Beason will attend on PHAC's behalf.</p>