

Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission

Tuesday, September 24, 2013

6:00 – 7:45 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Commissioners Present: Andre' Baugh, Karen Gray, Don Hanson, Gary Oxman, Michelle Rudd, Katherine Schultz, Chris Smith

Commissioners Absent: Mike Houck, Lai-Lani Ovalles, Howard Shapiro, Irma Valdez

BPS Staff Present: Susan Anderson, Deborah Stein, Leslie Lum, Julie Ocken

Other Presenters: Cristina Palacios, Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT); Kayse Jama and Nicole Brown, Center for Intercultural Organizing (CIO); Emily Schelling, Housing Development Center (HDC); Amy Gilroy, Oregon Public Health Institute (OPHI); Margaret Neal and Alan de la Torre, PSU Institute on Aging

Chair Baugh called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and gave an overview of the agenda.

Items of Interest from Commissioners

- *Chair Baugh* reminded the Commission about the work session with City Council about West Hayden Island on October 10 at 2:30 p.m.
- *Commissioner Oxman* commented on *Commissioner Houck's* travels and photos he's been sharing.

Director's Report

Susan Anderson

- PSC Officers and BPS staff are meeting on 10/02 to finalize the agenda and plan for the WHI work session with City Council. It's likely we'll want to have a few PSC members each provide a 2-3 minute perspective at the beginning of the session and others will be available for questions from Council members.
- The Central City 2035 SE Quadrant Plan is forming its Stakeholder Advisory Committee. Applications are available online on the BPS site and are due by 10/03. If a PSC member has an interest in participating on this SAC, please let us know and apply.
- Airport Futures: *Commissioner Gray* has been serving on the continuation of the Airport Futures project (PDX CAC). If PSC members would be interested in a briefing and updates from Port and/or BPS staff, we can arrange that in the next few months.
- Portland recently finished second, beating out SF and Seattle among 30 others, in the ACEEE energy efficiency rating. We finished second to Boston, in part because we haven't yet moved forward on some building performance policies.

Consent Agenda

- Consideration of Minutes from the September 10, 2013 PSC meeting.

Chair Baugh asked for any comments for the consent agenda. *Commissioner Hanson* moved to approve. *Commissioner Smith* seconded.

The Consent Agenda was approved with an *aye* vote.

(Y7 – Baugh, Gray, Hanson, Oxman, Rudd, Schultz, Smith)

Promoting Health Through Multi-Family Housing

Briefing: Leslie Lum; Cristina Palacios, Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT); Kayse Jama and Nicole Brown, Center for Intercultural Organizing (CIO); Emily Schelling, Housing Development Center (HDC); Amy Gilroy, Oregon Public Health Institute (OPHI)

Presentation: <http://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/webdrawer.dll/webdrawer/rec/6034945/>

Document

- [Healthy Housing Handbook](#)

Each organizational partner provided an overview of their work and what they brought to the project. OPHI has worked to identify ways to make multi-family housing and lots in East Portland safer and more healthy for the community.

OPHI has been working with Hacidenda and Rose CDCs as well. On-site safety and lack of space for kids to play were some of the largest issues brought up in their initial scan. Bike, stroller and scooter storage were also concerns, as was lack of connectivity within the neighborhoods. Another obstacle is in the zoning code: incentives for building multi-family are largely underutilized.

Fifty communities were funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities project. Housing was chosen as the issue because health happens where we live. Stable housing is linked to kids' academic performance and less chronic disease.

Benefits that healthy housing provides a number of benefits. An integrated approach to rental housing has multiple benefits for tenants and owners including:

- Energy efficient, well-constructed, and properly managed housing developments may reduce environmental toxins and allergens thereby reducing exposure to mold and pest, and ultimately reducing asthma and respiratory illnesses
- Affordable housing that includes on-site amenities that promote health, such as open areas for children's playspace or vegetable gardens, and bicycle and stroller storage space, can reduce unit repairs from bicycles and scooter damages, and improve food security for families
- Affordable housing may free up resources for families to purchase healthy food and for medical expenditures
- High quality housing provides stability for families. Residential instability contributes to stress and mental health problems that leave children and parents vulnerable to developmental delays and depression

As part of this work, BPS did an initial zoning code scan. There is an outdoor space requirement for multi-family buildings per unit, but not for the larger complex as a whole. Kids without a place to play means they tend to play in parking lots, around garbage bins and/or indoors that is unsafe and/or may damage property.

Affordable housing developers often receive funding that requires housing complexes to best meet resident needs. Typically, private market property owners and developers do not receive subsidies in a similar way. Affordable housing developers are mission driven; private do not necessarily put health as a top concern.

This work was funded by a grant through the Kaiser Permanente Community Fund. Organizers worked with CIO and CAT to identify six complexes, identified through CAT's Renters Rights Hotline, where they talked to residents to find out what's most important to them and what

concerns them the most. They then took this information to developers to see what they would do to ease these issues.

The [Healthy Housing Handbook](#) is the culmination of the work.

CAT, formed in 1996, is Oregon's only grassroots, tenant-lead and tenant-run organization that helps identify and engage renters in East Portland living in private market apartment complexes. It works to educate and empower renters to demand safe, stable and affordable housing. It is a membership-based organization with over 2000 members. Anyone that is a tenant or person experiencing homeless can sign up as a member.

The top three issues CAT members face are lack of affordable housing, lack of eviction protections and difficulty gaining repairs.

Through this project, CAT worked with CIO to design an engagement format for renters to share information to tenants about their rights. Most affordable rental homes for low-income tenants are apartment complexes. At properties with unresponsive landlords, tenants find more effective and safer resolutions when working together rather than alone. Many of the repair issues are about mold, sanitation and pests.

This project engaged over 125 households. Renters learned what they can do to address and prevent health hazards in their homes and how to best communicate with landlords about their needs. If renters can't get repairs by direct communication, they can coordinate with BDS for inspections. Tenants prioritize what they want to work on, learn about local policies and systems. For many CAT tenants this is the first time they engage with City government.

In this project, tenants prioritized community gardening as an amenity they wanted on-site. Management and residents worked out how to reuse landscaping area to create space for individual gardens. Spaces that had previously been just filled with dirt, mulch or decorative plants became spaces where tenants grew individual vegetable gardens. This was a creative reuse of space and a low cost means of obtaining healthy and culturally relevant food.

CIO works with members from 70 different countries. The organization has a long history of cross-cultural community organizing, leadership development and policy advocacy. CIO believes any member who brings up an issue must take a leadership role in solving the issue as well.

"We are here for the long-haul" is how CIO works. You don't design a project for the community; you design with the community for the long-term, even after the specific tasks and goals have been completed.

Many tenants were not native English speakers, but many of their needs and challenges translate across low-income communities more generally throughout Portland. CIO is doing leadership development and continues to meet with the community members to show them how the system works and promotes change. This year there are four community members who are participating in CIO's year-long leadership program, a partnership with the City's Office of Neighborhood Involvement.

HDC helps mission-driven property developers create and preserve housing and community facilities that thrive. Clients are other non-profits, CDCs and government entities. Program and policy development has worked on 4800 units and 25000 community facility spaces over the course of the organization's work.

On this project, HDC convened a committee of landlords and property owners to share information about challenges that renters identified to talk about solutions and how to work with residents.

The handbook provides practical, up-to-date ideas for creating healthier living environments for residents of multi-family rental housing properties. It is targeted to developers, property owners and apartment managers, the new online resource addresses six housing-related health issues identified as critical challenges by low-income residents of East Portland. www.healthyhousingpdx.com.

The landlord/development committee was comprised of seven property owners, property managers and developers. All own and/or manage multi-family rental properties in East Portland.

Resident-identified challenges included a range of challenges that affect people's health in their homes:

- Open space – ideas included ways to encourage people to take advantage of existing space to make it more usable; repurpose unneeded parking space; tips about how to design open space to accommodate many age ranges and needs.
- Food security
- Safety and security
- Relieving overcrowding
- Mold and moisture control – ideas included ways to provide proper ventilation; protecting housing envelop; diligent about routine maintenance.
- Pest management

Most of the focus in the affordable housing community is about reducing health care costs. We want to expand the conversation beyond health care costs to address the social determinants of health. How can residents' input inform development work? HDC is working to address this.

This Thursday is a public forum to talk about this work and highlight health and housing work done through this project. BPS is also looking forward to continuing this work via the mixed-use code project.

Commissioner Smith: Thank you for this great work. Do you have other suggestions to the zoning code aside from the outdoor space issue? In terms of overcrowding, how we define it is to limit unrelated adults versus having a standard for square feet per person.

- There are site requirements (stormwater, parking, outdoor space among others). Property owners have a hard time integrating these components on-site, so part of the best practices document shows ways to do this.
- With rehab housing, those code issues are often triggered in non-conforming use. Builders want to install amenities but have difficulty doing this cost-effectively.
- Overcrowding and the shortage of affordable housing may equate to 8-10 people living in a 3-bedroom apartment. People are afraid to tell their landlords about their concerns because they don't want family members to be evicted.
- CIO has been looking at this issue for a few years. The reality is that we need to address how to build larger, family-sized units.
- Inclusionary zoning could assist with this.

Commissioner Rudd shared her work on integration of health and built environment via the Oregon Land Institute. In working to build healthy communities, they will look at how to get information out to the development community, and work with architects to come up with solutions. Are there development incentives that would be effective?

- An implementation project to test integration of site requirements would be a good next step. We need to talk with landlords and property developers to move the

conversation forward. A demonstration project to study and show private landlords that there is a reason to do this work is key.

Commissioner Gray thanked the staff for the presentation and their work. Where were the six complexes and how selected?

- From 82nd out to Gresham. They were selected by people who called the CAT hotline and from referrals.

You can connect the people you're working with to the East Portland Action Plan Community Engagement Committee. This is a nice connection in the community and has been started.

Commissioner Schultz asked about how when buildings get taller if that affects the community within it (e.g. in terms of isolation of residents). Are there things based on the type of building that may be other or different concerns?

- This projects was limited in looking at East Portland, where complexes are mostly in the 2-3 story range. We looked at various typologies, but tall and dense is not the major housing type we in East Portland.

Susan: The PSC is not just about the big picture; we need to get in the streets as well. This is a good example of an area we haven't focused on extensively as of yet. It's like where our green building team was about 15 years ago. We also have the challenge that two of the areas (East Portland and growth in Portland will mostly be multi-family). I don't know how to take this to scale, but I hope the City will be in a good supporting position to continue this good work.

Commissioner Schultz: Zoning code carrots aren't working to produce community-driven open space. We should push for this.

Commissioner Hanson noted this is a turning-point project. The key difference is that they started with a social issue then went to the physical form that addresses these concerns. The foundation is an excellent way to go about projects. Everything in the handbook is good for business because it improves facilities, which means tenants will stay longer. It also decreases an owner's liability. These are practical solutions.

Chair Baugh: When we thinking about density, for example incenting not to put in parking, is open space or play space a reasonable trade-off or bonus incentive? This project would also be good to share with the Design Commission to get suggestions about when looking at multi-family housing and how healthy, good design can be done well. Healthy housing is better for all – healthier employees, healthier kids in schools, decreased cost of health care and decreased costs of housing long-term. It's being able to quantify these benefits in code that is the challenge but could be standards for the future.

Age-Friendly City Action Plan

Briefing: Deborah Stein, Margaret Neal, PSU Institute on Aging, Alan de la Torre, PSU Institute on Aging

Presentation: <http://efiles.portlandoregon.gov/webdrawer.dll/webdrawer/rec/6036119/>

Document

- [Age-Friendly Portland Action Plan](#)

Deborah introduced the project, the Age-Friendly Advisory Council and work with partners that take into account how we design our city to be age-friendly. There are many similarities to the Portland Plan's healthy connected city concepts, highlighting "Portland is a place for all generations".

Margaret noted how in the metro area of Portland we are aging rapidly. Also, Portland attracts empty-nesters more so than its peers in 50 other metro areas.

Timeline of work

- Fall 2006 – Spring 2007: Portland, via PSU Institute on Aging, invited to participate in World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Age-Friendly Cities project
- 2007 – present: Disseminating findings, building partnerships/Advisory Council, working to influence policy and practice (Portland Plan, Comprehensive Plan), drafting Action Plan
- Spring 2010: IOA/City application for membership in WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities (accepted June 2010)
- Spring 2011: Official acceptance into WHO Network
- Fall 2013: Presentation of Draft Action Plan to City

Portland has an opportunity to continue to lead in this work. We are one of 5 of the original 33 cities that remain active in the global age-friendly cities movement.

Planning for all ages and abilities: We must move away from “either/or” planning and plan for everyone, across the age and ability spectrums.

Age-friendly communities encompass:

- Enabling environments
- Inclusive approaches
- Equitable outcomes
- A life course perspective
- Intergenerational interdependence
- Moving toward sustainable environments
- An aging population is one of the few natural resources that is growing
- We must move from a needs-based approach (deficits) to one that focuses on opportunities (contributions) associated with older adults
- Age-friendly planning and development has economic, social, and environmental benefits

The Portland Plan highlighted actions to make Portland “A Place for All Generations,” including developing an Action Plan.

This group created 10 (out of an original 8 – splitting two of them) domains of age friendliness.

- Housing
- Transportation
- Outdoor spaces and buildings
- Social participation
- Respect and social inclusion
- Civic participation and volunteerism
- Employment and the economy
- Communication and information
- Community services
- Health services

Next steps in the process include

- Holding meetings with organizations identified as “Potential Partners” in each of the Action Plan items to:
 - explain the items
 - confirm willingness to collaborate

- identify others that should be involved
- make refinements
- identify an accountable organization
- set timelines
- Setting priorities for action in concert with the partner organizations
- Establishing measurable and meaningful indicators for monitoring progress over time
- Preparing the Implementation Guide

Ensuring success will include

- Develop a “What is age friendly?” educational campaign
- Keep abreast of technological, policy, and other developments
- Finalize website for information sharing about the project
- Seek funding for:
 - coordination
 - research and demonstration projects
 - partnerships with other U.S. international cities
 - examine and monitor the outcomes achieved overall
 - understand how best to make individual areas of the city more age friendly
 - specific age-friendly infrastructure/programs/actions

How we might approach planning will depend on where in the city we’re working. This is woven into the full city, not just in selected areas.

Commissioner Gray noted cultural considerations are huge when you talk about equity. What things are included in the action planning to address these differences?

- The Comp Plan Update process has been looking at residential development. Inter-generational housing in many cases may look more like a compound than a single-family house. Flexibility in what kinds of housing you can build could be an option.
- *Commissioner Hanson* noted inter-generational housing is good for all people who live these settings.

Commissioner Schultz thanked the presenters for this commitment. Age-friendly in this report seems more focused to the older generations. Do you plan on expanding to other age groups to make this more broadly age-friendly?

- The work that is going on is good for a variety of people, not just older people. The interdependence is critical for success. Schools as community centers and other examples show this isn’t just about older generations but more about populations we may have pushed to the side. We need to make a concerted effort to look at the minutia to plan for an age-friendly city.

For many points in the action plan, you could swap out with a picture of a child for one of an older adult.

Commissioner Smith thinks about inter-generational advocacy. Sidewalks and centers are a challenge in parts of Portland. Much of this advocacy is about school-aged kids. What about AARP working with Safe Routes to School? What will it take to make these types of connections?

- Education and introductions are necessary so people understand they have common interests.
- How we think about aging is about intergenerational interdependence... so people understand that what affects one generation affects others.

Chair Baugh thanked the presenters. There is clear connectivity between housing and priorities and aging. To get these groups in the same room to lay out priorities, they tend to look similar. If everyone gets together and shows support for ideas that hit multiple objectives, that is a stronger base for the PSC and others to advocate for.

Also, there are transportation impacts about where people live. TriMet was not listed as a partner, but they should be down the road. PDC as the economic development arm could assist as a partner as well. Calling out these connections, similarities among desires and needs, and building additional partnerships are key.

Susan's suggestion for working with Council is that they want to do something and take action. If there is a way to identify one or a couple specific things and have the unexpected partners supporting those topics, Council will appreciate that. This is good timing in terms of the upcoming budget planning too.

Adjourn

Chair Baugh adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Submitted by Julie Ocken, PSC Coordinator