

Housing Committee Minutes of March 28, 2018 Meeting

A meeting of the Portland City Council's Housing Committee (HC) was held on Wednesday, March 28, 2018 at 5:30 P.M. in Room 209 of Portland's City Hall. Councilors present at the meeting included Committee members Councilor Kimberly Cook, Councilor Pious Ali, Councilor Jill Duson, Chair of the Committee and Councilor Belinda Ray. City staff present included Jeff Levine, Planning and Urban Development Department Director, Mary Davis, Housing and Community Development Division Director, Victoria Volent, Housing Program Manager, Anne Torregrossa, Associate Corporation Counsel, Chris Branch, Public Works Director, and Keith Gautreau, Assistant Fire Chief.

Item 1: Review and accept Minutes of previous meetings held on February 28, 2018

Councilor Ali motioned and Councilor Cook seconded to accept the minutes from the February 28, 2018 Housing Committee meeting. Minutes were unanimously approved 3-0.

Item 2: Briefing on Proposed Text Amendments to Section 14-403

Anne Torregrossa introduced the item. The Planning Board (PB) held a workshop last week; a public hearing with the Planning Board will be scheduled in the near future. The PB will make recommendations to the full city council. Councilor Duson explains that this is an opportunity for the committee to receive an update but the committee will not be taking a position on this item. Councilor Duson asks committee members if they have questions. Councilor Cook thinks it is important for the PB and City Council to see a map of streets that exist "in the real world" that are unaccepted and have homes on them and the city provides trash or plowing and to understand the extent to which there are public utilities; should provide method or path forward for street can become an accepted street; trying to find a way forward to unlock parcels for development; want to understand how many streets or parcels are impacted. Councilor Cook asked staff to clarify whether the streets list on page 4 in the backup (memo from Barhydt to Dundon d. March 9) were paper streets or an extension of an existing street. Councilor Ray indicated that she was pleased to see this moving forward but wonders if there are other minimum standards that could be used instead of minimum paved width (perhaps reduced to 22 or 25 feet). Councilor Ali asks if costs of developing streets can also be provided.

Item 3: Briefing from HomeStart on Proposed Text Amendments to Facilitate the Development of Year-Round Affordable Housing on Peaks Island

Jeff Levine introduces the item. Betsy Remage-Healy, President of HomeStart briefs the committee; She describes Peaks Island as a combination of summer residents in modest cottages and mostly working class year-round residents; over the last 20 years market forces are squeezing year-round residents, housing

is becoming unaffordable. In 2004 HomeStart was formed as 501(c)(3); in 2011 the group created a few new affordable housing rental units; the board is now looking for lower impact ways to offer support for affordable housing; zoning was identified as a possible way to influence affordable housing development; there are pieces of the zoning ordinance that could be tweaked to provide affordable housing. HomeStart is bringing four proposals forward; the group has worked to get community input and they are looking at ways to make better use of resources already available. Bill Hall, another HomeStart member, stated that efforts made so far haven't yielded any additional units, so the group looked at what other opportunities might arise with tweaks to zoning, such as small lots that might be buildable with small tweaks to zoning; also looked at changes to parking requirements.

Jeff Levine explains the work plan for the recode effort; in the first phase ADU's will be looked at and hopefully a proposal would be brought to the City Council in 2018. Councilor Duson requested that staff provide updates to the HomeStart group regarding work on the recode and the text amendments proposal the group brought forward.

Item 4: Review and Approval of the 2018 Affordable Housing Development HOME Fund

Application

Mary Davis introduces the item. Councilor Cook asked about the additional revenue. Ms. Davis explained that it was from previously budgeted allocations that were not committed to activities and unanticipated program income. These funds do not need to be committed this year. Councilor Duson was happy to see that the application encouraged Housing First projects. Councilor Ali asked how the community is notified of the availability of these funds. Ms. Davis explained that the office maintains a list of developers and other interested parties that are notified directly. The office also works with the City's Communication Director to issue a press release and other social media notices. Committee votes 3-0 to endorse the application.

Item 5: Review of Franklin Reserve Massing Study including an Overview of the GPCOG

Brownfields Area-Wide Plan for the East Bayside Neighborhood

Jeff Levine introduces Christina Egan Executive Director of GPCOG who explains the brownfields area-wide planning process. Councilor Ali thanks GPCOG for including the work of the students in the final report. Councilor Ray indicated it was important to note that upper part of the Franklin Reserve is designated as a park and would be an obstacle in moving forward. Councilor Cook indicates that if the city does decide to move forward with housing on this site, she would like to see it as mixed-income housing; she questions if the city could consider a RFP and have developers do some of the additional study work for us. Councilor Ali wants to make sure the community has an opportunity for further contribution in the process.

Ellen Bailey – EBNO President said the EBNO Board is still processing the final report; she indicated

that she was disappointed that the planning process did not have this level of conversation regarding the Franklin Reserve and thinks there needs to be more robust conversation regarding this site. She urged the city to let neighborhood residents into the conversation, need to hear from more people. She urged the city to be careful not to touch the community gardens.

Craig Lapine, Cultivating Community Executive Director - Strongly endorsed the recommendation of a permanent pathway for a more stable future for the urban farm; he indicated that the city has invested very little in the urban farm space and there has been a lot of community labor and effort in creating and maintaining the space.

Cynthia Cochran – Indicates that there needs to be much more discussion by the EBNO board; some she expressed surprise that the recommendation for this site was included in the final grant report and is concerned that this is being rushed forward.

Committee would like to see additional analysis to figure out more about this parcel, including which part of parcel is designated as a park, possibility of a mid-block crosswalk, possibility of in-fill housing and whether it would have significant impact on other current and possible uses of the site. Councilor Ray also expressed an interest that the additional analysis would include further shadow analysis.

Item 6: Committee Discussion re: 2018 Work Plan

Councilor Duson asked staff to poll the committee members regarding a possible second meeting in June and July. Discussion on the Council goal setting workshop will occur during the April meeting.

On a motion made and seconded (approved 3-0) the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm. Motioned approved 3-0.

Respectfully submitted, Mary Davis