

**September 12, 2016**  
**East Portland Action Plan (EPAP) Housing Subcommittee Meeting**  
**East Portland Neighborhood Office**  
**Meeting Notes**

**The Goal of the Housing Sub-Committee is:** To find common ground in supporting a range of housing types in East Portland as a means to strengthening livable communities, encouraging healthy, complete, and stable neighborhoods, and promoting family wage jobs. A range of housing types is meant to include rental housing and home ownership as well as housing for people at various income levels.

**The Purpose of the Housing Subcommittee:** The purpose of the EPAP Housing Subcommittee is to agree upon productive strategies for housing and to prioritize action items involving housing for East Portland. These strategies and action items might include (but not be limited to): encouraging housing for people in a range of income levels---including affordable housing for low-income people, promoting high quality housing development and construction standards, and encouraging property rehabilitation as well as new construction. The EPAP Housing Subcommittee will work with a lens of preventing displacement, protecting tenants' rights, promoting enhanced housing inspection enforcement, supporting local schools, encouraging job creation and economic development, and strengthening neighborhoods.

The EPAP Housing Subcommittee will strive to promote, for all East Portland residents, quality housing by design which in turn promotes stronger educational systems; an increase in living wages jobs, greater economic opportunity, stronger educational systems, enhanced transportation, and healthy neighborhoods throughout East Portland.

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# Housing Subcommittee Meeting

September 12, 2016

Meeting began at 6:03 pm.

**Attendees:** Frieda Christopher, lore wintergreen, John Mulvey, Roger Meyer, Aleina Langord, Daniel Lechiga, Yesica Arévalo, Asher Freeman, Bill Cunningham, Linda Bauer, Katie Larsell, Sarah Taylor, Michelle DePass, and Staci White.

Ec Dev Members: Tony Lamb, Maiyee Yuan, Teresa Keishi Soto, Nick Kobel

**Guest:** Kurt Creager, Director, PHB

**1. Welcome and Introductions:** John Mulvey welcomed everyone and each attendee introduced themselves. John facilitated the meeting since Nick Sauvie had another obligation.

## **2. Combined EPAP Economic Development (EC Dev) and Housing: How do we partner to advocate for living wage jobs for East Portland Low-income resident:**

Lore explained what we are going to discuss living wage jobs. Teresa and lore explained that the Ec Dev committee just prioritized enhancements in Tri-Met service for East Portland (EP). There was some indecision as to the prioritization as follows:

Final Ranking on priorities from Ec Dev are:

1. Line 20\* tied with Line 71/73\*
2. Line 77
3. Line 25
4. Line 22/23
5. Line 80\*\*

\*We could not come to agreement on prioritization between 20 and 71/73 but the following is in descending order from highest to lowest priority.

\*Route Line 80 was set aside as it didn't pertain to East Portland.

**b.** The criteria Ec Dev used included:

Employment

Schools

Parks

Other Transit

Lore asked if anyone would like to kick off this discussion on advocacy for living wage jobs. Frieda stated that the affordable housing needs should be spread throughout the city so those that need affordable housing can be closer to their jobs. Tony Lamb said he agreed and people need to be close to jobs and there is a need to increase transit N and S transit to minimize time spent traveling to jobs.

John said some information he has read says a lot of people in EP work on the Columbia Corridor and thus needing more N/S connections. John said we need to advocate for living wage jobs, but he is skeptical about Community Benefit Agreements (CBA's), because contractors/employers can juggle the information to say they met the requirements when in reality they have not met the requirements. Michelle said that the city has tried to address tracking of the data so the numbers are more accurate. Lore said the Economic Development Subcommittee (Ec Dev) are concerned that Community Benefit Plans do not have the teeth that CBA's have. Roger said many who have very low wages need housing close to their jobs. It was also noted that it is expensive to pay for the monthly Tri-Met pass.

Lore said that there was an Ec Dev member who wanted the issue of drive-throughs in EP to be brought up, as that is soon to be decided by City Council and the member noted that drive-through businesses seldom pay living wage jobs. Katie said the Planning and Sustainability Commission passed a ban on drive-throughs in EP. She said we might need to mobilize advocacy before it goes to City Council, if we are to make sure Council members don't make a change to the proposal. Lore said Andre Baugh, Planning & Sustainability Commission member has offered to would work with EP community members to develop talking points and to organize both one-on-one testimony with City Council members and before the City Council on October 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM. Katie is interested in knowing who would like to advocate on this issue. John said that he is interested and lore shared that Arlene Kimura, Teresa Keishi Soto, and Tony Lamb said they want to participate in advocacy. Anyone else interested should let Katie Larsell know of their interest.

Frieda asked Lore to let Housing members know when Ec Dev would be discussing CBAs in the future, as Housing members are interested and may want to attend.

**3. Multi-Family Rehabilitation program:** John introduced Kurt Creager, Director of the City of Portland Housing Bureau (PHB), and the discussion. Kurt started with saying he had received our letter supporting adding back the \$1 million request for a Multi-family Rehabilitation Program to the fiscal year 2016 – 17 budget through the Fall Bump process. Kurt said PHB had just finished submitting their request for the Fall Bump and this request includes \$1M for the Multi-family Rental Rehabilitation Program. The Committee thanked Kurt for incorporating our needs into the PHB Fall Bump request.

Kurt said no decisions have been made on the Rehabilitation Program yet. He said we need to balance benefits and incentives, because we do not want to reward owners for not taking care of the buildings. We want the landlords to make sure that there is long term affordability and that the buildings are maintained, safe, and healthy. He said it is a moral issue when landlords try to circumvent the laws. He said PHB will set-up a committee that includes EPAP Housing representation to develop the Rehabilitation Program design and to make sure there are tenant protections.

Roger asked if there is a way to make sure the Rehabilitation Program is not one size fits all. There should be equity. Kurt referenced that in King County, Washington State, they have a dollar to dollar matching program. EPAP Housing wants to be involved in setting the standards. Kurt said he didn't have a problem with that.

Daniel said he hasn't heard what the City will do about the landlords who morally do things that are harmful to tenants and deliberately cause displacement once improvements are made. It was stressed that tenants should not be displaced. Roger brought-up that there are ways to make improvements so that tenants are not displaced while work is being done. Roger has examples from Gresham.

The Housing Subcommittee also wants to make sure that if the private sector outreach is not in place and the funds are not going to be applied, that East Portland nonprofits be able to use the Program funds. Frieda asked about carryover and is concerned that the funds, if not used in the fiscal year, do not go back into the general fund.

Kurt said that there are other funds for nonprofits. Kurt said PHB will have a Request for Information (RFI) posted this fall for existing property for nonprofits. PHB wants the Rehabilitation Program funds targeted for for-profit owners, in order to help secure the number of affordable units in East Portland. Kurt said

that he is sure PHB staff can successfully recruit participation from private property owners.

Sarah asked if there is a group contributing information from landlords. There will be representation on the PHB advisory committee, as this participation in defining the program needs to be realistic in terms of what will incentivize participation from landlords.

John is concerned about the enforcement piece. John sees a need for better code enforcement across the board. Is there a legal framework in place that if the fines reach a certain level, the City can assume ownership of the property (as with the “Zombie Homes”)? Kurt said there is a need to include a landlord registration program. Kurt said there would have to be changes to Title 30 (the City Code section that includes Landlord/Tenant ordinances). Frieda asked about the fines and if the City really enforces consequences or levies against property owners when they are able to do so. Kurt was not sure since enforcement is a Bureau of Development Services (BDS) responsibility.

Teresa said every time she calls the City and makes a complaint, they don't follow-up. Kurt said he would like to see 3 things implemented:

**1)** to get registration for all multi-family units in the City similar to what Gresham has; **2)** to have regular inspections, and; **3)** to have a non-judicial process to resolve issues between tenants and landlords (a “renters court”).

Lore asked Kurt how we can work to be involved in the development of the program. He said Andrea Matthiessen will be heading the group and the people we identified will be included at the table. He also wanted to have tenant and landlord representation. Lore said we would send a list of possible representatives.

**What guided PHB to dedicate these funds to the Division Bus Rapid Transit Corridor Action Plan?** John brought up the issue and was concerned that the Division Project will cause displacement and that the City should dedicate new funds to address the displacement in this corridor, not simply to take funding away from other East Portland projects that have already been established to address existing displacement prevention needs. Kurt thinks the BRT will not have the same amount of displacement as an express train would. Kurt said that at this time, PHB is making purchase offers on land within the Powell-Division corridor.

**Inclusionary zoning** –Kurt provided an update on the work being done to set rule about inclusionary zoning. He said that shared projects of 20 or more units will have 20% affordable units at 80 Median Family Income (MFI), but that there is potential to adjust the requirement, so that it might become something like 10% at 60% MFI. PHB cannot require less than the 80% of MFI be set, but they can incentivize the builder to offer affordable units down to the 60%MFI level..  
*Reminder: EPAP's Involuntary Displacement Prevention Recommendations target housing for 60% or less MFI.*

Kurt said PHB needs to look at the incentive packages and they will vary per zone. Kurt said they are recommending 99 years of affordability.

Lore said EPAP has advocated for rent stabilization and others are joining that advocacy. She said Commission Fish said instead there might be a pool of money to pay for increased rents. Everyone agreed that finding the funds to cover such an unrestricted cost in increased rents seems dubious. Commissioner Novick has proposed a surcharge on businesses that have a differential on CEO's pay and that of workers.

John thanked Kurt and PHB for their outreach with us. John expressed that the more successful Michelle is at reaching out to the public, the more PHB will get push back and he hopes that she has Kurt's support. Michelle said they would like to work more on involving various groups.

**4. Check in on EPAP Housing advocacy:** John reported on the EPAP August general meeting dialogue with candidates running for election this Fall and community members. Some of us asked questions about rent control as an option. John also mentioned the meeting with City Commissioner Fish. It was reported that CAT has a statewide campaign for doing away with the ban on rent control and no cause eviction. The goal is to have these decisions made locally. John asked if there was a way to engage with CAT on what is being proposed.

John asked Lore if legislators would be at the November meeting. She said the priority the Housing Subcommittee set is to get Mayor-elect Ted Wheeler here first. EPAP will be inviting him to the Dec 7<sup>th</sup> general meeting as well.

**ACTION:** Lore focus on getting legislative participation at the December Housing meeting.

## **5. Advocacy strategy for the EPAP Strategic Priority to increase opportunities for moderate income and minority home ownership:**

Lore asked if people had suggestions for how we can successfully advocate for homeownership funding increase in East Portland. Roger said we should also consider other groups such as elderly and disabled. John asked if we could carry this topic over to the next meeting. Lore asked Daniel and Yesika to come prepared to our next meeting to help guide a realistic strategy for EPAP. Daniel said they would work something up to present.

**6. Wapito:** Frieda shared about the tour that she had with Commissioner Shiprack of the Wapito jail site, with the potential for shelter use to be considered. Frieda said the facility, as built, could be used, but it would need outdated or removed kitchen and medical equipment installed. Frieda said the argument related to the distance of the site from resources could be worked around, but the biggest issue was the zoning. The area is zoned heavy industrial and residential is not allowed. There were several hurdles to overcome if this is to be pursued. Also, Frieda was told it was more expensive to house the homeless there each year than to have multiple facilities that handled the same amount of people. Frieda told the County representatives that they need to breakdown the costs and not just say the cost per bed is more. Hopefully they will provide more detailed information.

Frieda also shared that she had a chance to tour the Hansen Building shelter. It appeared clean and well managed. They told her there are already 14 people who have been placed in permanent housing in the first five weeks since they had been open and they weren't even fully staffed. They also said there were over 30 clients on site who go to work each day these working poor just cannot find housing they can afford. Frieda said Transition Projects is trying to be a good neighbor and they plan to actively work with the school district, since the facility is so close to a school.

## **7. Announcements:**

Portland Tenants United has organized an Anti-displacement rally at City Hall this Saturday, Sept 16<sup>th</sup>.

Teresa announced the Festival of Nations is this Saturday, Sept 16<sup>th</sup> at 122<sup>nd</sup> and Division.

Daniel announced on Oct 29<sup>th</sup>, African American Home Ownership Alliance is going to have their Home Ownership Fair. This one is not in East Portland.

Bill announced that the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability is launching a project on multi-family development. The Jade and Rosewood districts are two areas that will be targeted.

Roger announced he is talking to a Gresham news editor about housing and possibly they will do series of articles.

Lore said you may want to come to the next EPAP general meeting, as there is not a clear pathway to resolve the EPAP Advocate job share issue and Lore will be going down to 40 hours maximum. There will be a vote-by-dot exercise at the general meeting to establish what is the best way to allocate the Advocate position time.

Meeting ended at 8:10pm

**Next Meeting: Monday, October 10, 2016 6-pm at EPNO office.**

**Dinner provided.**

**Childcare, interpretation, translation provided upon request:**  
**[lore.wintergreen@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:lore.wintergreen@portlandoregon.gov) or 503.823.4035.**



## **Sub-Committee Name: HOUSING**

**EPAP Action item(s) being addressed:** Housing and Development.1 – .6; Commercial and Mixed Use.1 - .2; Economic Development and Workforce Training.4.5; Public Safety.7.1; Housing Assistance and Safety Net Services.1 - .6; Equity.2.1 + 3.2

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### **Housing Sub-Committee Recommendations:**

1. The Housing sub-committee supports mixed-use and commercial zoning in commercial corridors in East Portland. This would promote greater economic development, prosperity, and encourage mixed-income housing development.(CM 1.1)
2. The Housing sub-committee supports single-family housing adjacent to commercial corridors to promote general homeownership, especially minority homeownership, as well as mixed-income and more innovative housing. (CM 1.1)
3. The Housing Sub-committee sees the need for increase in amenities, jobs, infrastructure, and public transportation in East Portland to support housing of people in all income levels and to attract more middle and upper income housing.
4. The Housing Sub-committee would recommend prioritizing voluntary Inclusionary Zoning in middle income neighborhoods as one tool to promote mixed-income neighborhoods throughout Portland and to advocate for the City of Portland, Multnomah County and METRO to develop a pilot project for voluntary Inclusionary Zoning within the City/County.
5. The Housing Sub-committee would recommend advocating ending discrimination based on having a Section 8 Certificate, so low income families would have a greater choice on where they could live. The committee supports changing the law at the state level to remove this discrimination.

6. The Housing Sub-committee, after exhaustive research, recognizes that East Portland does not have significantly more tax-exempt housing properties than any other area of Portland, either in numbers or as a fair-share. East Portland does have significantly more “affordable by accident” housing than other parts of the City, but this has nothing to do with properties being tax-exempt or not.