

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dorsol Plants called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

II. ROLL CALL/ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Advisory Board members present: Andrew Calkins, Uche Okezie, Ryan Disch-Guzman, Aaron Johnson, Jennifer Hurley, Maju Qureshi, Patience Malaba, Tina Narron

Other attendees: Claire Vanessa Goodwin, SKHHP; Dorsol Plants, SKHHP; Jason Gauthier, SSHAP; Abby Anderson, KC RHA; Rev Jenny Partch, United Methodist Church; Nancy Kick, Burien People Power; Colleen Brandt-Schluter, City of Burien

III. FEBRUARY 2, 2023, MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve February 2, 2023 Minutes by Patience, Second by Uche. (8-0)

IV. FINAL BYLAWS UPDATE & VOTE

SKHHP Staff presented on some brief but essential changes to the by-laws. This included adopting language consistent with our implementation of the Advisory Board Compensation (Resolution 2022-03) and Organizational Alternate Board Members. Motion to approve the changes to bylaws by Maju, Second by Aaron. (8-0)

V. BURIEN AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Colleen Brandt-Schluter from the City of Burien presented on the formation and purpose of the Affordable Housing Demonstration Project in Burien. While reviewing the housing action plan they realized that Burien was largely zoned for single family. From 2013 to 2020 there was a 45% increase in rent and 101% change in the median cost of a home across Burien. Feeding into the affordability issue, Burien in the past decade was building 9.3 new units for every 10 new households.

The Affordable Housing Demonstration Project was started as an effort to determine what it would take to succeed in building affordable housing in Burien. It allowed for flexibility with certain development regulations in exchange for the provision of affordable housing. The goal was to evaluate the results of the project to determine what changes might be made to better support supplying housing. This information would then feed into the development of the next Comprehensive Plan.

The program had six primary provisions and was written into the Comprehensive Plan for consideration but had not been implemented previously. The program had to be a pilot effort and in a trial for three years. Only five projects would be selected and would be allowed anywhere residential buildings are permitted. The units could only serve income qualifying residents for a minimum of fifty years. At least one of the projects must serve 0-30% AMI, and the average cost of the units would be affordable to households earning 50% AMI.

The program would have the Burien City Council select projects on a competitive basis. Each applicant would attend a pre-application meeting where city staff could provide feedback. Each project was required to hold at least two public meetings, and all property owners and residents within 1,000 ft of the project would be invited to attend. Projects would then be presented to the Planning Commission, which would make a recommendation to the City Council. After review by the City Council, the project would be able to move into the contract stage.

Applicants had to demonstrate the ability to manage and maintain affordable housing and must be able to retain affordability for fifty years. The projects had to be compatible with the character of the community and could not be built within 1,500 feet of another project. At the time SKHHP was reviewing the Housing Capital Fund, Burien had two projects in the program: Habitat for Humanity phase 1 and a DESC project. There has been interest by other developers, and Eco-Thrive has applied to be included in the demonstration project.

The DESC project was controversial and would result in 7 community meetings and over 20 pages of question and answers responding to concerns of safety were produced. While it may have been possible to site the DESC project outside of the Demonstration Project, the developer required a number of minor changes to code to create safer housing. Ultimately, an interlocal agreement was signed with KC RHA and DESC that would guarantee 30% of the occupants would come from Burien. Despite these concerns, support for the demonstration project in the community would result in the program being extended from November 2022 to December 2023. When controversy arises, it is essential for creative ideas to have supporters in the community.

Some of the lessons learned would be not including the City Council approval for individual projects as it added a political component. It also added upfront risk and cost to the developer requiring responding to a political process. Greater clarity around the community engagement process would help, and following the process as laid out without deviating under pressure. Other lessons learned included removing the requirement for the applicant to demonstrate experience but state the requirements for affordability and have the applicant answer directly to how they would meet those goals; and no longer restricting projects by distance and clarify what code departures could be made outside of a demonstration project. Finally, reflecting on the affordability limits for homeownership, 50% AMI was challenging financially for the project and would likely be better at 60%.

Rev. Jenny Partch and Nancy Kick presented a community perspective on the Affordable Housing Demonstration Project. Rev. Partch began by discussing how the Demonstration Project was rolled out to the community highlighting how often cities rely on traditional forms of communication such as utility mailers or public announcements. These types of advertisements are frequently missed by community members so the first time many residents heard about the program was after the project had already begun.

In 2018, the Fox Cove Apartment was sold resulting in a massive displacement of about 90 units of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) in the City of Burien. This brought the critical issues of a lack of affordable housing and community displacement to the attention of many of the community members. The faith community stepped in and began providing rental and moving assistance and requested the City of Burien match their donations.

Well in advance of the start of the Demonstration Project, there was a series of meetings and work done to educate the community on housing needs. This work was tied into not just housing advocacy, but also providing severe weather and supporting the opening of a new unhoused family shelter. Work was also done to implement tenant protections to prevent a repeat of the mass displacements South King County has experienced for years.

While the Demonstration Project was started in November 2019, the community would become truly aware of it almost a year later in October 2020 when the first project was introduced. Aware that other projects could begin applying, the community began to pay attention to the projects which was around the time the DESC project was announced. This may tie into other things happening in the community at the time. In May of 2019, issues around an encampment located near human service agencies would result in implementation of new programs and a ban on camping. The unintended consequence was that many unhoused neighbors moved from the greenbelts and onto the sidewalks, becoming more visible to the general public.

Misinformation about the DESC site, and its purpose would result in significant pushback from the community. Some members of the community came to believe it was an emergency shelter or safe injection site instead of permanent supportive housing. Questions were also raised about its proximity to downtown business, and that as a non-profit they would not be contributing taxes to the city. Ultimately, the DESC project would become interlinked with the Affordable Housing Project itself raising concerns about what other projects could apply resulting in the project never meeting its 5-project goal.

The primary take away from the community was a greater need and emphasis on widespread outreach and communication. Once a project or program is on the defensive it becomes almost impossible to accomplish. Getting educators and meetings in the community to talk about housing issues even before discussing changes is essential. The more one-on-one conversations community members can have with their neighbors before any political action occurs will lay a strong foundation for success.

Patience Malaba asked what role SKHHP could take at the subregional level to provide community education and engagement around Affordable Housing. She expressed hope that over the next several months SKHHP could begin to map out a plan for engaging our community in the work SKHHP and others are doing.

VI. SKHHP 2024 WORK PLAN PROCESS

Claire Vanessa Goodwin covered the process to develop the SKHHP 2024 Work Plan. The Interlocal Agreement requires that SKHHP have a work plan and budget for the following year by June 1st. The work plan is required to be consistent with the ILA and guides the work across the year to advance the SKHHP mission to promote and preserve Affordable Housing.

The purpose of bringing this before the Advisory Board in March was to illicit feedback on the 2023 Work Plan using an electronic survey. This was the same survey provided to the SKHHP Executive Board at the February meeting. SKHHP staff intends to take feedback from both surveys and develop a draft work plan to present at the April 6th Advisory Board meeting. The goal will be to have a final draft for approval by the Executive Board in May. The final step will be approval from all the SKHHP partner jurisdictions.

VII. UPDATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Advisory Board will be transitioning its in-person component after a discussion with our legal team. We will begin to hold in-person public comment only at some of our Advisory Board meetings, by announcement. We will continue to allow for virtual public comment at all Advisory Board meetings.

Patience invited members of the public and Advisory Board to the HDC 35 Anniversary Celebration on Thursday, March 30th. Registration and more information can be found on the HDC website.

VIII. CLOSING/ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 7:56 pm