



MEETING SUMMARY

Countywide Stakeholder Listening Session #2: Housing Advocates

10/18/2021, 1-2:30 pm on Zoom

Overview

On October 18, 2021, 21 Elements hosted the second of four housing element stakeholder listening sessions with housing advocacy organizations. A majority of 21 E jurisdictions attended the listening session. Five stakeholder advocate groups introduced themselves and spoke about their group's interest in the Housing Element process. Detailed information about speakers and attending jurisdictions is below and in the appendix.

Key themes included:

- Ongoing outreach needed to underserved and diverse communities
- Production of new housing is critical to the SMC workforce
 - Greatest need for deeply affordable housing, dense, infill
- Connecting labor, environment and equity to housing
- Rent increases are a primary concern
- Protecting vulnerable renting populations with assistance from the governments

Policies & Programs to consider:

- Additional funding for affordable housing through commercial linkage fees, inclusionary zoning, vacancy tax, sales tax, etc.
- Protections: eviction assistance, anti-harassment measures, stronger just cause, tenant right-to return, relocation assistance, improvements to the building inspection process, rental registries as a tool
- Production: Increase density within existing communities in non-high fire severity zones, eliminating harmful restrictions on density, eliminating parking minimums, streamlining housing building process, fair and inclusive zoning policies
- Prioritize BIPOC families in housing policies, outreach and practice (all stages of the practices)
- Manage the threat of climate risk by adding green infrastructure.



Stakeholder Presenters & Additional Resources

Organization	Speaker Name	Contact
Housing Leadership Council	Angela Solis	asolis@hlcsmc.org
Faith in Action	Nani Friedman	nani@faithinactionba.org
Greenbelt Alliance	Zoe Siegel	zsiegel@greenbelt.org
San Mateo County Central Labor Council	Rich Hedges	hedghogg@ix.netcom.com
Peninsula for Everyone	Jordan Grimes	jordangrimes@me.com
San Mateo County Association of Realtors	Gina Zari (invited, unable to attend)	gina@samcar.org

Learn more about Greenbelt Alliance's endorsement program: <https://www.greenbelt.org/climate-smart-development-endorsement-program/>

Learn more about Greenbelt Alliance's Resilience Playbook: <https://www.greenbelt.org/resilience-playbook/>

Full list of Greenbelt Climate Policies can be found in the draft housing element playbook (under policies tab) <https://coda.io/@gazoe-siegel/housing-element-toolkit>

For those who wish to learn more about the focus groups in Redwood City that Trinidad from Faith in Action mentioned,, you can read the report here (posted on the City of Redwood City website):
<https://www.redwoodcity.org/home/showpublisheddocument/23755/637623096709130000>

Faith in Action supported with two other reports (tenant protections and preservation), found here:
<https://www.redwoodcity.org/departments/city-manager/housing-services/housing-policies/anti-displacement-strategic-plan>

Note Faith in Action works mostly with renter leaders in Daly City, San Mateo and Redwood City, but they have a presence in several other cities in the county as well.

Jurisdictions in Attendance:

Atherton	Half Moon Bay	San Mateo (City)
Brisbane	Menlo Park	San Mateo (County)
Burlingame	Millbrae	South San Francisco
Daly City	Pacifica	Woodside
East Palo Alto	Redwood City	
Foster City	San Bruno	+HCD



Key Themes and Actions:

Themes

- Ongoing outreach needed to underserved and diverse communities
- Production of new housing is critical to the SMC workforce
 - Greatest need for deeply affordable housing, dense, infill
- Connecting labor, environment and equity to housing
- Rent increases is a primary concern
- Protecting vulnerable renting populations with assistance from the governments
 - Rental registries, eviction assistance, section 8 availability, anti-harassment measures.

Questions/Discussion

- How do you best balance providing adequate living wages for construction workers with keeping housing units affordable?
 - Fair labor is critical to the building process
- Who should operate rental registries (city, county, nonprofit?)
 - Administered by RWC city staff
- Potential policies prioritizing BIPOC
 - Understand needs of BIPOC communities throughout the process
 - Understand displacement policies
 - More housing in transit rich corridors
- Section 8 Vouchers
 - How to increase the availability
- Housing as a benefit to the community/not extracting from it



Appendix: Additional Stakeholder Information & Input

- **Housing Leadership Council: Angela Solis**
 - Network of organizers to support affordable housing
 - Advocating for and preserving affordable housing
 - Greatest need:
 - Deeply affordable homes
 - Focused on funding for affordable homes with example policies:
 - Commercial linkage fees
 - IZ, vacancy tax, sales tax, etc.
 - Seeking greater outreach from jxs for Housing Element process- window into populations
- **Faith in Action Bay Area: Trinidad Villagomez**
 - Focus in Redwood City
 - Community organizers, leaders working in congregations schools, neighborhoods and apartments across SMC to uphold dignity of all people
 - Listening to community experiences with housing (phone calls, door knocking, church involvement, people at food distribution sites)
 - What the group heard from the community:
 - Poor building conditions, harassment, discrimination, rent increases, fear to speak to authorities, difficulty relocated, evictions for renovations and owner move in, unclear how to enforce existing rental rights, pandemic insecurity, rental debt, financial hardship, credit limitations, application fees
 - From focus groups:
 - Rent increase is the majority primary issue
 - Vision:
 - Regulations on eviction due to renovations
 - Preventing harassment of tenants
 - Partnership with city to work with tenants and landlords as a mediator
 - City to inspect buildings
 - Rental assistance
 - Process relocation assistance
 - Report rent increases, eviction notices, their business license and taxes
 - Education for tenant about rights
 - Policies:
 - Stronger just cause policy (define substantial renovation) and give tenants right to return (right of first refusal)
 - Stronger relocation assistance administered by the city
 - Improvements to the building inspection process, with greater confidentiality with the tenant
 - Rental registry program by city-tenant/landlord office
 - Anti-harassment policy



- More information:
<https://www.redwoodcity.org/home/showpublisheddocument/23755/637623096709130000>

- **Greenbelt Alliance: Zoe Siegel**

- Inclusive, climate resilient communities for all to thrive
- Housing and climate are linked
- Advocating for climate smart development
 - SMART: Sustainable, Mixed, Affordable, Resilient, Transit-Oriented development
 - Resilience Playbook
 - Resources for local decision-makers and community leaders with policies, model ordinances, etc.
- Ensure fair and inclusive zoning policies that makes housing accessible to everyone
 - Prioritize BIPOC families in housing policies, outreach and practice (all stages of the practices)
 - Advance racial and social equity in process
- Increase density within existing communities in non-high fire severity zones
- Manage the threat of climate risk by adding green infrastructure.
 - Prepare for climate impacts, require nature-based solutions for climate resilience

- **San Mateo County Labor Council: Richard Hedges**

- Advocate for increased outreach
- Increases for min. wage, building of housing for all workers (safe and affordable)
- Builders: getting the work/pay required to live in San Mateo County (can afford to rent/own home)
 - Service workers are struggling to live in SMC (especially retail pay)
- Advocated for housing built at Bay Meadows, advocated for 10% inclusive
- State law to allow for more density for affordable housing
- Qualified workforce is critical
- Removing barriers for Section 8 voucher holders

- **Peninsula for Everyone: Jordan Grimes**

- Frustration with lack of dense infill housing in SMC
- Member engage in local project advocacy, and planning meetings and are politically active at the local and state level
- Huge housing shortage in the county, decades of underbuilding
- Focus on as much being built as quickly as possible
- 3 Ps of housing policy, preservation, production, protection (interested in rental registries, want more rent data)
 - Protection: Rent control, right to counsel with the eviction process
 - Production: eliminating harmful restriction on density, parking min, streamlining housing building process