



HALA Community Focus Groups
Expansion Area Urban Village Focus Group | Meeting #2
Monday, June 20, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Seattle City Hall, Bertha Knight Landes Room

Meeting Summary

Opening Remarks and Introductions

Diane Adams, facilitator, reviewed the ground rules, schedule, and goals for the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) Focus Group process. Diane provided Focus Group members with an overview of the agenda and the objectives for the Expansion Area Urban Village Focus Group's second meeting.

Diane encouraged interested Focus Group members to attend an upcoming Seattle City Council public hearing on the Mandatory Housing Affordability (MHA) Residential framework on Tuesday, June 21, at 9:30 a.m.

Small Group Discussions: Reflections on May MHA Implementation Principles

Nick Welch, Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD), provided Focus Group members with an overview of MHA implementation principles and noted how recent Focus Group discussions influenced updates to the Group B principles. Nick highlighted the following information:

- MHA principles would require that multifamily and commercial development contribute to affordable housing by either incorporating additional affordable units into construction or paying into a City fund that would support the construction and/or preservation of affordable units.
- MHA principles are divided into three categories:
 - Group A principles form the foundation of MHA, and they are not likely to change.
 - Group B principles are community generated, and they will guide MHA implementation.
 - Group C principles include important ideas but are outside of the scope of MHA.
- The Focus Group's purpose during the May and June meetings is to act as a sounding board and engage in dialogue regarding the Group B MHA implementation principles, noting areas of agreement and disagreement.
- Focus Group members should reflect on the tenets of the City's Racial and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) and use its framework as a lens to consider MHA implementation.
- OPCD plans to provide the City Council with questions and ideas distilled from Focus Group discussion in advance of the Council's upcoming Planning, Land Use, and Zoning committee

meeting on July 8. Focus Group members will receive the summary of information provided to Council.

Focus Group members divided into three group discussion stations, each devoted to a collection of MHA Group B principles (one for **Urban Design, Historic Areas, Unique Conditions, and Neighborhood Design**, another for **Housing Options and Transitions**, and another for **Assets & Infrastructure and Urban Village Expansion Areas**). Focus Group members rotated through each of the three discussion stations throughout the meeting and shared thoughts and perspectives with one another. OPCD provided framing questions and supporting topical background information at each station.

Each station included a large sheet on the table illustrating preliminary Focus Group feedback on draft MHA principles following the group's May meeting. Discussion, comments and suggestions from the small group discussions were written down on the sheet. The ideas, suggestions and discussion from the small group session will be incorporated in a draft report of Focus Group input on the principles.

Small Group Sharing

Diane invited focus group members to share a summary of ideas and questions that emerged during group discussions at each of the three discussion stations. Focus group members identified the following key points:

- I. **Urban Design, Historic Areas, Unique Conditions, and Neighborhood Design:**
 - Clarify how developers can involve the community early in the design review process. This could potentially help to ensure that the community is happy with final results, and it would serve as a beneficial form of market research for developers.
 - Work to retain the character of the city and of individual neighborhoods.
 - Ensure that strategies for identifying and preserving historic areas and view corridors are equitable for all.
- II. **Housing Options and Transitions:**
 - Provide developers with incentives to prioritize construction of family units.
 - Upzone strategically (e.g., encourage greater density around schools, where more family-friendly housing may be most needed).
 - Consider RSJI implications when considering all transitions and housing options.
- III. **Assets & Infrastructure and Urban Village Expansion Areas:**
 - Coordinate development plans with other regional planning processes (e.g., long-range transit plans) to ensure equitable future access to assets and infrastructure.
 - Plan commercial and residential zoning in conjunction with one another to assure that needed jobs and amenities are appropriately located.
 - Consider updating infrastructure such as sewer and drainage upgrades, sidewalks, lighted crosswalks, grocery stores, healthcare facilities, roads, parking, transit, and access to good-paying jobs. A review of the presence and need for these types of assets is particularly important for significantly expanding urban villages.

- Create policy that provides consistent funding for infrastructure investment and improvement in areas where enhanced development is expected to occur.

Observer Comment

Diane invited the observers to share brief comments with the group:

- One observer encouraged the City to envision the ideal future of affordable housing in Seattle and then work backwards from that point, implementing policies that would help to achieve this outcome. The observer believed that development was currently occurring in areas of the city where it was not needed most. They also believed that the developer fees associated with the payment in lieu of performance option are currently set too low.
- One observer stated that HALA should work to address the potential need for infrastructure updates in areas of the city that may see zoning changes to incorporate additional affordable housing.

Next Steps

Diane thanked the group for their participation and discussion. She noted that the City would consider the Focus Group's perspectives as they finalized the MHA implementation principles. Diane said that the City would present final MHA principles and begin to explore ideas surrounding zoning changes within Expansion Area Urban Villages at the Focus Group's July 11 meeting.

Diane also encouraged Focus Group members to use the online HALA ConsiderIt tool (hala.consider.it).

Attendees

Focus Group members:

- Ainsley Close
- Andrea Tousignant
- Ann Selznick
- Brad Steiner
- Deborah Jaquith
- Erin Meek
- Esther "Little Dove" John
- Garet Munger
- George Yocom
- Jane Downey
- Janice Hougen
- Jenefer Monroe
- Jim Anderson
- Kathy Johnson
- Matt Gouras
- Megan Espinoza
- Michael Wong
- Rachel Eagan
- Ratna Warouw
- Robert Mohn
- Sean Paull

Observers

- Beth Freitas Clark
- Steve Rubstello

Project team and other City staff:

- Nicolas Welch, Office of Planning and Community Development
- Vera Giampietro, Office of Planning and Community Development
- Chris Gregorich, Office of the Mayor
- Diane Adams, EnviroIssues
- Brett Watson, EnviroIssues