

Community Equity Council Meeting Summary

Date: February 27th, 2024

Councilmembers: Tiffany Carter, Ben Wong, William Ortiz, Masha Hakimi, Raquel Redondie, Mary Travis-Allen, Lucia Obregon, Lara Kiswani, Del Seymour

Staff: Miriam Chion, Oscar Grande, James Pappas, Lisa Chen, Melina Leon-Farrera, David Garcia, Sarah Richardson, Giuliana Martinez, and Aurion Wiley-Green

1. Opening and Agenda Overview

The meeting began with a welcome from Oscar, the facilitator, who also provided an overview of the agenda. A land acknowledgment, read by Malena, honored the Ramaytush Ohlone lands. The meeting further recognized Black History Month and Lunar New Year.

Icebreaker: “What is your vision for a repurposed Macy’s?”

Council members shared their thoughts on how they would envision repurposing the iconic Macy’s store in a creative way to benefit the community.

2. SF Planning Presentation on Rezoning

Housing Element Implementation & Expanding Housing Choice

SF Planning staff presented an overview of the Housing Element Implementation, emphasizing expanding housing choice, affordable housing strategies, and aligning with community priorities. The discussion focused on zoning policy to support a mix of housing types (e.g., condominiums, apartments, and ADUs) across different income levels.

Key Areas Discussed:

- Protecting Residents
- Supporting Small Businesses
- Balancing Benefits and Addressing Tensions

Discussion and Comments from EC Members

Key concerns and insights emerged during the discussion, including:

- **Engagement Fatigue:** Equity communities feel their input doesn’t shape the decision-making process.
- **Equity in Homeownership:** The council stressed that equity should enable all community members to purchase homes in any neighborhood.
- **Rezoning Clarification:** Staff explained that rezoning includes housing options at all affordability levels, not just subsidized housing.

Key Questions and Concerns Raised:

- **Q:** Why do younger demographics support rezoning more than older ones?
A: Younger renters may favor affordable housing as they're less likely to stay long-term due to high costs, while older homeowners prefer stability.
- **Tenant Displacement:** Concerns were raised about displacement risks under rezoning changes.
- **Lack of Diversity:** There's a need for greater inclusivity in rezoning focus groups.
- **Affordable Housing Plan and Funding:** Questions arose about the plan to fund affordable housing beyond the \$300M bond and tenant protection measures.

Next Steps:

The Planning team will continue discussions during the Housing Working Group and explore ways to engage more diverse communities. The next Planning Commission hearing is on March 21st.

3. Working Groups Report

Community Initiatives & Housing Working Group:

The group proposed three actions to support affordable housing production and preservation:

1. Support Affordable Housing Leadership Council recommendations.
2. Create an Equity Communities' Affordable Housing map to guide funding allocation.
3. Develop popular education materials to raise awareness about delivering 46,000 affordable housing units.

Downtown Working Group:

- **Storefront Opportunity Grant:** Applications close April 8th. The required Commercial Lease Negotiation Webinar will be on March 7th.
- **Powell Street Improvement Project:** The public workshop on March 7th will kick off the engagement process for improving the pedestrian environment along Powell Street.

Key Questions

- **Q:** What happened to the \$500k food hall funding?
A: The \$500k could support 1-2 businesses but is insufficient for a full-scale food hall.
- **Q:** How will small businesses be supported in downtown areas, given challenges with celebrity kiosks?
A: These questions were not fully addressed due to time constraints but will be followed up.

4. Extended Session / Retreat Planning

Retreat planning feedback included:

- Clarifying the council's role in advancing equity.
- Improving external communication and formalizing the EC's work.
- A retreat is tentatively planned for late March or early April, with the suggestion to limit it to three hours.

5. Key Updates and Announcements

- **African American Historic Context Statement:** Adopted after more than 10 years of development.
- **Affordable Housing Leadership Council Recommendations:** Will be presented on February 29th.
- **HBCU Gathering:** A new initiative in San Francisco opens possibilities for collaborations.
- **American Indian Community:** Exploring housing funding through tribal designation.
- **City Budget:** \$750k has been retained for community engagement.

Community Announcements

- **Westside Affordable Housing Resource Fair:** March 9th, 11 AM - 4 PM at the County Fair Building, SF.

Closing Remarks

The next meeting is scheduled for March 26th, 2024.