

Community Equity Council Meeting

2.28.23

Facilitator: Majeid Crawford

Councilmembers in Person: Majeid Crawford, Raquel Redondiez, Del Seymour, Ben Wong

Councilmembers Online: Mahsa Hakimi, Lara Kiswani, Mary E Travis-Allen, Norma Garcia, William Ortiz-Cartagena, Anni Chung

Staff: Rich Hillis Miriam Chion, Claudia Flores, Oscar Grande,

1. Opening

Majeid opened the meeting. Mahsa read the statement acknowledging that the Equity Council's work is done on unceded Ramaytush Ohlone lands. Majeid also gave an acknowledgement of Black History Month and Lunar New Year.

2. Review of Planning Departments work and authority

Staff opened the conversation about the Planning Department's structure, scope of work, and authority:

Environmental Planning

The Environmental Planning Division is headed by the Environmental Review Officer Lisa Gibson. The division is charged with environmental review of CEQA topic areas, mitigation monitoring, and environmental policy.

Current Planning

The Current Planning Division is managed by Liz Watty. The division is charged with application/development review, historic preservation, zoning administration, code enforcement, short term rentals, and public information staffing.

Together Environmental Planning and Current Planning have about 100 of the 200 SF Planning Staff. Both divisions are regulatory and funded through fees.

Citywide Planning

The Citywide Planning Division have about 30 of SF Planning staff and is managed by Anmarie Rodgers. The division works on the department's General Plan, land use and community plans, resilience and sustainability, urban design, transportation, and plans' implementation and monitoring. The division also supports Housing Element implementation and smaller rezoning efforts.

Community Equity

The Community Equity Division is headed by Miriam Chion and is made up of about 20 staff. The team leads community engagement efforts in the Tenderloin, Western Addition, Mission and cultural districts. Additionally, they support the implementation of the Housing Element and of the Racial and Social Equity Plan across divisions.

Citywide Planning and Community Equity Division are less regulatory and tend to have more discretion on their workplan.

Administration

The director of the Administration Division is Thomas Disanto. The division handles the data analysis group, administrative, financial, and IT services, HR resources and trainings, and operations support.

3. Racial and Social Equity

RSE Action Plan Work

The Community Equity Division has been working on a RSE Plan since 2017 (before it was a formal division, which happened in 2020). In its early stages staff trainings were conducted and Phase 1 of the plan was drafted and adopted in 2019, and later revised in 2020 to comply with the newly formed Office of Racial Equity's framework. In the last two years, the focus has been on implementation of Phase 1, which has over 100 actions) and the further development of Phase 2. The division has also taken on key initiatives such as the Equity Audit of the Planning Code and Equity Impact Analysis Guidelines for regulatory work. A council member questioned how the Council has impacted the work of the department and the adoption of department policies.

Equity Analysis Application to SF Planning Work

Equity analysis has played a significant role in the departments work through projects such as Calle 24 Special Area Design Guidelines, The Village Special Use District, Environmental Justice Analysis of the Housing Element, and more. The Equity Impact Analysis Guidelines for development review is in the pipeline and should be complete at the end of summer 2023. There is an opportunity for community members to get involved with the draft through joining the working group or staff presenting to the Equity Council.

4. Equity Council

Key Issues and Focus Areas

Why the Equity Council was formed was a key theme that grounded discussion around the key focus areas of the council and next steps. The Equity Council was created out of an understanding that San Francisco has had policies and practices that disenfranchised specific groups. Therefore, in order for true equity to exist the community has to be at the table. The key areas of concern for the Equity Council are the displacement of low- and middle- income communities, erasure and invisibility of communities, City strategies constraining community opportunity, and communities of color having limited access to wealth creation and job opportunities. A council member raised a question about the Equity Council's ability to reach different divisions within the department and cross department connections to further its impact.

2021-2022 Accomplishments

Since its inception, the Equity Council has made some accomplishments which include: increased communication with Planning Commissioners and City Directors, allocation of 750K per year for

community engagement and dedicating General Fund resources to equity work in Planning's budget, community participation in hiring of Planning staff and more.

Pathways for Council's Work

Although there has been notable work done by the Council there are still questions about next steps and actions that will make the best use of time. So, the next two meetings will lay the groundwork for the rest of the year. The focus of the first meeting of the year was to review and deepen the knowledge of the Planning Department's work and authority. March will be reserved for reviewing the Equity Council's platform and focus areas and discussing the Planning Department's impact. The focus of April will be selecting and prioritizing steps for implementation and evaluation, assessing how the Equity Council is structured and organized, and creating a list of top action items for upcoming 12 months.

5. Discussion

Councilmember Involvement and Capacity

Councilmember Mahsa posed a question about how members can lend more expertise to the department. There is a strong need for more engagement and meeting once a month does not feel as if it suffices to get the work done. Some council members have more time and capacity than others however, if willing, there should be more ways to get involved.

6. Updates

\$400,000 has been allocated for a fellowship program in the American Indian and Black communities. The money will fund 3 staff positions in their respective communities to do housing work for a non-profit organization. Additionally, the fellow will spend one day per week working alongside SF Planning.

From Feb-Mar Cultural Districts and Equity Communities staff allocations will be prioritized. Areas such as the Japantown, and the southern parts of the city that don't already have a liaison will be assigned a staff member to directly work on community engagement.

A Housing Implementation interagency team and housing leadership group will be formed by March. The group will consist of non-profits, philanthropists, and other agencies to form affordable housing funding and acquisition strategies.

The Tenderloin Participatory Budget (\$4mil) final projects was released on January 31st. The projects received over 600 votes in support.

Upcoming approval of Housing Element Jan 31. Hearings on Environmental Justice Framework and General Plan Introduction.

Draft Planning Department budget was presented to the Planning Commission January 26.

7. Closing

Majeid closed the meeting and reminded council members that the next Equity Council meeting will take place on March 28th at 4-6pm. The March Equity Council meeting will discuss the Equity Council's platform and focus areas and impact.