

Advisory Council Meeting Summary DRAFT

July 20, 2021, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Council Members Present: Majeid Crawford, Norma Garcia, Oscar Grande, Mahsa Hakimi, Lara Kiswani, Raquel Redondiez, Del Seymour, Mary Travis-Allen, Ben Wong, Malcolm Yeung

Council Members Absent: Tiffany Carter

City Staff Present: Tameeka Bennett, Miriam Chion, Sheryl Davis (HRC Director), Claudia Flores, Rich Hillis (Planning Director).

Facilitator: Malcolm Yeung

Topic: This meeting was focused on the role of the Equity Council and trust challenges between the City and communities of color.

Approach for next meeting:

- Planning challenges and efforts towards racial and social equity
 - o What we do: Approval of projects, defining rules to use land, long term general plan, neighborhood strategies
 - o What we have tried to do to address equity: Equity plan, Equity resolutions, Community Equity Division, interagency collaboration on equity, diversify staff.
 - o How to prioritize equity effectively?
- Equity Council issues
 - o What we heard
 - o Additional concerns
- What the Equity Council wants to accomplish in 18 months
 - o Issues and policies
 - o Institutional changes

Equity Council Notes

7-20-21 meeting

Claudia's notes

- There were question about the group that was mentioned at Megablack meeting during HE discussion. It was conveyed that this group was making decisions on Housing Element.
- Which is this group making decisions on the Racial Equity Plan on behalf of the community?
- Members of the Equity Council do not want the Council to be represented that way. There is a need transparency and for the role of the Equity Council to not be misrepresented as this is not a decision-making body.
- How and when will what we contribute will affect policy? What is the roadmap to present the policy to get the Council voices out of this room. Even if we were mandated staff do not like boards and commission. At times, input gets watered down. What is the plan for our voices to make a difference?
- The Planning Department doesn't have the voice of the community, some of the data they presented on internal diversity shows there is not enough representation.
- I'm also concerned that they started their Racial & Social Equity Plan in 2016 - some of the data in the plan leaves out some groups, and have they reached out to community members for us to tell our own stories? The data presented has implications.
- The Plan is also too long, 100+ pages misses the mark. It is also not grounded in words that [average] people can read.
 - Most of the time community groups are working too hard to try to understand what Planning is saying to us and viceversa.
- We are being asked to take a leap of faith that this is going to make a difference.
- What is the ask for us? My organizations focus is to make sure that we are represented in spaced were we're usually not but what are the dynamics of representation here? I am still learning about Planning's work and how that impacts working-class, immigrant communities.
- There has been a history of bad Planning decision that has affected the neighborhood that I work in. This is why we are at the table.
- However, is the timing going to make a difference, is it worth it?
- Some are bothered about the process in that it may give the perception that there is decision-making authority. We need to clarify the role and some may question participation if there is no decision-making authority.
- There is a difference between engagement and accountability, they are not the same. City needs to clarify accountability.

- In terms of data, collecting it is not enough. How communities value and collect data is also important.
- Planning is one of the most difficult departments because it is one of the most political one (because of the stakeholders – developers, property owners, the Mayor’s Office, etc.)
- How will the Mayor’s Office be involved in all of this? If we give a recommendation and room 200 shuts it down, what do we do? What are the checks and balances?
- What is the weight of our opinion? How will you account for it?
- Who will we be centering?
- Can we pass an ordinance that says we can’t build anything that doesn’t address disparities and serves BIPOC communities? It depends on how you define this? Can we come up with the details together?
- Want to make sure if we are in Planning documents, if we are being represented as a quasi, decision-making body, and yet we feel we have no power that we address that. Is this an organizing strategy, then community folks need to do some work.