



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee MEETING AGENDA

Thursday June 13, 2024 8:30-10:00 AM

Hybrid: Civic Building 1st Floor Conference Room (322 N Commercial St) & Zoom

Agenda Items		Time
1.	Call to Order, Introductions and Roll Call of Members Present (Dan)	8:30 – 8:35
2.	Agenda Review (Dan)	
3.	Action Item: Approval of March, April, and June Special Meeting Minutes (Dan)	
4.	Presentation: Bellis Fair Family Housing Project, Phase 2 (Adrienne Wyld)	8:35 – 8:55
5.	Discussion: Draft Resolution on expanding shelter capacity and creating a shelter subcommittee (Dan)	8:55 – 9:25
6.	Executive's Office Update (Kayla)	9:25 – 9:30
7.	Health and Community Services Update (HCS Staff)	9:30 – 9:40
8.	City of Bellingham Update (Samya)	9:40 – 9:45
9.	Whatcom Homeless Service Center Update (Teri)	9:45 – 9:50
10.	New Business (Dan)	9:50 – 9:55
11.	Public Comment (2 Minutes Per Person)	9:55 – 10:00
	Adjourn (Dan)	

Next meeting: Thursday, August 8, 2024, 8:30-10:00 AM

Community members who require special assistance to participate in a committee meeting are asked to contact the meeting facilitator at least 4 business days in advance.
ageleyns@co.whatcom.wa.us





Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: 3/14/2024 / 8:30-9:30am / Hybrid: Civic 1st Floor Conference Room & Zoom

Committee Members Present: Ann Beck, Ashley Thomasson, Brien Thane, Bruce Bosch, Dan Dunne, Mary Lou Steward, Paul Schissler, Samya Lutz, Tara Sundin, Von Ochoa

Committee Members Absent: Adrienne Renz, Dawna Morse, Diana Phair, Kayla Schott-Bresler, Teri Bryant

WCHCS Staff/Guest Presenters: Ashley Geleyense, Chris D'Onofrio

Agenda Item	Report/Discussion
1. Call to order, introductions, and roll call	Introductions commenced and quorum present.
2. Agenda Review	There were no requested revisions to the agenda.
3. Approval of Minutes	Samya moved that the minutes from the February 2023 meeting be approved, Ann seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed. Yes: 10; No: 0; Abstain: 0
4. Discussion, Review, and Endorsement of 2025 Comp Plan Recommendations to the Executive	<p>Dan reviewed the committee's task to make general recommendations to the County Executive regarding the 2025 Comprehensive Plan. Dan proposed to review the list of Council Priorities, make suggested changes as recommended by members of the committee, and then review collaboratively one by one to either keep, add, change, or remove.</p> <p>Samya shared that she and Tara met with folks internal to the City of Bellingham, and they suggest adding into the mix the Countywide Planning Policies, an existing document that is part of each city's and Whatcom County's comprehensive plans. The amendments were intended to strengthen the language of the policies related to affordable housing. An edited version of Section G of this document was shared with all members. Samya reviewed the City's recommendation to update numbers two, five, six, and seven and remove number nine. Ashley G. screenshared the document and committee members discussed and collaboratively made additional changes to numbers two and six.</p> <p>Ashley G. screenshared the Council Priorities document and committee members collaboratively reviewed and suggested edits.</p> <p>Tara motioned that the Countywide Planning Policies document that was amended by the committee be included in the memo to the Executive. Ann seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed. Yes: 10; No: 0; Abstain: 0</p>



	<p>Members continued to review items in the Council Priorities document. Time was running out before the end of the meeting, so a quorum of members agreed to extend the meeting by 10-15 minutes to finish the review.</p> <p>Samya moved that the edited list of priorities be included in the memo from the Committee Chair to the County Executive. Ann seconded the motion. Paul recommended one additional change to the document. The committee voted and the motion passed. Tara and Mary Lou were not present for the final vote. Yes: 8; No: 0; Abstain: 0</p>
5. Public Comment	There was no public comment.
Adjourn	The meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 11, 2024, 8:30-10:00am

DRAFT





Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: 4/11/2024 / 8:30-10:00am / Hybrid: Civic 1st Floor Conference Room & Zoom

Committee Members Present: Ann Beck, Brien Thane, Dan Dunne, Mary Lou Steward, Paul Schissler, Samya Lutz, Tara Sundin (late arrival), Von Ochoa, Teri Bryant

Committee Members Absent: Adrienne Renz, Ashley Thomasson, Bruce Bosch, Dawna Morse, Diana Phair, Kayla Schott-Bresler

WCHCS Staff/Guest Presenters: Chris D'Onofrio

Agenda Item	Report/Discussion
1. Call to order, introductions, and roll call	Introductions commenced and quorum present.
2. Agenda Review	There were no requested revisions to the agenda. Kayla is not here so Chris will provide a quick legislative update in her place.
3. Approval of Minutes	Brien moved that the minutes from the March 2024 meeting be approved, Ann seconded the motion. The committee voted, but there were not enough yes votes to approve. Yes: 7; No: 0; Abstain: 1
4. Executive's Office/Legislative Update	<p>Economic Development Investment (EDI) Fund legislation passed during session and the Executive's Office is preparing to implement program reform in collaboration with the EDI Board and Council. The Executive's office would also like this committee's input. The clarification that came out of the legislative session is that it can be used for acquisition of land that will be owned by a nonprofit and that nonprofit owned projects are eligible to apply for pre-development.</p> <p>Other notable legislation from the recent session include the Washington Low Income Housing Alliance's push for setting a limit on how much rent can increase each year (did not pass), document recording fee backfill (passed), additional funding for the Housing Trust Fund (passed), and a modification to 1590 to allow homeownership projects if they benefit households at or below 80% of the Area Median Income.</p>
5. Follow-up on Comprehensive Plan Recommendations	Dan reviewed the committee's contributions so far providing recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan Housing Chapter. After the special meeting in March, a memo was submitted to the Executive, and Dan has since met with the Executive's Office. Dan shared his notes from that meeting and committee members further discussed EDI loans, the City of Bellingham's pre-construction loan program, and the smaller cities' challenges around securing land for housing.



<p>6. Point in Time Count Messaging</p>	<p>Teri explained the process for collecting data for the Point in Time Count (PITC), and while the final numbers are not yet confirmed, we are likely going to see the number go down compared to last year. She explained that this does not mean that there is less homelessness, rather it is more likely due various other reasons such as, disenfranchisement and refusal to participate, the exacerbation of the fentanyl crisis, that it's become more difficult to locate people in vehicles due to relocation, and people living outside are dying at higher rates. The Committee talked more about messaging including the importance of looking to other data sources to more comprehensively describe the problem, and describing the local context beside the numbers.</p>
<p>7. Health and Community Services Update</p>	<p>Health and Community Services staff provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award letters for the Small Capital RFP will go out next week. • We will be hiring to backfill Barbara's position after she retired last month. • The County-run severe weather shelter ended operations in mid-March. Of note, 172 unique guests were served at the temperature dependent shelter over 20 nights during the season. An after-action report will be released at a later date.
<p>8. City of Bellingham Update</p>	<p>City of Bellingham staff provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COB and Whatcom County jointly funded another winter season overnight shelter (not temperature dependent). The total cost was about \$530k over three months and the program served 307 unique guests. • COB is purchasing a site on Northwest Ave. where both Homes Now locations will relocate to hopefully by the end of this year. • The City's Annual HUD Action Plan draft is published and the public comment period ends today. Tonight, the Community Development Advisory Board will meet to make their recommendations. • HUD has a new funding source to support manufactured home parks, and the Department of Commerce is hosting a meeting on April 15th at 10:00am to discuss how the state will respond. • Samya recommended a podcast called "Lost Patients," which provides an in-depth review of our mental health system over the past 50-70 years. • The Planning and Community Development division is going through a lot of transition with 4 out of 8 people leaving/retiring. In the next few weeks, there will be job opening posted for the Home Rehabilitation program.
<p>9. Whatcom Homeless Service Center Update</p>	<p>Teri provided the following updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Whatcom Homeless Service Center has an open position on the Homeless Outreach Team. • HOT continues to provide showers Friday, Saturday, and Sunday behind City Hall. • Things are moving along with the Way Station. • The Coordinated Entry system is stretched thin while trying to respond to the demand for service in the community.
<p>10. New Business</p>	<p>Dan: Councilmember Buchanan asked for an update on the Homeless Strategies Workgroup recommendations. Chris and Ann shared that many of the recommendations have been completed and talked about upcoming efforts to develop a new set of recommendations. Ann will follow up about providing a presentation to Council in June.</p> <p>Paul: There is a role for the County to lead and bring in other public agencies to help with land acquisition for affordable housing projects. Paul asked what policy recommendations would look like for a land acquisition program. Tara shared about the group that was formed to work on this</p>





	<p>that includes County staff. She welcomes the committee recommending criteria, but the implementation should take place in a different setting.</p> <p>Committee members discussed their role, including how, when, and to who the committee makes recommendations or provides advice. Ann will follow up with the Executive's Office about what they would like this committee to work on.</p> <p>Samya: The Ruckelshaus Center just came out with their final Pathways to Housing Security Report to the Governor and the State Legislature in December and are facilitating community discussions about the recommendations in the report. Chris and Samya are working with Ruckelshaus staff to potentially have them come to Whatcom County for one of these discussions in June. Chris will follow-up with the report document.</p> <p>Ann asked if everyone received a copy of Health and Community Services' Annual Report.</p>
<p>11. Public Comment</p>	<p>The committee heard public comment from Sara O'Connor, Executive Director of Ferndale Community Services re: the PITC and their severe weather shelter operations over the winter season.</p>
<p>Adjourn</p>	<p>The meeting was adjourned.</p>

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 13, 2024, 8:30-10:00am



Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time/Location: 6/3/2024 / 9:00-10:00am / Hybrid: Civic 1st Floor Conference Room & Zoom

Committee Members Present: Adrienne Renz, Ann Beck, Brien Thane (late arrival), Dan Dunne, Paul Schissler, Samya Lutz, Tara Sundin, Teri Bryant

Committee Members Absent: Ashley Thomasson, Bruce Bosch, Dawna Morse, Diana Phair, Kayla Schott-Bresler, Mary Lou Steward, Von Ochoa

WCHCS Staff/Guest Presenters: Ashley Geleyense, Chris D'Onofrio, Michaela Mandala

Agenda Item	Report/Discussion
1. Discussion of draft resolution: shelter	A quorum of the committee was not present until about 15 minutes before the end of the meeting. Committee members continued their discussion of the Council Resolution <i>Requesting the County Executive Prepare a Proposal for the Expansion of Year-round Shelter Capacity and Establish a Homelessness and Shelter Subcommittee of the Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee</i> . No action was taken.

Next Meeting: Thursday, June 13, 2024, 8:30-10:00am



Housing



Housing

HB 2126/SB 6029 would have authorized counties to allow detached accessory dwelling units outside urban growth areas.

WSAC position: **SUPPORT** Outcome: **FAILED**

SB 5334 would have allowed counties to levy a new local option excise tax on short-term rentals to be used for affordable housing development and homelessness alleviation.

WSAC position: **SUPPORT** Outcome: **FAILED**

SB 6015 implements restrictions on how local governments can regulate off-street parking for residential development.

WSAC position: **NEUTRAL** Outcome: **PASSED**

HB 1998 requires counties to allow co-living housing development on any residential lot zoned for multifamily housing of at least six units per lot.

WSAC position: **SUPPORT** Outcome: **PASSED**

SB 6173 expanded eligible uses of the existing local option sales tax for affordable housing to include projects serving up to 80% AMI if the project is developing units for owner occupancy.

WSAC position: **SUPPORT** Outcome: **PASSED**

HB 1987 clarifies that funds from the rural counties sales and use tax for public facilities (.09 tax) can be used for affordable workforce housing that is not publicly owned.

WSAC position: **SUPPORT** Outcome: **PASSED**

HB 2464 would have allowed counties to site new mobile and manufactured home communities outside urban growth areas. It would have also required counties to allow the siting of new or used manufactured or mobile homes or park model trailers on any open lot within an existing park unless it violates health and safety standards.

WSAC position: **OPPOSED** Outcome: **FAILED**

Budget Highlights

\$600 thousand for Commerce to provide technical assistance in planning for and siting supportive and emergency housing services.

\$180.663 million for the new construction, acquisition, or rehabilitation of affordable housing projects for low-income and special needs populations.

\$100 million for the Apple Health and Homes rapid permanent supportive housing program.

\$20 million to acquire, renovate, and prepare real property for rapid conversion into enhanced emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing, youth housing, tiny homes, or shelters.

\$34 million to backfill the shortfall in document recording fees.

\$44 million for affordable housing for low-income people with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

\$25 million for affordable housing preservation projects.

\$60 million to develop home ownership projects that are affordable for first-time low-income households.

\$4 million in increased funding for long-term rental subsidies for those with a mental health or substance use disorder (SUD).

\$23.688 million for housing assistance, with priority given to those with a mental health disorder, SUD, or other complex conditions.

\$150 million for public and private electric utility bill credits for moderate and low-income families.