



# Whatcom County Housing Advisory Committee

## Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date/Time/Location:** 6/13/2024 / 8:30-10:00am / Hybrid: Civic 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room & Zoom

**Committee Members Present:** Adrienne Renz, Andrew Calkins (future Housing Authority rep), Ann Beck, Ashley Thomasson, Brien Thane, Dan Dunne, Dawna Morse, Diana Phair (late arrival), Mary Lou Steward, Paul Schissler (late arrival), Samya Lutz, Tara Sundin, Teri Bryant, Von Ochoa

**Committee Members Absent:** Bruce Bosch, Kayla Schott-Bresler

**WCHCS Staff/Guest Presenters:** Ashley Geleynse, Chris D'Onofrio, Janie Oliphant, Michaela Mandala / Adrienne Wyld, Avery Hallsted, Turner Campbell

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	Brien moved that the minutes from the March, April, and June special meeting be approved, Ann seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motion passed. Diana and Paul were not yet present for the vote. <b>Yes: 11; No: 0; Abstain: 0</b>
4. Presentation and Action: Bellis Fair Family Housing Project, Phase 2	<p>Adrienne Wyld, the Housing Development Manager for Opportunity Council, presented the progress on Phase 2 of the Bells Fair Housing Project. The project will occupy the current motorcycle safety school parking lot, next to the Bells Fair Mall. Phase 2 will have 64 units of housing for seniors aged 62 and older, with 60 units being one-bedroom units and four two-bedroom units for seniors who might need a full-time living caregiver or need to co-house to achieve rent affordability. Twenty percent of the units will be set aside for seniors exiting homelessness.</p> <p>The building will feature ADA accessible gardening patio boxes, enhanced energy code heating and cooling systems, and solar panels. Design review has been submitted with the City of Bellingham and construction is expected to start in September 2025, with completion expected in February 2027 and full occupancy by March 2027. The City of Bellingham has awarded the project \$3.5 million, and Enterprise Community Partners have awarded \$50k for predevelopment costs. The project will be applying to multiple other funding sources over the summer. The committee asked questions and discussed project-based vouchers, urban agriculture, and the City of Bellingham's landmark tree ordinance as it relates to this project.</p>



	<p>Samya proposed a <b>motion to recommend Phase 2 of the Bells Fair Housing Project as the committee's chosen 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit priority project.</b></p> <p>Chris clarified that the committee has the ability to designate a specified project to be the County's chosen applicant for 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits through the Washington State Housing Finance Commission.</p> <p>Ann seconded the motion. The committee voted and the motioned passed. Teri abstained. <b>Yes: 12; No: 0; Abstain: 1</b></p>
<p><b>5. Draft Resolution on Expanding Shelter Capacity and Creating a Shelter Committee</b></p>	<p>Dan introduced the draft resolution to create a subcommittee of the Housing Advisory Committee to make recommendations on expanding shelter capacity. Dan suggested that the committee review the resolution and send feedback to Council in the form of a memo. As a result of the committee's discussion about the resolution, a memo with the committee's specific recommendations (listed below) will be sent to Council following the meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add "Whereas Whatcom County also supports a continuum of housing solutions to help with housing stability ranging from shelters to homeownership and everything in between".</li> <li>• Add "Whereas work addressing the need for shelter should not take away from work elsewhere within that continuum to support housing stability".</li> <li>• Replace "a goal to achieve and maintain functional zero homelessness within 10 years" with "a goal to eliminate unsheltered homelessness within 10 years, with annual progress reports provided by Health and Community Services staff."</li> <li>• Name the subcommittee "Shelter Recommendation Committee" to more clearly define the purpose of the subcommittee.</li> <li>• Include specificity about subcommittee size, composition, and member selection including that:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The subcommittee should be made up of no more than seven Housing Advisory Committee members, plus other subject matter experts, for a total of no more than thirteen people that are selected by the HAC following submission and review of application.</li> <li>- At minimum, the HAC should strive to select membership that includes homeless service/shelter providers, people with lived or living experience, outreach workers (one with medical focus), a small cities representative, a City of Bellingham representative, an Indigenous representative, and immigration representative, and a fire/EMS representative.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Clarify that the task of the subcommittee should be to provide advice on a range of shelter options and potential trade-offs, to the Housing Advisory Committee.</li> <li>• Clarify that the committee feels that exploration of longer-term solutions to end homelessness should occur outside of this subcommittee over a longer timeframe.</li> <li>• Clarify that that the recommendations resulting from the subcommittee should be considered in the broader local plan to end homelessness.</li> </ul> <p>It was confirmed that recommendations that come out of the subcommittee will come to the full committee, who will have an opportunity to make comments before sending to Council.</p>



5. Executive's Office Update	No update
5. Health and Community Services Update	Ann introduced new Housing Program Specialist, Janie Oliphant.
5. City of Bellingham Update	No update
5. Whatcom Homeless Service Center Update	Teri reported a record-breaking shower truck day with 41 showers.
5. New Business	The committee acknowledged that this is Brien's last meeting and expressed their appreciation for his contributions.
5. Public Comment	Eve from Northwest Youth Services advocated for their organization to have a seat at the table in the shelter work group discussions.
Adjourn	The meeting was adjourned.

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, October 10, 2024, 8:30-10:00am

