

SNOHOMISH COUNTY HOUSING AFFORDABILITY REGIONAL TASKFORCE (HART)

Meeting 1 Draft Meeting Summary

Wednesday, May 31, 2019 ~ 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Public Meeting Rooms 1 and 2, 1st floor, Drewel Building (County Admin Bldg. East), 3000 Rockefeller Ave, Everett

(Underlined Italics indicate action items/decisions; follow up items in bold italics)

Attendees:

Task Force Members and Alternates					
Bogen, Brian (Woodway)	X	Kelley, Leonard (Stanwood)		Wahl, Bryan (Mountlake Terrace, <i>Alt.</i>)	X
Geniza, Art (Lynnwood, <i>Alt.</i>)	X	Matsumoto Wright, Kyoko (Mountlake Terrace)	X	Wright, Stephanie (Snohomish County)	X
Steve Dana (Snohomish, <i>Alt.</i>)	X	Nehring, Jon (Marysville)		Bothell*	
Earling, Dave (Edmonds)	X	Nehring, Nate (Snohomish County)	X	Brier	
Franklin, Cassie (Everett)	X	Smith, Nicola (Lynnwood)	X	Darrington	
Gregerson, Jennifer (Mukilteo)	X	Somers, Dave (Snohomish County)	X	Gold Bar	
Hartman, Matt (Granite Falls)	X	Spencer, John (Lake Stevens)		Index	
Hirashima, Gloria (Marysville, <i>Alt.</i>)	X	Swanson, Ben (Monroe, <i>Alt.</i>)	X	Sauk-Suiattle Tribe	
Hope, Shane (Edmonds, <i>Alt.</i>)	X	Thomas, Geoffrey (Monroe)		Stillaguamish Tribe	
Holtzclaw, Brian (Mill Creek)		Todd, Mike (Mill Creek, <i>Alt.</i>)	X	Sultan	
Kartak, John (Snohomish)	X	Tolbert, Barb (Arlington)	X	Tulalip Tribes	
Presenters and Support Staff					
Mary Jane (MJ) Brell Vujovic, Snohomish County Human Services Department (HSD)	X	Barb Mock, Snohomish County Planning and Development Services	X	Mark Smith, Housing Consortium of Everett and Snohomish County	X
Chris Collier, Alliance for Housing Affordability	X	Karen Reed, Facilitator	X		
Alessandra Durham, Snohomish County Executive's Office	X	Wendy Roullier, HSD	X		

Welcome; Remarks from Executive Dave Somers: Karen Reed called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., provided some general logistics information, asked Taskforce (TF) Members to review and update contact information sheet, and introduced Executive Dave Somers. Executive Somers explained the reason for the formation of the Taskforce and the intended outcome.

Introductions of HART Members, Presenters, and Staff: Taskforce Members introduced themselves and offered their assessment of the importance rating of the issue of housing affordability to their community, on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being extremely important, and 1 being not at all important. Ratings offered are presented below:

Importance of Housing Affordability in Community?

Jurisdiction	Ranking	Jurisdiction	Ranking
Arlington	8 or 9	Monroe	9, almost 10
Edmonds	10	Mountlake Terrace	10
Everett	10; 8-10 for community	Mukilteo	10
Granite Falls	5 (but 10 regionally)	Snohomish	At least 9
Lynnwood	10+	Snohomish County (3 votes)	10, 10, 10 but 8 for the public)
Marysville	6	Woodway	8
Mill Creek	7		

Taskforce Formation and Process.

- **Binders:** Karen noted the contents of the binders prepared for each Taskforce Member. Members can leave binders or take them with them to read/review.
- **Who’s Who:** There are a few jurisdictions we have not heard from and staff will continue to follow up. We hope to finalize the list of primary and alternate Taskforce Members by next week. Please forward information to Alessandra Durham.
- **Mission Statement:** Karen reviewed the proposed mission statement with the group and spoke to the scope, deliverables, and timeline it anticipates.
 - **Question:** will tribes be included (as listed in the mission statement), if they do not participate? **A:** If they do not participate, we can amend the mission statement to remove reference to the Tribes.
 - The mission statement was unanimously approved with the caveat that it will be amended if the Tribes elect not to participate.
- **Operating Rules:** Karen reviewed the proposed operating rules and posed questions to the group about their support for electing a second co-chair; the preferred definition of consensus; support level needed to approve the final report; and how to address objections from jurisdictions specifically named in a recommendation. In discussion with the group, it was agreed as follows:
 - Have a second co-chair elected from amongst members at the second meeting.
 - Have two levels of recommendations: (1) consensus, defined as support of 75% or more of Taskforce Members (or their alternates) present and voting, and (2) recommendation items receiving support from at least 60% but less than 75% of member present and voting.
 - Agreed that jurisdiction specific recommendations should have the support of the Jurisdiction’s representative; in the case of the County’s representatives, with all three Members present at least 2 must agree with the recommendation; with two Members present, at least 1 must agree.
 - Final Report must be approved by 60% of the total membership (not just of those present and voting)
 - Short minority statements may be added to the final report.
 - Other: Changes in membership must be submitted in writing/email to the facilitator or lead County staff (Alessandra Durham).

Karen will revise the rules accordingly and bring them to the second meeting for action by the group. Karen noted that the plan for public input may be augmented, but at this point, we will collect comments through an online email address and comment cards at each meeting. She recommended members read the materials in the “Background” section of the binders, and asked members to encourage their planning directors to complete the short survey on local actions around affordable housing in the “Other” section of the binders.

Presentation on the Current and Projected Housing Affordability Situation in Snohomish County. *Presenters:* Mary Jane (MJ) Bell Vujovic, Director, Snohomish County Human Services; Chris Collier, Program Manager, Alliance for Housing Affordability; Barb Mock, Director, Snohomish County Planning & Development Services, and Mark Smith, Executive Director, Housing Consortium of Everett & Snohomish County. MJ began the presentation noting that some of the data points presented do not exactly match from section to section because they are from different data sources. Following the presentation, there was a Roundtable discussion with the Taskforce Members, who were asked to comment on either *what you hope the Taskforce will accomplish*, or *what major challenges/questions do you now have that you think we will need to address?* Comments included:

- My City Council is very challenged by this issue. What can we do to help councilmembers address the questions and concerns about housing? I am hoping this will provide us a vocabulary to build a better understanding of affordable housing. Also, we need more clarity about what we can and cannot do, for example, one councilmember is asking if rent control is a legal option?
- My City is experiencing a lot of growth; we are interested in working together to develop guidelines for all.
- I would like to have tools to get the political will to implement the policy recommendations and responses to community (for example: there is a concern about a parking crisis from the business perspective, especially when suggesting residential units without parking in the downtown core); we need a marketing campaign.
- We need courageous action at the local level; make sure County decisions do not negatively affect cities; hope that our discussions can lead to political capital on this issue.
- What will it take to impact the low to medium housing range? We have lots of research, but not much discussion about rental housing. We need to talk about rental housing as well as home ownership. I'm not sure how you can have an affordable housing conversation without talking about that housing type; when looking at Cottage Housing, Townhouses, etc., need to consider these aren't usually affordable.
- We recently had a big uproar about workforce housing (NIMBYism); I like the example from today's presenter about his daughter becoming a teacher and her anticipated future where she was not able to afford housing in her own town – that is effective. My city has a high percentage of multi-family housing but the community does not seem to know this and thinks any multi-family housing equates to adding "section 8" housing. This is a regional problem; we need to talk about actual problem and educate the public.
- I am hoping that what policy makers understand intersects with the community perception and/or understanding; some cities have done a great job of creating housing, but it's not well known; my community hates the changes of the culture and feel of their community and neighborhoods. The presenter's information about a change in policy that impacted townhome development was powerful. As an example, a developer recently explained that when he talks about affordable housing he means "housing that's affordable." I would like to see how we can educate the public to understand the issues we're trying to work on here.
- My City has eclectic neighborhoods that developed over time, we see rental and other types of housing spread throughout the neighborhoods, rather than same housing types bunched together. The mixed neighborhoods tend to have increased family involvement, especially from those in rental units mixed with other housing types. Restoring funding for the Public Works Trust Fund (PWTF) could impact housing (ex: we cannot build new housing until we upgrade our sewer system, but we cannot afford the upgrade). We need to look at the impact of things happening at our boundaries, and look at zoning – ex. locating housing for the elderly near transit and services. We should be careful of not

hitting property taxes too much that make residents feel they are supplementing affordable housing.

- As we work through policies and funding, we need to bring communities along; need to make sure they understand the parameters we're required to work within; must do an educational piece to help community understand. The PWTF can be very important. I am open to changing policies, trying new things, being brave. What else hasn't been thought of? A lot of this challenge is related to funding; changing policy cannot be implemented if there are no funds available to do it; we must have funds available; private developers are not the solution.
- I am hoping we will identify ways to achieve compassionate understanding of housing issues; tools that we can champion on the missing middle. It's not a cure, but increasing the supply can help others; I hope we will agree on items that we can work on together at the legislative level.
- I observe there is a disconnect for the public in understanding disparities between AMI and wages. Addressing our affordable housing needs is too large of a challenge for any one jurisdiction to do by itself.
- How do you educate the public about the problem? Teachers and firefighters can't live in their own neighborhood. This issue will get greater buy in if it's simplified.
- What I hear people saying is that this boils down to three things. We need to focus on policy, funding, and outreach. The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) has a housing tool box: how many jurisdictions know it exists and what is included in it? We all need to know what policies we can be trying. I am interested in sharing the information with advocates that can help – if you don't know what tools are available, you can't utilize them. We hear about impacts of growth (parking, congestion) as the key issues and/or complaints to developing land. It is important to help Taskforce Members be able to sell policy changes to our own councilmembers. There needs to be a regional approach to funding.
- I think we need to provide options. We should focus on local policies that create barriers (regulations, full potential of supply), and ensure we don't add to the costs of the renters and/or homeowners.
- There is a discrepancy between income and housing cost – how do you reduce the disparity? With the condo liability issue removed for developers, we will see change. Timing is good so we can make a stand with legislature next session. We need a consensus at the countywide level to create a loud voice; educating constituents. Residents do not want their cities to grow, do not want to change. We have a sewer moratorium – need funding to upgrade plant, and growth should pay for growth. It's not fair to have current rate payers foot the bill to fix. We need more from the PWTF.
- The biggest obstacle to building affordable housing is NIMBYism – that's why education is so important. The neighborhood you live in today was built when other people protested it being developed. I disagree that single family homes are what everyone wants; I think we need to have a variety of housing types available. People don't really need everything they say they want. My city has to build high-density near high-capacity but due to citizen concerns, we are now years behind. Lynnwood had similar issue; I do not worry about getting voted out for speaking my mind on this issue.
- Agree with what others have said. This is a complex problem. Acting individually, it's not solvable, but together we have more options. We should make a plan; each jurisdiction is in a different place, but we can help each other if we have a cohesive plan and are not alone; we have opportunities having this discussion at the regional level.

Mark Smith announced the Affordable Housing Conference on Friday, June 7th

Next meeting: Thursday, June 6, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. at the City of Everett Training Room (5th floor, Wall Street Building) at 2930 Wetmore Ave. The agenda will include a presentation about Housing Demand and Supply Challenges; where are the problems and where can you help those that are trying to build more housing. We will also take up the Operating Rules and election of a co-chair.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM