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Housing and Neighborhoods Meeting #5

October 14, 2021, 10:00AM | 2 hours

Documented by: Jason Tompkins

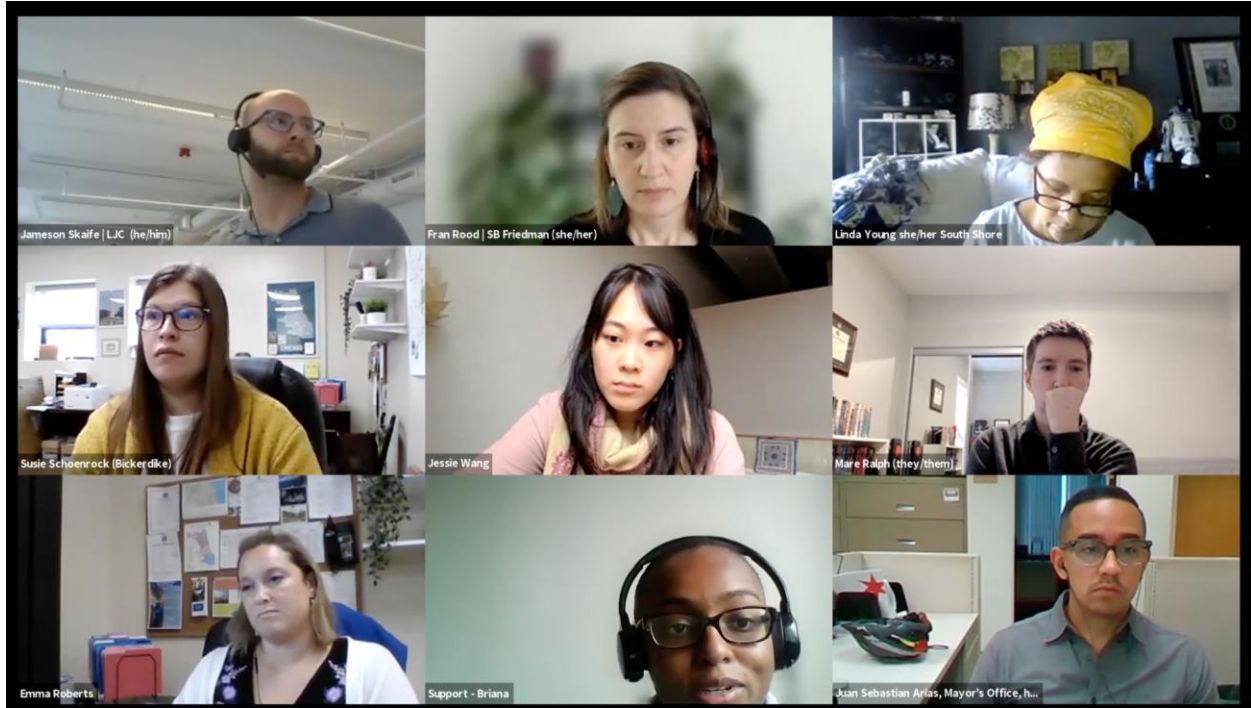
MEETING MATERIALS

[Agenda <Link to Agenda>](#)

[Presentation <Link to presentation>](#)

ATTENDEES

- Fran Lefor Rood
- Briana Gipson
- Jameson Skaife
- Michelle Merritt
- Jackie Paige
- Felice Eckhouse
- Victoria Moreno
- Linda Young
- Jessie Wang
- Sedy Soto
- Emma González Roberts
- Mare Ralph
- Enrique Castillo
- Susie Schoenrock
- Juan Sebastian Arias
- Jerome Wade
- Ann McKenzie
- Myk Snider
- Dalia Aragon
- Paola Villegas
- Freda Madison
- Victoria Ogunsanya



MEETING GOAL

Refining the guiding questions for the Housing + Neighborhoods Pillar, reflecting on trends as they relate to racial equity gaps in housing, and asking participants for feedback on the proposed expansion of the pillar meeting schedule.

WHERE WE ARE



Step 1
We Are
Setting the Stage



Step 2
We Have and Need
Develop A Policy Toolkit



Step 3
We Will
Set Policy Framework

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1

A key theme is the importance of lived experience and personal narratives in qualitative data analysis for this pillar, which can point to root causation and neighborhood-level context in ways that “hard” data cannot.

2

A key takeaway is the importance of a holistic understanding of neighborhoods as work, play, learning, transit, business and green spaces, beyond just the single family residential built environment.

3

The proposed expansion of the pillar meeting schedule is welcomed by pillar members, as it will provide more cross-pillar community engagement, circle work and feedback opportunities before the pillar reports are completed.

CONVERSATION HIGHLIGHTS

“Something that really bothers me on this slide, it says, ‘while gentrification pressures may be forcing Latinx residents out of their communities’... there is very hard and clear data to show that this population definitely is being forced out of certain neighborhoods like Logan Square, Wicker Park, even Humboldt Park ... I think that the local Chicago media has been doing a good job of pairing this data with stories of residents, combining that demographic data with lived experience.”

Emma González Roberts | Bickerdike Redevelopment Corporation, Community Engagement & Organizing Director

“Latinx [families] are being forced out of even the little pockets in Albany Park that used to be more heavily Latinx, and at some point were more heavily Korean, so we see, we are losing that diversity... It’s also our Korean, our Arabic, our Jewish families... and not just for rent, but also homeownership - those opportunities do not truly exist in these ... north side pockets of the city.”

Dalia Aragon | North River Commission, Economic Development and Housing Coordinator

“I always look at data as only identifying a current state it is an identifier of the symptom, like, ‘I have a headache’ ...the lived experiences are trying to get at that root cause and so to be very effective, if we want to wipe it out... and stop repeating these cycles of ‘oh let’s look at this problem’ and apply a band aid, we have to really get to the root cause... that’s the only chance we have of truly eliminating the segregation, the disinvestment. But we have to be really brave to face those root causes. The data will not give us that, and those lived experiences will.”

Linda Young | Volunteer

NOTES

Kickoff and Introductions

- The meeting begins at 10:05am with Briana Gipson facilitating consent and a reflective prompt: What can we learn from the data and our own lived experiences to help guide our work forward?
 - Jessie Wang notes the importance of incorporating lived experience into policy work, as there is much that data cannot tell us.
 - Felice Eckhouse notes the current ward redistricting process, and how the outcome of potential ward “wrangling” will affect the work of the Housing + Neighborhoods pillar.

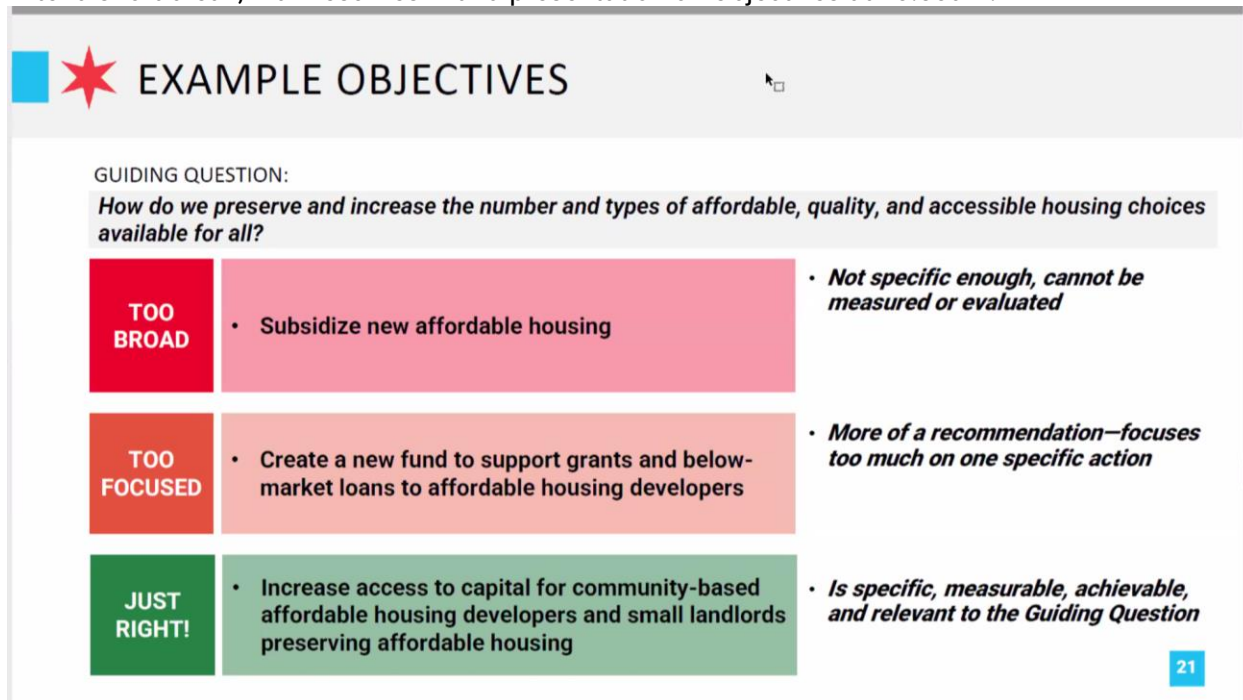
Overview**Pillar Discussion**

- Fran Lefor Rood discusses the extended structure proposal for Phase 2:
 - Adding 5 meetings to the original plan for 9, a total of 14 meetings. Meetings 5-8 for Step 2 expansion, Meetings 9-14 in 2022 for Step 3. Want to get everyone’s feedback before proceeding with this.
 - Victoria Moreno asks about opportunities for sharing across pillars. Fran Lefor Rood clarifies meeting #6 onward will explore overarching goals. Advisory committee and Community Engagement feedback. At meeting #7 there will be time to review a more detailed report from other pillars.
- Linda Young requests clarification on when the extended program would end, as the original structure would end Q2 2022. Fran Lefor Rood notes that the program would end June 2022. Specific meetings not yet scheduled but generally the same cadence - one meeting every three weeks.
- Michelle Merritt: “I’m looking forward to the process being extended.” Stating it will give artist teams space to do further community engagement and cross-pillar outreach. Housing + Neighborhoods hopes to work with the Health + Safety pillar on some engagement activity as part of the extension of time.
- At 10:36am, Briana reviews the drafted definition of the Housing & Neighborhoods pillar, and solicits suggested edits. The definition provided is: “We Will’s Housing and Neighborhoods pillar involves the residential spaces and surrounding communities where Chicagoans pursue their private lives, raise families and spend the bulk of their leisure time.”
 - Michelle Merritt notes that there should be more mention of neighborhoods. Feels a bit narrow in terms of going from residential to surrounding communities, but a neighborhood is more than residential and the built environment.
 - Victoria Moreno builds on other comments by Freda Madison and Ann Mckenzie, saying that the focus on families feels individualistic; suggests mention of “flourishing as a community”, including business opportunities, education, interaction and engagement with neighbors etc.

- Victoria Ogunsanya points out that issues of gentrification and redlining are not referenced in the definition, and should be there.

Objectives Presentation

- After a short break, Fran resumes with a presentation on Objectives at 10:50am:



EXAMPLE OBJECTIVES

GUIDING QUESTION:
How do we preserve and increase the number and types of affordable, quality, and accessible housing choices available for all?

TOO BROAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subsidize new affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Not specific enough, cannot be measured or evaluated</i>
TOO FOCUSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a new fund to support grants and below-market loans to affordable housing developers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>More of a recommendation—focuses too much on one specific action</i>
JUST RIGHT!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to capital for community-based affordable housing developers and small landlords preserving affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant to the Guiding Question</i>

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Objective Brainstorming

- Briana shares the Objectives survey link: “I just want you all to throw spaghetti at the wall”. Pillar members submit potential objectives based on guiding questions through the application, Mentimeter.
- Q1: How can we develop inclusive engagement & community-centered decision making to address neighborhood issues, ensuring transparency and accountability?
 - “Require city council members to offer opportunities for all ward residents to provide input on development proposals and decide collectively how to proceed.”
 - “Create development approval process that does not favor aldermen.”
- Q2: How can we invest in historically marginalized communities while avoiding displacement of existing residents?
 - Jerome Wade: this shouldn't be that much of a problem in Roseland, where there is significant vacant land and property. Building affordable housing in those areas without displacing folks.
 - Myk Snider: “Minimize restrictions on providers and developers of neighborhood housing & NOAH, to avoid reducing value of properties (& thereby capitalization options).” Snider elaborates saying that affordable housing policies need to be

- careful so as not to inadvertently restrict property value and whether or not owners can keep and invest in their properties.
- Juan Sebastian suggests drawing from the City's Blueprint for Fair Housing to inform goals/strategies.
 - Q3: How do we preserve and increase the number and types of affordable, quality, and accessible housing choices available for all?
 - Jerome Wade: This is difficult through construction alone, due to high costs. "First we have to define 'affordable'." "There are developers willing to build affordable housing, the way this is done is decreasing the size of the house." Wade also suggested eliminating basement build outs as they are expensive. Adjustments need to be made. Existing stock of abandoned 2-3 flats can be rehabbed to make them affordable.
 - Mare Ralph: More Small Accessible Repairs For Seniors (SARFS)-like programs for Seniors. Important to support upkeep of properties.
 - Emma González Roberts: expand subsidy budgets, making it possible to do rehabs of existing housing.
 - Felice Eckhouse: Build spaces to be accessible at the onset which is cheaper, and think of how we will use the space as we age or have a change in our function.
 - Q4: How can we address historical inequities by creating safe & healthy neighborhoods (beyond the provision of basic needs), and provide amenities & jobs?
 - Jackie Paige: Works with folks trying to enter communities that they aren't traditionally from. When they pursue fair housing complaint processes, their cases aren't taken seriously. There aren't enough resources being put into supporting those with fair housing complaints. If we're going to address discrimination we need to put money and resources into it.
 - Paola Villegas: Works on Section 3 policies and procedures. If funds hit a certain threshold, developers are required to hire locally. There is discrimination in the technical details of how these contracts have to be set up and how eligibility is determined.
 - Q5: How do we foster connected, resilient, and sustainable neighborhoods that address disparities across the city?
 - Michelle Merritt: Can someone talk about the context of this question?
 - Fran Lefor Rood: this question is referring to transportation infrastructure but trying to get us to resiliency and sustainability in terms of flooding, heat island effect and pollution impacts. Trying to address a couple of different ideas in the same question. A key concept is the importance of equitable transit-oriented development (eTOD).

Housing + Neighborhoods Housing Survey

[Responses to these questions will help us design policies related to Housing and Neighborhoods throughout the city.](#)

Institute for Housing Studies at DePaul University, “The Preservation Lab Releases New Resources to Support NOAH Preservation Strategies”

[The report updates new Preservation Lab activities and resources that can equip practitioners and policymakers with the information and tools needed to preserve naturally occurring affordable housing \(NOAH\) across different Chicago communities.](#)

Chicago Blueprint for Fair Housing

[Building on findings of fair housing challenges, City and community partners collectively identified historic policies and decisions, as well as root causes, that can inform future action.](#)

Small Accessible Repairs for Seniors (SARFS)

[The Small Accessible Repairs for Seniors \(SARFS\) program provides safety, security and accessibility improvements that help senior citizens to remain in their homes.](#)

The City of Chicago's eTOD Policy Plan

[The Chicago eTOD Policy Plan outlines a comprehensive set of actions for the City to take to advance racial equity, wealth building, public health and climate resilience goals through equitable Transit-Oriented Development \(eTOD\).](#)

NEXT STEPS

- Meeting #6 will focus on reviewing objectives. Will begin objectives review in larger groups then transition into breakout group sessions.
- Include a session to map out how to flag and address cross-pillar and cross cutting objectives.
- Will assess willingness / process to extend the pillar meeting process