



HALA Community Focus Groups
Hub Urban Village Focus Group | Meeting #2
Tuesday, June 21, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Seattle City Hall, Room L280

Meeting Summary

Opening Remarks and Introductions

Diane Adams, facilitator, reviewed the ground rules, schedule, and goals for the Housing Affordability and Livability Agenda (HALA) Focus Group process. Diane provided Focus Group members with an overview of the agenda and the objectives for the Expansion Area Urban Village Focus Group's second meeting.

Small Group Discussions: Reflections on May MHA Implementation Principles

Nick Welch, Office of Planning and Community Development (OPCD), provided Focus Group members with an overview of MHA implementation principles and noted how recent Focus Group discussions influenced updates to the Group B principles. Nick highlighted the following information:

- MHA principles would require that multifamily and commercial development contribute to affordable housing by either incorporating additional affordable units into construction or paying into a City fund that would support the construction and/or preservation of affordable units.
- MHA principles are divided into three categories:
 - Group A principles form the foundation of MHA, and they are not likely to change.
 - Group B principles are community generated, and they will guide MHA implementation.
 - Group C principles include important ideas but are outside of the scope of MHA.
- The Focus Group's purpose during the May and June meetings is to act as a sounding board and engage in dialogue regarding the Group B MHA implementation principles, noting areas of agreement and disagreement.
- Focus Group members should reflect on the tenets of the City's Racial and Social Justice Initiative and use its framework as a lens to consider MHA implementation.
- OPCD plans to provide the City Council with questions and ideas distilled from Focus Group discussion in advance of the Council's upcoming Planning, Land Use, and Zoning committee meeting on July 8. Focus Group members will receive the summary of information provided to Council.

Focus Group members divided into three group discussion stations, each devoted to a collection of MHA Group B principles (one for **Urban Design, Historic Areas, Unique Conditions, and Neighborhood Design**, another for **Housing Options and Transitions**, and another for **Assets &**

Infrastructure and Urban Village Expansion Areas). Focus Group members rotated through each of the three discussion stations throughout the meeting and shared thoughts and perspectives with one another. OPCD provided framing questions and supporting topical background information at each station.

Each station included a large sheet on the table illustrating preliminary Focus Group feedback on draft MHA principles following the group's May meeting. Discussion, comments and suggestions from the small group discussions were written down on the sheet. The ideas, suggestions and discussion from the small group session will be incorporated in a draft report of Focus Group input on the principles.

Small Group Sharing

Diane invited focus group members to share a summary of ideas and questions that emerged during group discussions at each of the three discussion stations. Focus group members identified the following key points:

I. Urban Design, Historic Areas, Unique Conditions, and Neighborhood Design:

- Retrofit historic, single-family houses into multifamily buildings when possible in order to retain historic, neighborhood character and increase density.
- Ensure that strategies for identifying and preserving historic areas and view corridors are equitable for all.
- Ensure that retained historic buildings incorporate safe materials and design (e.g., designed to required seismic standards).
- Encourage development of buildings that facilitate a sense of community (e.g., buildings with shared amenities).
- Encourage development that is sustainable and healthy.
- Ensure that HALA efforts do not negatively affect racial minorities and do not supplant existing low-cost market-rate housing.
- Encourage design and policies that develop new histories among new populations.

II. Housing Options and Transitions:

- Ensure flexibility and diversity in terms of design guidelines and zoning to match community and market needs.
- Encourage larger, multi-bedroom units.
- Encourage development and zoning that promotes a mixture of low-, middle-, and high-income housing.
- Make affordable housing available to those who make less than 60% of the Area Median Income.

III. Assets & Infrastructure and Urban Village Expansion Areas:

- Define walksheds based on miles rather than minutes in order to ensure that assets and infrastructure are equitable.
- Ensure that any urban village expansions are done in a way that is equitable.

- Construct schools and parks and other assets, and then encourage higher-density housing nearby. Development impact fees could pay for these important assets where needed.

Observer Comment

Diane invited the observers to share brief comments with the group:

- One observer said that they build small developments around the city that they sell rather than operating them as landlords. This observer noted their interest in hearing more about how HALA and MHA could potentially affect their work.
- One observer highlighted that Seattle has very few historic districts compared to other cities of similar size. This observer suggested that craftsman style homes in the central Wallingford neighborhood and houses near Volunteer Park in Capitol Hill could be categorized as historic assets.
- One observer noted that increased urban density will underscore the need for open park spaces, which could help to mitigate increased noise and light pollution.
- One observer noted that shared building amenities are sometimes insufficient within Seattle's existing multifamily housing. This observer encouraged City policy that would require landlords to keep shared amenities to certain standards if they were to be incorporated into affordable housing development.

Next Steps

Diane thanked the group for their participation and discussion. She noted that the City would consider the Focus Group's perspectives as they finalized the MHA implementation principles. Diane said that the City would present final MHA principles and begin to explore ideas surrounding zoning changes within Hub Urban Villages at the Focus Group's July 12 meeting.

Diane also encouraged Focus Group members to use the online HALA Consider.It tool (hala.consider.it).

Attendees

Focus Group members:

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| • Adam Bejan Parast | • Jennifer Cells Russell | • Laura Bernstein |
| • Alex Brennan | • Jennifer Price | • Mary Monroe |
| • Beatrice Peaslee | • Jody Grage | • Melissa Lerch |
| • Chris Maite | • Judy Bouse | • Natalie Curtis |
| • David Evans | • Kara Luckey | • Patrick Burns |
| • Dean McBee | (Medium Density) | • Ryan Reese |
| • Derek Scheips | • Karthik Jaganathan | • Shelly Cohen |
| • Isaac Mooers | • Katharine Kurfurst | • Vanessa Laughlin |

Observers

- Cooper Moore
- Joan Weiser
- Linda Melvin
- Rufoi Risler
- Sarajane Siegfriedt
- Steve Nielsen

Project team and other City staff:

- Nicolas Welch, Office of Planning and Community Development
- Vera Giampietro, Office of Planning and Community Development
- Robert Feldstein, Office of Policy and Innovation
- Diane Adams, EnviroIssues
- Brett Watson, EnviroIssues