

Housing Levy Oversight Committee

March 15, 2018 Meeting Minutes -- Approved June 13, 2018

Committee Members Present: Debbie Carlsen, Erin Christensen Ishizaki, Doug Ito, Ann Melone, Colin Morgan Cross, Kristin Pula, Traci Ratzliff, Doug Vann

Staff: Emily Alvarado, Maureen Kostyack, Laurie Olson, and Jennifer LaBrecque, OH; Maurine Worgum, Jess Chow, and Owen Kajfasz, HSD

Guest: Waslala Miranda, City Budget Office

1. Welcome and Minutes

Doug Ito opened the meeting at 2:40 pm. Debbie Carlsen, the committee's new member, introduced herself and described her work at LGBTQ Allyship and several community boards. The minutes from the January 18, 2019 meeting were approved.

2. OH Investments Report

Maureen Kostyack and Emily Alvarado described OH's new annual report, which will show all rental and homeownership investments in a single document. As discussed at prior Oversight Committee meetings, it has become increasingly important to provide a comprehensive picture of OH investments, due to the larger amount of non-Levy funds available and the need to report performance for the new Mandatory Housing Affordability Program. As a result, some information previously reported in the Levy annual report, such as leverage of other public and private funding, will now be in the OH Investments Report.

Maureen walked through the draft report. It includes a series of maps, demonstrating the alignment of OH investment locations with Citywide growth and equity goals. Debbie Carlsen asked for explanation of the Opportunity Index and Displacement Risk Index maps and suggested more explanation in the report. Traci Ratzliff suggested more explanation of the OH fund sources awarded to projects. A Q&A section could provide more information, for example, about the origin of the maps. Jen LaBrecque mentioned that Weatherization Program investments could also be shown in the report.

3. Levy Annual Report

Maureen reviewed the introductory section of the Levy report, which shows that the four Levy programs that awarded funding in 2017 are meeting or exceeding goals. The goal measures used are housing units and households, to track with the program goals established by ordinance. There was discussion of how to better show the impact of these investments, given the urgency of housing and homelessness problems in Seattle. Where possible, the report should show total people served, not just households. Erin Christensen Ishizaki suggested that the report show projects coming on line during the year. Emily replied that project openings are now included in the OH Investments Report, but could be moved to the front of that report, with photos. Colin Morgan Cross suggested that the report include a trend line showing each program's progress toward the 7-year goal. Maureen replied that trend lines are included in the new online Housing Levy Dashboard report. A trend line requires explanation because some programs do not award funding in a straight-line fashion. The O&M Program, for example, awards funds when projects are under construction, and OH strives to use other non-Levy sources first to preserve O&M for future projects.

HSD staff – Maurine Worgum, Jess Chow and Aaron Kaifasz -- reported on the Homelessness Prevention and Housing Stability Services Program. In 2017, HSD continued to contract with agencies that had been

providing services under the prior levy. HSD conducted a competitive funding round last summer to select providers for 2018. In 2017 Levy funds supported rent payments only, but next year the report will show rent and case management expenditures. Committee members made several suggestions: include total households served, include age of persons served (such as homeless young adults), and show total City dollars (not just Levy). Maurine replied that more data will be available next year and the program can report age of householders, including youth; LGBTQ data is not collected. Ann Melone asked about the possibility to expand the program, given its success. Jess replied that the limit is available funding. Since resources are insufficient to meet demand, agencies direct assistance to people with the greatest risk of homelessness using a vulnerability tool. This tool is now being used by County-funded agencies as well. Next year's report will reflect the wider use of the vulnerability tool and will include housing stability data for up to 24 months after services end. Kristen Pula asked where the households assisted by Rapid Rehousing Programs are going, and Jess replied that they find both nonprofit and market rate housing, both in and outside Seattle. Erin suggested that we find ways to highlight what's new in the 2016 Housing Levy, for example, the larger investment in Homelessness Prevention programs.

Jen LaBrecque reviewed the investment of Homeownership Program funds. In 2017, homeownership development and home repair were funded; spending on foreclosure prevention will begin next year and down payment assistance loans will begin when 2009 Levy funds are fully expended. Doug Ito asked whether there were funds that could be reprogrammed, for example, to support accessory dwelling units. Jen replied that OH is developing a pipeline of sites for affordable ownership development, such as surplus Seattle City Light properties that are too small for rental housing, that will need Homeownership Program funds. Emily reminded committee members of the policy change to the Acquisition and Preservation Program, now at City Council, that would allow OH to purchase sites.

Jen also reported on the new Rental Rehab loan program. OH issued a Notice of Funds Available in 2017, and is also doing targeted marketing to neighborhoods, such as South Park, with high displacement risk and the building typology anticipated for this loan product. Traci Ratzliff asked if funds were available to for-profit owners and Jen replied, yes, that is the intent.

Laurie Olson reported on the Acquisition and Preservation Program, which is experiencing a high demand for short-term acquisition loans. Three projects received loans in 2017. Two of these were made to projects that received permanent financing in OH's 2017 Rental Housing funding round; these loans will be repaid at closing in 2018. The third loan allowed the sponsor, Africatown, to acquire a portion of a larger market-rate development site. This project is still relatively early in the planning process.

4. Next meeting

The remaining time did not allow for discussion of priority topics for the next meeting. Maureen will consult with Doug Ito and contact members for suggestions.

Doug Ito adjourned the meeting at 4:00 pm.