Seattle's Housing Choices

Seattle Planning Commission Report
July 2003

Seattle Planning Commission

The Planning Commission, established in 1946, is an independent voluntary 15 member advisory body appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by City Council. This diverse group is made up of people who bring a wide array of valuable expertise and perspectives to the important planning decisions in the City of Seattle. The role of the Commission is to advise the Mayor, City Council, and City departments on broad planning goals, policies, and plans for the physical development of Seattle. It reviews land use, transportation and neighborhood planning efforts using the framework of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan and the long-range vision described in the Plan.

Planning Commission publications can be found on its website at:
www.cityofseattle.net/planningcommission/

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City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor
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July, 2003

Dear Reader:

The Planning Commission is pleased to publish its Housing Choices Report. This report contains results of the public process the Commission sponsored with the City's Department of Construction and Land Use. It also contains the Planning Commission's observations and recommendations regarding the two housing types under consideration – Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (DADU's) and Cottage Housing.

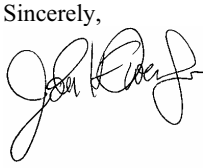
The Commission has been a strong advocate of expanding housing choices to meet the changing needs of our community since the inception of the Comprehensive Plan. We recognize the critical need for more affordable housing in the community as well as expanded choices in the types of housing that are available to our changing population.

This report attempts to accurately portray the opportunities and the challenges of both Detached Accessory Dwelling Units and Cottage Housing. Each will contribute in a small but important way by providing more choices throughout the city. DADUs and cottage housing are part of a larger set of options that the City and its neighborhoods are exploring to help residents like older people who want to "age in place" and younger people seeking to own a home.

We urge the City to listen carefully to the concerns and ideas of the community members who participated in this process and to continue to seek the balance between the need for a broad array of housing types and the need to ensure healthy residential communities.

The Planning Commission looks forward to continuing our work with the community, City staff and elected officials to ensure that we meet both current and future housing needs of our diverse community.

Sincerely,



John Owen
Chair

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Table of Contents

I. Background

The City of Seattle Housing Choices Initiative

Growth Management and Seattle's Comprehensive Plan

In the 1980s, Washington State experienced unprecedented population increases. Without a plan for growth much of the development during that period was haphazard and resulted in sprawl. The Washington State Legislature enacted the **Growth Management Act** (GMA) in 1990.

The Goal of the Washington State GMA is "to further protect the quality of life in the Pacific Northwest." The GMA directs the state's most populous and fastest growing counties and their cities to prepare comprehensive land use plans that anticipate growth and related impacts for a 20-year horizon (*King County Comprehensive Plan 2000 Adopted February 12, 2001 Published June 2001*).

In the early 1990s, Seattle adopted a Comprehensive Plan, as required by State Law, to manage growth for the next 20 years. Seattle's Comprehensive Plan acknowledges that it has become difficult for many people to find housing that is affordable or otherwise of the type they need within their community.

The Plan articulated the City's strong commitment to expand housing choices and to tackle affordability issues using a variety of tools. This includes exploring different housing types and changes in land use and zoning codes including development standards as a tool to expand those choices.

The City's Commitment to Housing Choices

Comprehensive Plan Goals

The City of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan outlines a number of housing goals that relate to expanding housing choices and opportunities within the community:

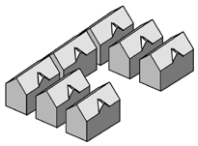
- Accommodate a range of 50,000 to 60,000 additional households over the next 20 years covered by this plan.
- Maintain housing affordability over the life of this plan.
- Achieve a mix of housing types that is attractive and affordable to a diversity of ages, incomes, household types, household sizes, and cultural backgrounds.
- Encourage and support accessible design and housing strategies that provide seniors the opportunity to remain in their own neighborhood as their housing needs change.
- Accommodate a variety of housing types that are attractive and affordable to potential home buyers.
- Promote and foster, where appropriate, innovative and non-traditional housing types such as co-housing, live/work housing and accessory dwelling units, as alternative means of accommodating residential growth and providing affordable housing options.
- Increase opportunities for detached single family dwellings that are attractive to a variety of residents, including families with children.
- Encourage development of ground related housing types including townhouses, duplexes, triplexes, ground-related apartments, small cottages, accessory units and single-family homes (*Seattle's Comprehensive Plan: Toward a Sustainable Seattle*).

The City has taken the lead in identifying these potential tools and testing them on a limited scale as detailed below. This information has been shared with neighborhood planning groups— many of whom addressed affordable housing and called for expanded housing choices in the neighborhood plans. Housing non-profits and other community organizations have also worked with many communities to address these issues.

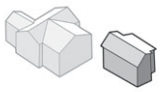
The City of Seattle's Housing Choices Initiative

In 1998, the City's Department of Design, Construction and Land Use (DCLU) initiated the Demonstration Program for Innovative Housing Design "to test housing concepts that could diversify Seattle's housing," focusing on Cottage Housing, Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (Detached ADUs), and residential small lots. This effort was supported by the Mayor and Council and included an evaluation of the project as a condition to allowing these uses outright. DCLU also began examining code changes to the Lowrise 3 and 4 zones to encourage more effective use of these low density, multi-family residential designations.

Cottages and Detached ADUs are two housing types that provide opportunities for smaller homes, either rented or owned, to be built within the existing single-family residential fabric. They offer the possibility for people to stay in their homes or in their neighborhoods by either renting out or living in a Detached ADU or living in a cottage home on a lot with shared common spaces and parking. They are defined as follows:



Cottage Housing is typically a cluster, usually of 4–10 small dwelling units of 1,000 square feet or less, surrounding a common garden. They are developed as a single project and may have shared garage structures as well as shared open space. Each cottage is owned separately.



Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (Detached ADU) is a separate, small dwelling unit built on the same lot as an existing single family home. It is similar in concept to an "accessory dwelling unit" which allows homeowners to convert a portion of the existing structure into a second dwelling unit. The main difference is the Detached ADU is located in a separate structure in the rear yard. These units are owned by the main homeowner and rented out or used for extended family situations.

Role of the Planning Commission in Housing Choices

The Seattle Planning Commission plays an important role as a steward of the Comprehensive Plan. This is an outgrowth of its role advising the Mayor, City Council and City departments on broad planning goals, policies and plans for the physical development of the City. The Planning Commission actively supported and advocated for affordable housing through the development of the Comprehensive Plan and neighborhood plans. To this end, the Planning Commission has worked with communities and the City to promote the development of more choices in housing types that meet the needs of a diverse population and expands the supply of housing.

The Planning Commission advised DCLU and participated in the development and implementation of the Demonstration Program for Innovative Housing design over the past 6 years. Accordingly, the Commission continues to play a key role in the broader Housing Choices Public Process.

In 2002, DCLU staff conducted the evaluation of the Demonstration Program for Innovative Housing Design. They began the work of developing specific proposals for permitting both Detached Accessory Dwelling Units and Cottage Housing across the city. They also worked on adjustments to the Lowrise 3-4 zones to encourage development that meets the potential capacity of these more dense residential zones. DCLU requested the Planning Commission's assistance in developing and carrying out a public process for Detached ADUs and Cottage Housing.

The Planning Commission's role in this phase of project has been twofold:

- Assisting DCLU in designing and implementing a public process to educate citizens and obtain citizen input on these proposals before they go to City Council.
- Reviewing and forwarding recommendations on the Housing Choices Initiative to DLCU, Mayor, and Council based on public input and Planning Commission analysis.

Timeline: Planning Commission's Role in Housing Choices

March 2002
Demonstration Projects
Planning Commission advised DCLU on evaluation of Demonstration Program.

August 2002
Public Outreach Criteria
Planning Commission developed and proposed criteria for Housing Choices public outreach process.

February 25-27, 2003
Housing Choices Focus Groups
Planning Commission hosted 3 focus groups involving a diversity of interests from the community.

1998 – 2001
Demonstration Program for Innovative Housing Design
Planning Commission advised DCLU on scope and process for Demonstration Program; two Commissioners participated on selection panel; Commission was briefed on progress of the program at key intervals.

March 26, 2003

Public Open House and Forum

Planning Commission and DCLU hosted a Public Open House and Forum on Housing Choices.

June/July 2003

Report and Recommendations to DCLU staff

Planning Commission prepared this summary report based on input from the public outreach and advises DCLU staff on legislative proposal.

Late summer/Early Fall 2003

Public Hearings with/ Council

The Planning Commission will co-host a public forum with the City Council on proposed legislation.

II. Planning Commission Findings, Issues and Recommendations

Overall Findings, Issues and Recommendations on Housing Choices Proposal

× **Changing Demographics and Housing Needs**
Throughout the public process participants acknowledged that the face of households in the City has changed and will continue to change. This resulted in strong agreement that the City must meet the changing housing needs of an aging population, an increasing number of multigenerational families, extended families, and single parent families. Community participants generally agreed that it is important for the City to look for innovative solutions in providing housing options for this new housing demographic profile.

× **Requirements/Regulations**
There were contrasting opinions and goals expressed during the public process regarding requirements and regulation of these housing types. On one hand participants expressed a desire not to overly burden homeowners who want to build Detached ADUs or developers who want to build Cottage Housing with overly-restrictive requirements and bureaucratic layers to the permit process. On the other hand, there was a desire to safeguard neighborhood quality and character. Balancing these contrasting and possibly conflicting goals will be one of the greatest challenges of implementing housing choices legislation, and will require an innovative approach from the City.

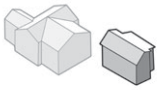
× **Support**
The public process confirmed that many homeowners support allowing these housing types in single family zones and some would welcome the opportunity to live in Cottage Housing and Detached ADUs if they were available. There were also a number of people participating who want to build Detached ADUs for a variety of reasons.

× **Common Concerns**
The most frequently identified concerns associated with these housing types were parking, privacy, traffic, and neighborhood context and character. Participants suggested strategies to address these concerns. Examples include both "carrots" and "sticks" including regulatory tools such as zoning and development standards to provide the structure to safeguard neighborhood character, and incentives such as a simple process for those meeting certain standards to help raise the bar on design quality.

× **Effect on Single Family Character**
The public process also revealed that some people oppose these housing types or any code changes that might change the nature of Seattle single family communities. The City may be able to alleviate some people's concerns by providing a level of standards, guidance and resources, but it should recognize that some people will not want any changes to the status quo.

× **Consistency/Fairness**
Many people involved in the public process made a strong argument for considering consistency and fairness when creating restrictions and standards for these housing types. They suggested the City should not apply standards to Cottages and Detached ADUs that are not applied to other housing units in the same zone. They argued that putting restrictions on parking or occupancy that do not exist for other housing in the same zones is unduly burdensome and unfair.

Overall Findings and Recommendations for Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (Detached ADUs)



Overall Findings

Detached Accessory Dwelling Units provide an important addition to the housing choices for both homeowners and renters.

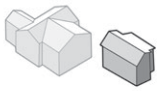
They can provide an opportunity for extended families, where elderly parents or young adults can live in an independent, supportive housing arrangement**.** Detached ADUs also provide homeowners with extra income to help meet rising homeownership costs, allowing older homeowners to stay in their home or potential new homeowners to purchase a single family home. Detached ADUs are a good way to increase the supply of affordable rental housing in single family areas with dwellings that fit into the scale and character of the neighborhood. Finally, Detached ADUs guarantee on–site landlords who are more likely to make sure their renters are good neighbors.

Overall Recommendation

The Planning Commission supports and urges the City to move forward with legislation permitting Detached Accessory Dwelling Units in single family zones throughout the city.

Specific Issues and Recommendations for Detached ADUs

Throughout the process of developing and testing Detached Accessory Dwelling Units, several issues have been raised. Key issues are described below along with Commission recommendations for addressing them in the Detached ADU legislation. The specific legislation should address the following issues:



#1. Inexperience of homeowner as developer and landlord

Issue

In most cases, Detached ADUs will likely be built by homeowners with little or no experience with developing property or being a landlord. This raises concerns about inadequate quality of design and development and of poor management or treatment of tenants. Some people have suggested that regulations are needed to safeguard single family neighborhoods from these potential problems. Participants also raised concerns that the complexity and expense of the development process might discourage most homeowners from taking this on.

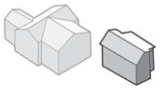
Recommendations

The Planning Commission recommends that the City consider several tools or measures to address lack of homeowner experience**.**

Create a Client Assistance Memo that provides a detailed, easy-to-use "how-to" guide on developing a Detached ADU. The memo should also give guidance on how to work well with neighbors during the planning, design and construction of the project.

Provide access to technical assistance for homeowners interested in and going through the Detached ADU development process (ensuring this is available to the full range of cultural/ language groups). This assistance could be built into DCLU's existing homeowner assistance programs.

Develop a plan book of pre-approved Detached ADU designs (described in more detail below)—a potentially important tool in addressing architectural and good design concerns and providing homeowners with clear guidance for moving forward.



#2. Size/Fit of Detached ADUs in single family neighborhoods

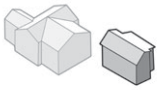
Issue

Many participants have expressed concerns about the design, scale and size impacts of Detached ADUs, of how they can "fit" unobtrusively into existing single family neighborhoods. Related concerns include the impact on property values of adjacent neighbors.

Recommendations

Develop a plan book that has a series of "pre-approved" plans for Detached ADUs that homeowners can select for the design of a Detached ADU. This would help address homeowner inexperience and would be a useful tool for dealing with size and fit issues. The plan book could simplify the process for the developer/homeowner. It should offer a broad range of design options consistent with quality housing stock in this region. The Planning Commission recommends that for those wanting more flexibility outside a plan book a simple admin-istrative process be used to ensure that quality standards are met.

Include performance standards for minimum lot size, maximum unit size, parking standards, setback, and height requirements in the Detached ADU legislation. Make standards consistent with those for single family dwellings; address issues such as privacy and other impacts of structures overlooking an adjacent home or yard. The Commission encourages the City to use this approach to ensure Detached ADUs are built with sensitivity to design quality rather than requiring that Detached ADUs emulate features of the primary residence. (e.g. such as roof pitch, color, trim, windows and eaves).



#3. Locational or Siting Criteria for Detached ADUs

Issue

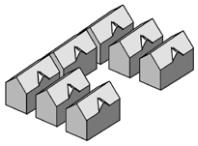
Some people have expressed concern that some areas of the city have lot sizes and characteristics that may be more conducive to adding a Detached ADU such as corner lots and lots with alleys that can better accommodate a Detached ADU. Others argue for dispersion criteria to ensure no single neighborhood has a concentration of them. Although the Planning Commission recognizes that certain characteristics such as alleys and larger lot sizes can make Detached ADUs more appealing in a neighborhood, it does not advocate setting up either preferences or dispersion criteria. They believe this would unduly complicate matters and diminish the feasibility of providing this housing type.

Recommendation

The Planning Commission recommends that Detached ADUs be permitted in all single family zoned areas, with consistent siting and design standards, rather than limiting them to specific neighborhoods.

Overall Findings and Recommendations for Cottage Housing

Overall Findings



Cottage Housing provides a housing option for people who want to own a smaller home in a lower-density residential area. The demonstration cottage housing project and existing older cottage developments indicate the marketability of these small homes with shared common spaces. Developers have shown an interest in this housing type and a number of projects have been built in surrounding communities. This type of housing would not necessarily always qualify as what is typically referred to as "affordable" housing, but is likely less expensive than larger single family homes in the same area. Thus, Cottage Housing can offer a less expensive and more suitable housing option for those seeking a small home.

The Commission recognizes that currently there are limited sites appropriate for cottage housing, which may result in more limited use of this housing type, at least in the short run. However, over the long term, it presents a valuable addition to the types of housing options for the increasing number of small households living in Seattle.

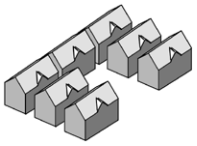
Primary concerns raised about Cottage Housing relate to perceived land use, traffic and parking impacts associated with increased density.

Overall Recommendation

The Planning Commission recommends that the City move forward with development of Cottage Housing legislation. Additional analysis can help determine where there is potential for this type of development which will make Cottage Housing a more viable housing choice.

Specific Issues and Recommendations for Cottage Housing

Throughout the process of developing and testing Cottage Housing a number of issues have been raised. The key issues are described below along with the Commission's recommendations for addressing them in legislation. The specific Cottage Housing legislation should address the following issues:



#1. Density — Dispersion and Siting Criteria

Issue

Concerns were raised in the public process regarding the impacts of increased density in a single family area as a result of Cottage Housing development. These impacts include parking and traffic impacts, bulk, scale and privacy impacts on adjacent homes, and site design impacts (the inward orientation of design).

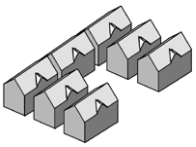
One suggestion has been to develop dispersion criteria, limiting the number of Cottage Housing projects that could be developed on a block, or block face. Another suggestion was to require that garages be used for storing owner cars.

Recommendations

The Commission recommends that concerns about increased density and traffic created by Cottage Housing be addressed with minimum lot size, maximum total lot coverage, minimum open space, and off street parking requirements. Such requirements should be fair and equitable so as not to unduly burden or encumber Cottage Housing development as compared with other development permitted by in single family zones.

The Commission recommends against including dispersion criteria for Cottage Housing. This is not an appropriate requirement because it would be difficult to find a fair way to justify allowing development just on the basis of being first.

The Commission recommends that similar to Detached ADUs, privacy concerns can be addressed by looking at standards such as size, siting location, height and bulk.



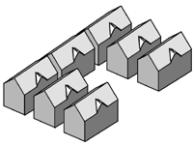
#2. Open Space and Site Design

Issue

Open space was identified in the public process as an important priority, particularly using setbacks to create shared open space while still ensuring appropriate space between adjacent homes and the cottage development. The Commission agrees that open space is integral to cottage housing and its design is what makes cottage housing both unique and workable. Cottage Housing must also fit into the broader neighborhood context in the way it relates to the street and surrounding neighbors.

Recommendations

The Planning Commission recommends careful consideration be given to the open space requirement, balancing the desire and advantages of shared open space with the need for some consistency with the general siting characteristics of the neighborhood.



#3. Design/Design Review

Issue

The Planning Commission acknowledges the importance of good design and quality materials and workmanship to the ultimate success of Cottage Housing, an issue of importance to many community members in the public process. People expressed the need for public input in the design of such projects, particularly given the larger size and density of a Cottage Housing project in a single family area. The same time, developers expressed concern that such a process needed to be clear, timely and have a clear decision point.

Recommendations

The Planning Commission recommends the City develop a simple design review process for Cottage Housing projects. One option would be to have a special design review board/team with expertise in Cottage Housing (including a neighborhood representative) that would be responsible for reviewing all such projects. This would ensure that the process would have consistency and would benefit from the expertise on this fairly unusual type of housing project.

The Planning Commission recommends that DCLU publish a guide to cottage housing that could inform potential developers and, more importantly, community members about basic siting and design parameters of cottage housing projects.

Observations and Recommendations on the Public Involvement Process

Observations

The joint SPC/DCLU public process provided an opportunity for diverse citizen participation and allowed for a broad range of feedback that will ultimately inform public policy about Cottage Housing and Detached Accessory Dwelling units. The three focus groups; general community, people familiar with the housing types, and housing experts allowed for very detailed discussions and input. The public open house and forum was well organized and allowed multiple opportunities for input.

DCLU staff was very helpful and creative in taking extra steps to ensure broader public involvement. This included distribution of the housing choices brochure and survey to targeted constituencies, and the creation a virtual forum and on-line survey on the DCLU website. The Commission commends DCLU in its efforts to expand outreach efforts to solicit input from diverse interests.

Those who participated were typically from two main groups; single family neighborhood activists and people wishing to develop Detached ADUs or cottage housing, despite the best efforts and comprehensive outreach to seek a broader range of input. Since those interested in Detached ADUs are typically single family homeowners, the dichotomy between developer and homeowner was softened in both the focus groups and the public forum. While there was the expected tension between these different interests, there was also movement and coming together on some key points in these two processes. Watching this dynamic play out in the focus groups and the public forum was heartening.

Few people of color, elderly homeowners, those from immigrant communities and generally lower income people participated in the Housing Choices public process. While this was not a surprise given limited resources and a general outreach approach, it is a reminder that the City must make a more concerted effort to engage these groups. This is particularly important in this issue as these groups could benefit from developing Detached ADU to make homeownership more financially viable and to help meet multigenerational households' housing needs. In addition, greater initial opportunities for these housing choices exist in neighborhoods where community revitalization is occurring.

Recommendations

The Planning Commission recommends that after adoption of Detached ADU and Cottage Housing legislation the City carry out more targeted outreach to communities of color, elderly homeowners, those from immigrant communities and lower income people. The City should work with housing advocacy stake-holders, housing and neighborhood interests and revitalization efforts throughout neighborhoods of the city.

The Planning Commission recommends that DCLU further develop a broad array of tools for public outreach and input, particularly using on-line tools. Even those without personal computers could access these tools through libraries and various community service programs providing free computer access.

III. Public Involvement 2002-2003

In summer of 2002, DCLU requested the Planning Commission's help in developing and carrying out a public process for exploring two housing choices—Detached ADUs and Cottage Housing.

The Planning Commission assisted DCLU by developing goals for public involvement in the Housing Choices Initiative. The goals were intended to guide a strategy for public involvement, emphasizing the need to solicit input from a broad and diverse range of stakeholders.

Goals for Public Involvement

- Provide information that helps the public understand the broader growth challenges Seattle and the region are experiencing.
- Research and provide information about changing trends in household composition over the past two decades and implications for housing needs.
- Educate public on need and value of housing choices and the principles behind them; including how the proposed legislation contributes to them.
- Educate City officials and the public about housing options that can help address growth issues.
- Engage the public in developing and tailoring these options to our community's specific situation.
- Increase broad public support for housing choices legislative package.
- Improve the proposed legislation and the development/approval process.

Public Involvement Strategy and Elements

DCLU and the Planning Commission jointly developed a public involvement strategy that would best incorporate these goals. The Commission agreed to conduct focus groups, co–sponsor a public open house and forum, and provide advice and input on DCLU's information distribution and outreach.

- **Focus Groups:** Planning Commission sponsored three focus groups in February 2003 to get feedback on the Cottage Housing and Detached ADU concepts. Focus groups including a group of general citizenry looked at broader housing needs and choices; people familiar with Cottage Housing and Detached ADUs gave opinions on key features and criteria; and architects, developers and technical experts gave input on technical features and feasibility.

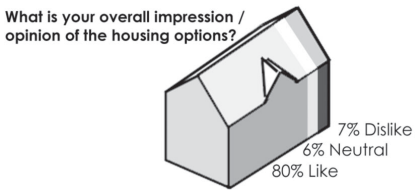
- **Public Open House and Forum**: DCLU and the Planning Commission co-sponsored a forum and open house in March 2003 to report on results of focus groups, provide information and obtain further input on the housing choices proposals.

- **Demonstration Program Survey and Evaluation**: DCLU planners conducted interviews and surveys to learn from the demonstrations projects (Cottage Housing and Detached ADUs). DCLU staff briefed and discussed the findings from demonstration projects with City officials and the Planning Commission.

  A survey was mailed by DCLU to about 500 stakeholders and community activists soliciting feedback regarding Detached ADUs and Cottage Housing. DCLU included an analysis of the 140 completed surveys in the evaluation.

- **Outreach & Information Distribution:** The City broadly distributed information on the housing options, including brochure mailings, print and web news articles and presentation materials for City and neighborhood events.

- **Virtual Forum and Survey:** DCLU hosted a virtual forum and on-line survey on its website where over 80 additional people provided opinions from March through June 2003.



Survey results from 81 participants.

Summary of Focus Groups

Purpose and Format
The purpose of the Planning Commission sponsored focus groups was to hear from an intentionally diverse group of people on how to best provide more housing choices for people to live in our community. The focus groups particularly sought suggestions on how Cottage Housing and Detached ADUs could be developed in single family areas of the city. (See Appendix for Sample of Focus Group Agenda, page 37.)

Results from the focus groups were compiled and used by DCLU staff to refine the proposals and to guide further public information and process. Results were also used by the Planning Commission and DCLU in planning the March 2003 public open house and public forum. (See Appendix for Focus Group Summary of Input, page 39.)

Focus Group Composition
Each focus group had 6-12 participants, a neutral facilitator, a Planning Commission host/observer and a notetaker. The Commission sought geographic, ethnic, age and gender diversity in assembling the focus groups. (See Appendix for a list of Focus Group Participants, page 38.)

General Public
This group represented a broad group of citizens including a renter, first time home-buyers, existing homeowner with an ADU, a homeowner with interest in Detached ADU, neighborhood and land use activists, and people who have concerns about these housing types.

Citizens Familiar with Cottage Housing, Detached ADUs and Similar Housing Types
This group represented people who have had some first hand knowledge with these housing types such as a neighbor of demonstration projects, residents of demonstration projects, neighborhood plan stewards, potential Detached ADU applicant, a housing advocate representing the Tenants Union and affordable housing, a resident of New Holly development with a carriage house, and a growth management advocate.

Housing "Experts"
This group consisted of people with professional expertise in housing and including an architect who designed Cottage Housing, and another who built and designed a Detached ADUs, a housing advocate, a land use and housing planner, a housing developer, and an urban designer.

Results: Focus Groups Summary

	Themes for increased housing choices
Key Findings	**There is a need for housing options**—Options need to be affordable to a broad spectrum of people and are diverse enough to meet different needs. However, some would prefer that these housing types be limited to particular neighborhoods that can better handle added density. **Changing demographics are affecting the housing market**—There is recognition of the changing housing market needs such as single person, single parent households, empty nesters, and multigenerational families.
Common Concerns	**Affordability**—Some believe permitting these housing types should be tied to their affordability; others think that expanding choices and the supply are the key goals rather than affordability.

Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (Detached ADU)

Establishing criteria—There is strong interest in articulating clearly defined criteria for these housing types to ensure quality and address impacts to neighbors

Key impacts—Privacy, parking, traffic, neighborhood context and character are the impacts that should be considered when developing these housing options.

Prioritize housing types when certain characteristics exist—Suggestions include encouraging Detached ADUs where there are alleys and in areas where the City wants to prioritize more housing growth.

Need to provide tools for people to ensure it is done right—Various suggestions were made for tools and incentives from "how-to" guides to providing financial incentives.

Guidance and standards—Although most agreed that some standards are a must, there was wide variation about which criteria are important (i.e. lot sizes, setback, height restrictions, dispersion criteria) and how to ensure standards that do not add too many restrictions or make it unaffordable to build.

Parking and traffic—There is disagreement over how much emphasis can be placed on this and whether it is a real problem or only a perception.

Cottage Housing

Locating in single family zones—Some people are okay with this, others have serious concerns or don't want it allowed in single family zones without constraints

Need for neighborhood input—There is disagreement over who constitutes the 'neighborhood' when seeking neighborhood input. Varies from neighbors in the periphery, district councils, or community meetings.

Key impacts—Privacy, parking, traffic, neighborhood context and character are the impacts that should be considered when looking at these housing options.

Design review is important for ensuring quality and neighborhood context—The need for design review is important, whether administrative or a public process.

Ideas and Suggestions from the Focus Groups

× **Plan book of pre-approved designs for Detached ADUs**
To expedite the review process and control costs the City could develop a series of pre-approved designs for Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (Detached ADU). This could also help ensure quality and neighborhood integrity.

× **'How to guide' for Detached ADUs**
Guide applicants through the process with estimated costs and general advice for homeowners who are considering building a Detached ADU.

× **Ombudsman**
Assist and facilitate individuals who wish to pursue housing options through the City process or to look for funding options.

× **Training/assistance on being a landlord and developer**
Ensure that "mom and pop landlords" created by this housing type understand their rights and their tenants' rights.

× **Funding to help homeowners develop Detached ADUs**
Look for existing opportunities or create new ones for providing funding for homeowners to build Detached ADUs. Could possibly link funding availability to affordability.

× **Tours of demonstration projects**
Create a tour to help elected officials, City planners, neighborhood planning councils and others better understand how these housing options fit into neighborhoods.

× **On the Counter Design Review**
Create an easy design review checklist and process. This could be combined with a catalogue and planning book of off-the-shelf designs.

× **Create Benchmarks for success**
Look to other cities to see how they are successfully incorporating these housing options into their communities.

Public Open House and Forum

DCLU and the Planning Commission jointly sponsored a public open house and forum on March 26, 2003. This event built on the focus groups and was intended to involve the broader public in learning about and discussing the potential of Cottage Housing and Detached ADUs as housing choices in single family residential zones. The event was organized in three parts.

Open House

The open house provided an opportunity to see informational displays on Cottage Housing and Detached ADUs, to talk informally with staff and write down individual questions and comments. Participants viewed displays, interacted with City staff and Planning Commissioners and provided comments on the display boards or on comment worksheets. (See Appendix for a List of Public Forum Participants, page 44.)

Presentation and Panel Discussion

The presentation and panel discussion were structured to provide information and elicit discussion about the characteristics and merits of the housing types (based in part on the demonstration project experiences). DCLU Staff Jory Phillips and Michael Kimelberg gave presentations describing the Detached ADU and Cottage Housing concepts, as they have been developed thus far.

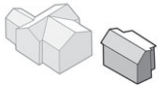
A panel discussion was moderated by Chuck Weinstock, Executive Director of the Capitol Hill Housing Improvement Program. The discussion focused on three areas: 1) Advice regarding de-velopment of Cottage Housing and Detached ADUs, including standards or criteria that should be considered; 2) How to address key concerns about parking, traffic impacts and about privacy; 3) How to ensure good design and quality development of both of these housing types. The four panel members represented a range of interests including neighborhood organizations, developers, homeowners and urban designers (See Appendix for Public Forum Agenda, page 43.)

Table Discussions

The table discussions offered the opportunity for facilitated discussion among participants in a small group setting. These discussions focused on key aspects of Cottage Housing and Detached ADUs that had emerged throughout the public process and demonstration projects. Either a Planning Commissioner or City staff person moderated the discussion while another recorded detailed notes of the questions, concerns, ideas and suggestions (See Appendix for Public Forum Summary of Input, page 45.)

Results: Public Forum Summary

	Themes for increased housing choices
Key Findings	**Changing housing needs**—There is recognition that household composition has changed (fewer nuclear families; broader mix). Across the board agreement that housing choices should reflect this. **Who develops**—There is recognition that Detached ADUs will primarily be built by homeowners while Cottages will be built by developers. Thus, process and requirements must be viewed differently. **Effect on single family character**—Fear that these housing types would change the nature of single family neighborhoods leads to desire for a higher level of scrutiny and standards. **Fairness/consistency**—Some believe that standards should be the same/consistent for all housing types allowed in a zone (e.g. Detached ADUs and Cottage Housing should only have standards that are applied to other single family housing units in the same zone).



Detached Accessory Dwelling Units (Detached ADUs)

Advantages for extended families—Detached ADUs will provide needed housing for grandparents, immigrant families, singles, etc.

Success of ADUs—Detached ADUs have worked very well in single family neighborhoods. There is no reason to believe that Detached ADUs won't have similar results.

Owner occupancy—There is the belief that owner occupancy would help mitigate negative impacts to the community by ensuring owner responsibility/oversight.

Affordability criteria—Some believe that affordability should be a consideration while others believe that if you make building Detached ADUs easy it will add housing in a limited supply market, thus increasing supply to meet the demand.

Cottage Housing

Expands homeownership options—Cottage Housing is a good way to allow for homeownership of smaller homes in single family areas; modest increase of density that is consistent with single family character.

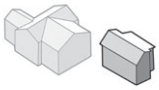
Development standards—The key standards the City should focus on are size, location, height and bulk.

Priority areas—Some suggested prioritizing Cottage Housing in areas where there is good transit or prioritizing transit money where Cottages are developed.

Open space—Both common and private open space was identified as what makes Cottage Housing work.

Results: Public Forum Summary (continue)

Common Concerns	**Themes** for increased housing choices
	Larger context—Many participants suggested parking concerns should not drive urban planning
	Parking and privacy—These were identified as the most common negative impacts that will come from Detached ADUs or Cottages.
	Neighbor voice—Some were concerned that neighbors would not have any say in the development of these housing types.
	Effect on neighborhood character—Concern that these housing types would change the nature of single family neighborhoods and decrease property values.



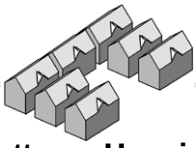
Detached Accessory Dwelling Units
(Detached ADUs)

Success in other jurisdictions—Many other jurisdictions in the region and offer good examples for Seattle.

Cost of regulation—Many who want to build a Detached ADU are concerned that development requirements and process will be complicated, burdensome and prohibitively costly.

Height limits—Concern exists that 12 foot height limit would be too restrictive; there needs to be more flexibility in the regulations.

Sensitivity to adjacent homes—Detached ADUs should be designed with sensitivity to neighbors by limiting impacts on privacy, shading, and parking.



Cottage Housing

Limited opportunity—There are limited opportunities to develop Cottages in a built-out city. Opportunities are mostly where there are underdeveloped or large lots.

Excessive standards/process—Concern that the City tends to pile on standards, resulting in too many hurdles for developer interest.

Development standards—There is concern that 350 square-foot second floor requirement is too limiting.

Fit with neighborhood—Cottages should fit into the character and scale of neighborhood.

Use of parking—Concern exists that people would use garages for storage and parking cars on the street.

Ideas and Suggestions from the Public Forum

- **A plan book for Detached ADUs is an important tool**.
  There is some concern about creating a cookie cutter look or limiting creativity if a plan book is used. To ensure both standards and flexibility, some suggested the use of a two tiered approach where a Detached ADU builder could use the simpler process for pre-selected designs from the plan book or could get more flexibility by going through an administrative process that would be subject to more steps toward approval.

- **Provide technical assistance for Detached ADU Developers.**
  Specific suggestions included a Client Assistance Memo, an Ombudsman program, a single project manager/case worker assigned to a Detached ADU review so there is consistency, and a resource guide with information on things like hiring an architect and contractor. Hold workshops and how-to clinics for potential Detached ADU builders with City planners. Include architects and contractors who can provide technical advice.

- **Encourage smart growth and sustainability**.
  These housing types should promote smart growth techniques by providing smart growth tools like Flexcars, free bus passes and bicycle storage for Cottage Housing units. Consider allowing exemptions for parking requirements in certain instances such as dense neighborhoods where transportation options are more available. Work to develop location efficient mortgage options as a tool for placing these housing types in areas where certain advantageous characteristics exist. Look for ways to reward green building efforts for all new housing in the City including Cottages and Detached ADUs.

- **Outreach and education should address the communities being served with housing choices**.
  These housing choices seek to reach a demographic population for whom housing needs are not being served such as multigenerational and immigrant communities, the elderly, and singles. Their issues should be addressed in tools like how-to guides, plan books or design guidelines. Consider partnerships with community groups to educate landlords and tenants. Prepare materials for non-English speaking immigrants and for outreach to cultural groups who would be interested in multigenerational or co-housing options, such as Cottages and homes with a Detached ADU.

- **Administrative design review for Cottage Housing**
  In most cases, administrative design review could replace a broader design review process making the process less cumbersome and time consuming yet still providing clear performance standards ensuring quality control and good design practices.

IV. Appendices

Sample of Focus Group Agenda

City of Seattle
Seattle Planning Commission

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor
Marty Curry, Executive Director

HOUSING CHOICE FOCUS GROUP (3)

AGENDA

February 26, 2003
11:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M.
Key Tower Room 1860

Welcome **11:30 – 11:45** A.M.
Background,
Introduction of Facilitator, Jim Metz
Planning Commissioner, Mimi Sheridan

Self-Introductions **11:45 – 11:55** A.M.
All

Facilitated Discussion **11:55** A.M. **– 12:40** P.M.
All

BREAK **12:40 – 12:50** P.M.

Facilitated Discussion Part 2 **12:50 – 1:20** P.M.
All

Wrap up and Next Steps **1:20 – 12:30** P.M.
Planning Commissioner, Mimi Sheridan

ADJOURN **12:30** P.M.

Brown bag lunch provided

IV. Appendices

Focus Group Participants

Focus Group Details	Focus Group Date, Time and Location	Confirmed Participants
Focus Group #1: **GENERAL PUBLIC** P.C. Host: John Owen P.C. Staff: Barbara Wilson Facilitator: Jim Metz	Monday, February 24, 2003 5:30 – 7:30 P.M. Miller Community Center 330-19th Avenue E. Seattle, WA. 98112	1. Julie Gwinn 2. Matthew O'Brien 3. Nelson Miller 4. Doris Baxter Burns 5. Skye Kahli 6. Devin Malkin 7. Mike Ruby 8. Bill Zoesel
Focus Group #2: **CITIZENS FAMILIAR WITH HOUSING TYPES** P.C. Host: Steve Sheehy P.C. Staff: Marty Curry Facilitator: Jim Metz	Tuesday, February 25, 2003 5:30 – 7:30 P.M. University Heights Center 5031 University Way NE Seattle, WA. 98105	1. Andrew Taylor 2. Tim Trohimovich 3. Joan Davis 4. Mark Engelbrekt 5. Marisa Hancock 6. Jeannie Hale 7. Kate Maulkin 8. Chuck Winkleman
Focus Group #3: **HOUSING 'EXPERTS'** P.C. Host: Mimi Sheridan Planning Commission Staff: Marty Curry & Barbara Wilson Facilitator: Jim Metz	Wednesday, February 26, 2003 11:30 A.M. – 1:30 P.M. Key Tower 700 Fifth Avenue, Room 1860 Seattle, WA 98104	1. Rick Sellers 2. Vince Feresse 3. David Foster 4. John Kucher 5. Mike Luis 6. Roger Wagoner 7. Carol Eychaner 8. Bill Kreager 9. Tom Donnelly 10. Mark Hinshaw 11. Nicki Parrot

IV. Appendices

Focus Group Summary of Input

Focus Group 1	Focus Group 2	Focus Group 3
Group make up: This group consisted of "general community" and was mostly people who have been active in their own neighborhoods in one way or another. A few last minute cancellations and one no show ended up making it a small group of 6 people. On the upside we had 3 people who identified themselves as skeptical and 3 people in the supportive category making for a very productive dialogue.	**Group make up:** This group consisted of 8 community members familiar with housing types including; 2 neighbors who live near the demonstration projects, a resident of Ravenna cottage, a new homeowner with a carriage house, 2 neighborhood association members, a housing advocate, and a growth management/land use organization representative.	**Group make up:** This group consisted of 10 housing experts including architects who have built these housing options, architects and developers involved with the demonstration projects, a developer, two low income housing advocates, a representative from the master builders, and a land use expert.
Need for this Housing Type ➢ Changing demographics mean that people need more options in housing ➢ There is a need for more affordability housing options in neighborhoods where people want to live ➢ Social responsibility dictates that the City enables more diverse housing options. ➢ These options help foster a more rich and diverse culture. ➢ Ownership creates more neighborhood pride and commitment. ➢ DADU's provide a way for people to stay in neighborhoods. ➢ These options could help transform feel of neighborhoods where housing stock is poor. ➢ Housing is expensive because there is not enough of this type of housing. A lot of people who need these smaller housing types instead of mega housing that are the current building trend. ➢ There is a new generation of homeowners with different needs such as multigenerational families, people caring for elderly parents, kids staying at home longer, empty nest baby boomers who want community and accessible neighborhoods.	**Need for this Housing Type** ➢ People need more options in housing because of the changing demographics. ➢ Cottage housing and DADU's provide housing choices as people age. Renting an ADU allows older people to stay in their homes. ➢ DADU's provide a strong contribution to affordability. ➢ Cottage housing has worked well for people who are single, older, desiring to be able to walk to services. ➢ DADU's and Carriage housing provides needed rental income enabling people to afford to own a home. ➢ These options provide an alternative to moving to the suburbs and allow more people a choice to stay in the city. ➢ One story housing options serve people with disabilities. ➢ Awareness of cultural considerations points to need. There are more extended families in the immigrant community that would benefit from these housing options.	**Need for this Housing Type** ➢ There are people in society whose housing needs are not being supplied that would be interested in these housing options. ➢ Demand is there for DADU's. It helps people to afford to buy a house, or stay in a house, knowing they can depend on rent to help pay the mortgage ➢ There is a demand for more density. The market is there. People like close knit neighborhoods near transit with amenities that you can walk to. Probably could not build cottages or DADU's fast enough in some neighborhoods. ➢ Looking at 2000 census, we need to open the door to housing by providing more options for singles, single parents, young couples, and seniors. This is now 50% of the population and many of them are willing to live in dense neighborhoods. ➢ Increased supply is one element to increasing affordability. ➢ Recognize that people who will live in this housing often already live in the neighborhood. These housing options allow them to stay in their familiar community. ➢ Demonstration program illustrated the need in single family zones for more housing diversity. ➢ Need to expand opportunity for infill to meet the demand to live close in. That is what the market is telling us. The environmental and Comprehensive Plan benefits of this are it also reduces sprawl and meets many other important goals of the comprehensive plan.

IV. Appendices

Focus Group Summary of Input

Concerns	Concerns	Concerns
➢ Fitting into the neighborhood character ➢ Impacting the status quo will impact middle class people's largest investment ➢ Distrust that City can do it right. ➢ This housing option (cottage housing) will not alleviate affordability issues. ➢ We could create "rabbit warrens". ➢ There is an incongruity between limiting supply by requiring things like limiting the number per block versus providing affordability. Ultimately a choice will have to be made about affordability versus heavy restrictions. ➢ Ravenna Cottages are not affordable. ➢ Some neighborhoods are less appropriate than others for this type of housing. ➢ Distrust of architects and developers who just want to make money. ➢ People have seen a lot of bad, low quality DADU's. ➢ People in neighborhood hate density and will try to oppose any attempts to change the status quo. ➢ Cautious about DADU's because of design and scale concerns. ➢ It's important for people to understand who will live there and how it will *add* to community.	➢ Standards will not be adequately enforced or will be loosened in single-family areas. ➢ In designing cottages, the courtyard design option isolates the cottage housing from the rest of the street and makes it feel like it's not part of the rest of the neighborhood. ➢ Encouraging people to develop ADU's results in "mom and pop" landlords who are not educated on being good landlords. ➢ Increasing density will have negative impacts on parking in neighborhoods. ➢ Cottage housing doesn't increase housing affordability. ➢ Design will not be consistent with the neighborhood. ➢ Should require owner occupancy. ➢ The problem is with zero lot line and the impact on light/shade on adjacent neighbors, and privacy impacts. ➢ Concern about lack of response from DCLU on current infractions on housing and zoning standards. ➢ Growth is incremental; cumulative impacts over time are not addressed. ➢ This will result in duplexing the city. ➢ Parking will be an issue and figuring out how to require a garage or off-street parking in older areas where existing homes don't have either is a challenge. ➢ Concerned that all this is a done deal and that people have not had the ability to input into this process adequately.	➢ Hard to strike a balance between providing low income housing that existing neighbors feel good about before it is built. ➢ People are predisposed not to accept changes in their neighborhood; they have no incentive to change their opinion. ➢ Concerned that getting into neighborhood design review is like stirring up hornets nest. ➢ Create something that can get insured and can get built. ➢ Need some guidance and standards. ➢ Concerned about trying to do code language that applies citywide. Look for places in the city that make sense and start there. ➢ Developers will not put in DADU's because it is expensive – design review, permit process plus building costs all add up to a prohibitive venture for the average homeowner. ➢ Supply problem is caused in part by single family zoning codes. ➢ Design review takes too long. Fees are very prohibitive. ➢ Huge houses on small lots that are totally out of the character of the neighborhood are bigger problem than cottages and DADU's. ➢ Middle level DCLU people who have no concern for the cost of housing add to developers' costs. ➢ City officials are scared of the sanctity of the single family neighborhood. ➢ Design review process is complicated. Being prescriptive about the do's and don'ts is fine, but we need a simple (one page) code. Beyond that let us design. ➢ Demonstration projects have been a really good process and people's original fears about neighborhood impact, parking issues, visual issues have mostly been resolved. ➢ There are 300-400 ADU's in the city with no complaints. ➢ Administrative design review might work better. Standards need to be performance based, rather than prescribed setbacks and heights. ➢ More housing will be developed through DADU's, not cottages. Fewer opportunities for cottage development so will take a long time to see any real change.

IV. Appendices

Focus Group Summary of Input

Criteria and suggestions for how these housing types can work better	Criteria and suggestions for how these housing types can work better	Criteria and suggestions for how these housing types can work better
➢ DADU's are better in areas with alleys. ➢ Neighborhood consultation will help ensure neighborhood character is retained. ➢ Put limits on the numbers of these housing types in each neighborhood. ➢ Exempt some neighborhoods based on specific criteria (E.g. lot size). ➢ Don't overcrowd – consider relationship and impact on neighbors. ➢ City must be prepared to do the inspecting that is required. ➢ Affordability should be prioritized. ➢ Ensure fairness in permitting. ➢ Consider neighborhood specifics like scale, design, appropriateness, degree of existing density. ➢ Banks need to be involved. Sometimes banking requirements add to ugly, bad design. ➢ DADU's need consistent design and finish between house and the DADU. ➢ Allow boundary changes such as combining of lots and replatting to create more space for cottage housing. ➢ Regulating aesthetics will be hard, but try to include design features like porches, gardens, community spaces that could be regulated through code and zoning. ➢ Create incentives for owners. ➢ Be visionary about who is going to use this housing. ➢ Address parking by ensuring that parking regulations are enforced. ➢ Critical as to how they are places on the lot and how they address the street.	➢ Prioritize property with alleys in placing DADU's. ➢ Focus in areas where growth is anticipated and targeted by the city and in areas with good transit access. ➢ Require height and setback restrictions should be considered in context of what is appropriate for the neighborhood. ➢ Enforcement of existing parking regulations will help. ➢ Require that "required" parking is used by people in the units (versus parking on street). This is especially true in areas where there are other pressures on parking. ➢ Proactively deal with the traffic that comes with more density. Address traffic safety concerns. Consider things like traffic circles, speed bumps to slow traffic. ➢ On-street parking can actually help to slow down traffic. ➢ Need to have standards for open space and setbacks, requirements to be close to transit and to mitigate transportation impacts. ➢ Harness local knowledge in design review process and incorporate local knowledge into development. ➢ Seattle has very restrictive ADU requirements compared to other jurisdictions, e.g. waivers to parking requirement allowed in other cities. ➢ Develop within the context of the neighborhood. Clear standards that are not open-ended. ➢ Invite neighborhood input; listen to their concerns carefully. Project should not be a "done deal" before neighborhood review.	➢ Target some areas first vs. citywide application ➢ More density increases will come from cottages, works best with alley but there are not a lot of alleys in the city. ➢ Look into whether there is money in housing levy, through the home repair program – that can be made available to people to add an ADU that would be made available to low income person. ➢ Consult with land trusts to enable housing choices that could be used as low income housing options. ➢ Create a Sears catalog of designs where someone could just go in and get their design. That would make it easier for people to actually do it. ➢ Good design works. Procedural changes are needed so DCLU can give inspectors the authority to make judgment calls. ➢ Subdivision increases land value surrounding cottage housing even more. Find changes that are useful and broaden the options – not just ADU's & cottage housing. ➢ Simplify the ordinance to make this more likely to be a real choice. ➢ Watch what Redmond and other places nearby are doing. Find great examples of people elsewhere in region and create benchmarks for success ➢ Create an Ombudsman for projects within the city to help people get over hurdles and to give them tools to do these right. ➢ Educate the City staff on how the code is not working; teach them by showing examples of how it could be. ➢ Good inspectors who can make good judgment calls in the field will make a big difference. ➢ Incorporate simple solutions to address people's big concerns like window placement for privacy ➢ Look at dispersion requirement of these housing types ➢ Develop a 2 track review process; give a choice to go through optional design review height/setback or use design book plans. ➢ Design on the counter with the plan, make it easy. ➢ In order to make this a viable housing option that fulfills the goal there will need to be marketing and public awareness efforts.

IV. Appendix

Focus Group Summary of Input

Criteria and suggestions for how these housing types can work better	Criteria and suggestions for how these housing types can work better	Criteria and suggestions for how these housing types can work better
➢ Should be welcoming. Consider how you get in them and where is parking. ➢ Increasing supply should be a priority and will help address affordability issues. ➢ Design Review will help ensure quality. ➢ Planning Books – Create a "Sears catalogue" of pre approved plans in order to make it easy for people. It will bring down the costs and make the permitting process easier. It will also help with the quality and design concerns. ➢ Help people do this by providing tool that will speed up process and lower expenses.	➢ Structure public process to not last too long. It is not sustainable to require approval of neighbors. ➢ Ensure neighbors get a fair shake in decision-making about their neighborhoods. ➢ Recognize distinction between retrofitting an existing building and building a new one. This includes both design issues and ensuring that plumbing/electrical are adequate for this new use. ➢ Minimize substandard housing being developed. Education of the landlord is very important, especially regarding landlord-tenant laws. ➢ Limit how many per block. ➢ Institute covenant agreements	➢ Make it easier for the layperson by creating a "how to" kit that walks through how to hire architect, explains the land use review, permit process, and outlines costs and financing. ➢ Think through and work with the financing component. ➢ Build your own DADU kits – stock plans. Sounds like a good Project for AIA ➢ DADU's will be least intrusive to the current code. ➢ Cottages are out of character in L zones should be in Single family zones. ➢ Height has to be conceptually based and architecturally sound. ➢ Alleyway rear yard setbacks should be built right up to the edge of an alley as it has many positive impacts. ➢ Provide flexibility in open space and how you provide it. It should be functional space. ➢ Neighborhood council is not always representative of neighborhood. Going through only them is not really a fair process. Might be better to outreach to people in perimeter to get buyoff and do a pre design neighborhood meeting during project planning. ➢ DCLU middlemen need to be educated on helping contractor to keep costs down if we want to create affordable housing. It shouldn't be harder to build something that is a better project just because the codes get in the way. ➢ Educate the public, elected officials and developers and bankers. Coordinate a tour of all of these housing types and then take people out to see it. ➢ City has to step up and be proponent. ➢ Compile statistics and develop general human interest stories about who lives in these cottages and DADU's. ➢ Mayor and City council have to set vision, set goals, and get input to make it better and be leaders in moving this forward. It is their mandate and their responsibility.

IV. Appendices

Public Forum Agenda

Housing Choices Public Open House and Forum

Wednesday, March 26, 2003

Seattle Center, Northwest Rooms (Olympic)

5:30 – 8:30 P.M.

AGENDA

Co-sponsored by the Seattle Planning Commission and the City's Department of Design, Construction and Land Use

Open House **5:30 – 6:30** P.M.

- *View Displays*
- *Ask Questions of City Staff and Planning Commissioners*
- *Opportunity For Public Comment*

Public Forum Program **6:30 – 8:30** P.M.

Welcome and Introductions **6:30 – 6:40** P.M.

***Diane Sugimura**, Director of Department of Design, Construction and Land Use*
***John Owen**, Chair, Seattle Planning Commission*

Background/Overview **6:40 – 6:50** P.M.

***Mimi Sheridan**, Seattle Planning Commissioner*

Presentation on Cottage Housing and Detached ADUs **6:50 – 7:05** P.M.

***Jory Phillips**, DCLU staff*
***Mike Kimelberg**, DCLU staff*

Panel Discussion **7:05 – 7:50** P.M.

***Moderator, Chuck Weinstock**, Director, Capitol Hill Housing Improvement Program*
Panel Members:
***Mark Hinshaw,** Architect and contributing writer to the Seattle Times*
***Chuck Winkelman**, Neighbor of Housing Choices Demonstration Project*
***Vince Ferrese,** Designer/building of Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit*
***Lisa Merki,** City Neighborhood Council and Southeast Neighborhood Plan Steward*

Table Discussion **7:50 – 8:20** P.M.

This discussion will be facilitated by a Planning Commissioner, focus group participant or staff. Notes will be taken, summarized and included in the Commission's report.

Closing/Next Steps **8:20 – 8:30** P.M.

Moderator, John Owen

IV. Appendices

Public Forum Participants

T. J. Andersen
Brittani Ard
Emory Baldwin
Tim Becker
Garrett Birkeland
Mindy Black
Evelyn Brom
Steve Brooke
Marci Bryant
Judy and Hudson Burke
Christine Carr
Mike Carroll
Clarence Copeland
Brian Corbett
Karen DeLucas
Tom Donnelly
Allan Farkas
Bill Fenimore
Mike Ferone
Vince Ferrese
Gary Gartcell
Joseph Gellings
Laura Hafermann
Dru Hardee
Laura Hewitt Walker
Mike Hollingea
Laura Hopper
Ron Hopper
Mark Huppert
S. Johnsen
Heather Johnston
Skye Kahli
Michael Kitchell
Ian Klein
Scott Kralik
John Kucher
Gary Langowski
Denise Lathrop
Tory Laughlin Taylor
Marty Liebowicz
Stephen Edwin Lundgren
Suying Luu
Jennifer Mahler
Mike Mariano
Helen Matekel
Andrfew McCune
Lisa Merki
Lisa Miller
Tammy Morales
George Ostrow
Tom Phillips
Chad Rollins
Jim Romano
Rick Sever
Cheryl Sizov
Jim Soules
Winnie Sperry
Andrew Taylor
James Thomas
Jeremy von Wandruszka
Lluvia and Seth Walker
Chuck Weinstock
Jaques White
David Williams
Chuck Winkelman
Vin Yarnmunilert
Chris and Ward MacKenzie

IV. Appendices

Public Forum Summary of Input

Public Forum Summary of issues, concerns and Ideas from the presentations and table discussions

Housing Choices Overall	Detached ADUs	COTTAGES
Need for this Housing Type ▪ Need affordable housing options overall in a variety of neighborhoods for people like teachers who often cannot afford to live in the communities where they work. ▪ These housing types will affect character of the city ▪ Build in protections to ensure the fabric of communities. ▪ With increased density come traffic issues. In the short term traffic will be a real problem. ▪ Look at locational criteria and allow each neighborhood to decide whether to require parking. ▪ Seattle has a responsibility to graciously accept density. ▪ Need to make the City dense near transit lines. ▪ Detached ADUs & Cottages allow more people/homeowners to live in Seattle rather than moving to the outskirts and creating more sprawl.	**Need for this Housing Type** ▪ From an economic perspective DADUs can help to support intergenerational housing for lower income households. ▪ ADU's have worked very well in single family residential neighborhoods it is likely that Detached ADU's will also work well and provide needed options. ▪ DADU's are often better housing options than ADU's that are often built in basement. The carriage house or garden house concept for DADU's is a nicer visual and will be appealing to neighbors and those living in the housing.	**Need for this Housing Type** ▪ Cottage housing provides potential home ownership and a long-term way to add density with good transit access ▪ Cottage housing promotes economic and lifestyle diversity. Affordability should not necessarily be an objective SF cottage housing – same cost as SF home.
Concerns ▪ Concerns with parking, traffic and privacy due to increased density in single family neighborhoods. ▪ Concern that this will negatively impact the character and fabric of single family neighborhoods.	**Concerns** ▪ Opposed to Design Review for DADU. It is not required for other housing such as big tear –down new homes that are out of character and scale with the neighborhoods that are not subject to design review. Design review on DADU's is an unfair scrutiny. ▪ Need to ensure there is a simplified structure and process for DADU's. Overall process should be easy and have a threshold for tiered review ▪ Does not need to be and should not be prohibitively expensive. ▪ Parking issues vary significantly. Don't be too rigid in adding requirements Requirement for off-street parking should be waived in some situations. ▪ May be challenges to owner occupied requirement ▪ Concern that a 12 foot plate height won't allow above 1 story. 16 foot better & allow floor over garage.	**Concerns** ▪ Concern with whether there enough available cottage sites. ▪ Character & scale can be addressed, but concerned about the neighborhood fabric. ▪ Parking and density concerns come down to fear of the unknown. ▪ There is a lot of upfront costs which create a big challenge before ever getting to a neighborhood design review. Neighborhood design review would make it too cumbersome.
Criteria and suggestions for how these housing types can work better	**Criteria and suggestions for how these housing types can work better**	**Criteria and suggestions for how these housing types can work better**

IV. Appendix

Public Forum Summary of Input

Housing Choices Overall	Detached ADUs	COTTAGES
▪ Balance the impacts city-wide and not just in certain neighborhoods ▪ The City could provide better education and background on why "good density" is great thing. Teach neighbors about GMA ▪ City should conduct a survey of parking and determine a process for waiving parking requirements ▪ Make outreach materials available in multiple languages and at Neighborhood Service Centers and Family Support Centers to target potential audiences for these housing types	▪ Find ways to promote a scale and typology for "garden cottage" or "carriage home". ▪ The plan book acts as an economic incentive for poorer people to build these types of housing. ▪ Detached ADUs should relate to scale of main house to show DADU is subordinate. ▪ Prescribe detached ADUs city-wide. ▪ Design review process should offer departures to applicants. If builder meets prescribed standards, than no design review or public process. ▪ Create a better process where neighbors can work with neighbors. ▪ Look at places like the City of Kirkland to see what works and what does not work. ▪ Consider geographic standards based on availability of bus line. ▪ Consider Location Efficient Mortgage options to place DADU's in certain neighborhoods, or near transit. ▪ Require a basic level of prescriptive design but close to nothing more than what would be prescribed in single family zones. ▪ Find ways to minimize light/shadow impacts on adjoining properties. ▪ Consider two permitting options; one with strict standards and one with departures & neighborhood review. ▪ Don't get too complicated with height limits instead look at FAR standards. ▪ The size of unit could be relative to size of lot or average of lot sizes in neighborhood	▪ Provide incentives liker location efficient mortgages, Flexcars, reduced parking requirements for cottage housing if with x number of feet of single family bus line. ▪ Builder may benefit by holding a neighborhood meeting prior to proposal, very early in process. ▪ Look outside of Seattle to determine density limits for Cottage Housing. ▪ Greenwood cottages provide a good example of how cottages can fit nicely into the neighborhood context. ▪ Cottage homes should have a strong sense of community and help to create a sense of community. ▪ Create a process to deal with this scale impact of Cottages. Sitting and bulk should fit the specific site. ▪ Apply same level of scrutiny as comparable density projects have with flexibility to take advantage of a given site.