
**SEATTLE HOUSING AUTHORITY
YESLER TERRACE CITIZEN'S REVIEW COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

MEETING NO.: 9

LOCATION: Yesler Community Center, 917 East Yesler Way

DATE: Wednesday, September 26, 2007, 5:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES: Committee Members

Norman Rice, Chair
 Elise Chayet
 Herold Eby
 John Fox
 Abdisamad Jama
 Timothy Leary
 M. Michelle Mattox
 Mary McCumber
 Quang Nguyen
 Kristin O'Donnell

Father Hoang Phuong
 Adrienne Quinn
 Michael Ramos
 Sue Sherbrooke
 George Staggers
 Sue Taoka
 Linda Taylor (alternate for James Kelly)
 Donya Williamson
 Norma Zavala

SHA Staff

Judi Carter
 Virginia Felton
 Eddie Hill
 Brett Houghton
 Judith Kilgore
 Leslie Stewart
 Tom Tierney

Facilitators and Guests

Marcia Wagoner and Katie Lemmon, PRR
Marcia Tate Arunga, Arunga & Associates

Liz Birkholz, NBBJ
Milenko Matanovic, Pomegranate Center

I. Call to Order

Chair Rice called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. He reviewed the agenda items for tonight's meeting. He asked that members of the Muslim community in the audience verify the appropriate time for a meeting break for the purpose of evening prayer. The response provided by the Muslim community through an interpreter was 7:15 p.m.

Rice thanked members of the Outreach Team for their work during the first phase of this project.

II. Community Comments

Chair Rice called for public comments. No one wished to speak.

III. Approval of the Minutes of the August 22, 2007 Meeting

Rice asked for amendments to the minutes of the Committee's August 22, 2007 meeting. There were none. Quinn moved to approve the minutes as distributed; Williamson seconded the motion; all those present voted AYE; the motion passed unanimously. Taoka and Staggers abstained from voting since they were not present at the meeting.

IV. Report by Pomegranate Center on the Community Art Project

Milenko Matanovic of Pomegranate Center gave a PowerPoint presentation regarding the community art engagement project developed so far. He said that the project is based on what community members value and feel is unique about Yesler Terrace and how these elements can be expressed into the future. They include: (1) honor and express the rich and unique history; (2) integrate art into the neighborhood; (3) celebrate cultural diversity; (4) created a connected system of outdoor spaces; (5) ensure a safe and enriching environment for children; (6) preserve the natural environment; and (7) connect with downtown and jobs. He reviewed the themes that emerged from the art work created by youth included in the packets. Matanovic said that the art project is a work in process, and it is expected that three more panels will be added for a total of twelve panels. He said that the idea is to display the panels in Community Center.

In response to a question from O'Donnell, Matanovic said that the project incorporated input and ideas from adults and youth. Fox asked how the common themes that have emerged from the project, such as open space, trees and respect for history, can be preserved with a much denser redeveloped Yesler Terrace. Matanovic responded that this will be a creative challenge for the designers.

V. Definitions and Guiding Principles – Remaining Issues and Adoption

Rice stated that the first remaining issue is whether the ninth guiding principle under one-for-one replacement housing should be modified to incorporate the language in bold: "If the footprint of Yesler Terrace is expanded to include adjacent low-income housing, any lost units at those sites will be replaced in the neighborhood **one-for-one at comparable rent and without sacrificing existing limited local funding such as trust fund or levy dollars to replace those units.**"

Fox stated that he feels the language in bold font should be retained noting that his recollection of past discussions is that the Committee already agreed to the language as written above. He said that the language holds SHA accountable for replacing any lost units in the neighborhood due to the expansion of the Yesler Terrace boundary using new funding sources, not existing ones. He said that existing funding sources would otherwise be used to build new affordable units thereby increasing the affordable housing stock and the ability to serve a greater number of low income people; without the language, scarce resources can be used to replace units at Yesler Terrace instead of using the resources to build new ones.

Chair Rice asked for input from SHA on this matter. Tierney responded that this issue was up for discussion at the August meeting, however, because Fox left the meeting early, it was Tierney's desire to table the matter until the September meeting. Tierney said that SHA supports the language in bold with regard to *one-for-one* and *comparable rent*. However, he said it would be very difficult to carry out this guiding principle with out access to traditional funding sources that are generally available to not-for-profit organizations. For example, SHA recently purchased the Baldwin Apartments on 13th Avenue and Yesler Way. This is existing low-income housing that could be used to replace units as part of the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace, but because the units are not safe and decent, the building needs to be demolished. Under this scenario, Tierney said that SHA is committed to replacing the Baldwin units in the neighborhood one-for-one at comparable rents. However, SHA should be free to access the same resources as other housing organizations in order to accomplish this.

In response to a question from Quinn, Fox said he feels that there is a distinction between renovation of an existing structure and demolishing and rebuilding a structure. However, he said that it is not acceptable for SHA to label a project as replacement housing for Yesler Terrace if it is a project that would be carried out regardless of the Yesler Terrace project. He said that using existing limited funding sources for the purpose of creating replacement units at Yesler Terrace when these funds could be used to expand the low-income housing stock is akin to "robbing Peter to pay Paul."

Williamson stated she feels that there are so few resources available to fund public housing projects, and this is a good reason to use any resources that have traditionally been available. O'Donnell disagreed, saying that using public funds for replacement units will take away funds that could be used to build additional units elsewhere. Tierney responded that he agrees with using public funds in this way if a building has a useful life; however, the Baldwin Apartments has lost its useful life and needs to be replaced. He said that rebuilding the Baldwin Apartments will actually result in an increase the number of low-income units as currently these units are uninhabitable. In this case, SHA should be able to compete for funds that have been traditionally available. Additional discussion ensued and several other Committee members (Sherbrooke, Taoka, McCumber, Chayet and Rice) expressed their support for deleting the last portion of the sentence that states, "and without sacrificing existing limited local funding such as trust fund or levy dollars to replace those units." Support for the deletion was based in part on the desire to provide flexibility in considering development scenarios especially because of the uncertainty with regard to future funding sources.

Fox said that, should a vote of the Committee result in deleting the language regarding funding, he will propose alternate language that would limit the use of local funding, but not restrict it entirely.

Sherbrooke moved to adopt the ninth guiding principle under one-for-one replacement to state, "If the footprint of Yesler Terrace is expanded to include adjacent low-income housing, any lost units at those sites will be replaced in the neighborhood one-for-one at comparable rent;" McCumber seconded the motion; Chayet, Eby, Leary, Mattox, McCumber, Nguyen, Phuong, Quinn, Rice, Sherbrooke, Stagers, Taoka, Taylor, Williamson and Zavala voted AYE; Fox and O'Donnell voted NAY; the motion passed.

Fox moved to modify the ninth guiding principle under one-for-one replacement to restrict the use of limited local funding by SHA in cases where a structure would be demolished, but allow the use of these funding sources in the case of rehabilitation of a structure; O'Donnell seconded the motion; Eby, Fox and O'Donnell

voted AYE; Chayet, Leary, Mattox, McCumber, Nguyen, Phuong, Quinn, Rice, Sherbrooke, Stagers, Taoka, Taylor, Williamson and Zavala voted NAY; the motion failed.

In response to a comment from Fox, Tierney said that SHA does not intend to demolish units that can be renovated.

Rice stated that the second remaining issue is whether the tenth guiding principle should be retained under one-for-one replacement housing which states: **“Pursue those alternatives for Yesler Terrace which will enable us to maintain the vast bulk of the site in public ownership, or that at a minimum will guarantee that after the term of any financing is complete, the bulk of the site will be returned to public use and ownership in perpetuity and continue serving first very low-income households.”**

Fox stated that he feels this guiding principle should be retained because it helps to ensure that Yesler Terrace will remain in public ownership, as it should; without the principle the door is opened to privatization of a public resource. Tierney responded that with the decline in federal funding, it will be necessary to sell portions of Yesler Terrace in order to pay for redevelopment. He said that he feels it would be beneficial to examine and present a variety of development scenarios and financing plans and advantages and disadvantages of each plan would be identified. He said he would expect a relatively small portion of the entire site to be sold in order to accomplish some of the objectives in the guiding principles, such as increasing the number of low-income units and incorporating public amenities.

McCumber stated that one advantage of maintaining flexibility is that it allows the possibility of expanding the footprint of the current site of Yesler Terrace in order to accomplish one-for-one replacement; in turn this provides greater flexibility for residents to return to the community after redevelopment. In response to a question from Sherbrooke, Fox said that he feels the stakeholders should come together to find new funding resources in order to address the shortfalls noted by Tierney. Rice stated that the proposed guiding principles direct the development of scenarios that range from replacing all units on the current site, which would provide very little flexibility, to selling enough portions of the site to private developers to provide a great deal of flexibility. O'Donnell stated that she is in favor of retaining the principle as the opportunities to acquire public land in the future are few.

There was continued discussion about the flexibility of the existing language of this principle and alternate language that would strike a balance between the two extreme viewpoints. Taoka stated that the principle as currently written would make it very difficult to carry out the redevelopment project, particularly with regard to the second part of the principle which has implications and restrictions of a tax credit project. Chayet stated that she is concerned that maintaining the land in public ownership is becoming more important than the provision of low-income housing. Fox responded that there is no limit established in the guiding principles on the amount of land at Yesler Terrace that could be sold. He posed the question of what is an acceptable amount of land to be sold and where would one draw the line. He said that the principle as written sends the message that as much of the resource should be retained as possible and without the principle there are no parameters. Rice stated that he feels there are parameters when the guiding principles are considered in conjunction with one another. Fox responded that none of the principles address the sale of land.

Fox moved to retain the guiding principle as written; O'Donnell seconded the motion; Eby, Fox, O'Donnell and Zavala voted AYE; Chayet, Leary, Mattox, McCumber, Nguyen, Phuong, Quinn, Rice, Sherbrooke, Stagers, Taoka, Taylor and Williamson voted NAY; the motion failed.

Leary moved to adopt the definitions and guiding principles as amended to revise the ninth guiding principle and delete the tenth guiding principle under one-for-one replacement with the stipulation that minority reports may be submitted and incorporated into the document by October 12, 2007; Eby seconded the motion; Chayet, Eby, Leary, Mattox, McCumber, Nguyen, Phuong, Quinn, Rice, Sherbrooke, Stagers, Taoka, Taylor, Williamson and Zavala voted AYE; Fox and O'Donnell voted NAY; the motion passed.

Rice summarized the Committee's discussion and outcomes of the votes which was interpreted to community members.

Chair Rice recessed the meeting for a five minute break. The meeting was reconvened. Rice stated that several committee members expressed a desire during the break to consider alternate language with regard to the tenth guiding principle under one-for-one replacement.

Williamson moved to consider alternate language to replace the tenth guiding principle under one-for-one replacement; Taoka seconded the motion; all those present voted AYE; the motion passed.

Chayet proposed the following language to replace the tenth guiding principle under one-for-one replacement: **Pursue those alternatives for Yesler Terrace which will result in the greatest balance between the development of low-income public housing and the maintenance of the land in public domain.**

Williamson moved to adopt the language proposed by Chayet above in bold as the tenth guiding principle under one-for-one replacement; McCumber seconded the motion; all those present voted AYE except Fox who abstained from voting; the motion passed.

Rice called for a vote to adopt the amended definitions and guiding principles, revising the ninth principle as noted previously, and incorporating alternate language for the tenth principle as adopted above under one-for-one replacement.

Community members provided comments and feedback on the definitions and guiding principles.

A vote was taken on the motion to adopt the definitions and guiding principles as amended; Fox voted NAY; all others present voted AYE except O'Donnell who abstained from voting; the motion passed.

Chair Rice recessed the meeting for evening prayer. The meeting was reconvened.

VI. PowerPoint Presentation and Discussion of the Planning Concepts

Liz Birkholz of NBBJ gave a PowerPoint presentation on the planning concepts for the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace. Birkholz reviewed the slides noting the presentation is included in the packets. She said the planning concepts are based on and support the guiding principles. Birkholz answered questions of the Committee members and the audience. Additionally, general comments on the concepts were provided by Committee members:

- In response to a question from Fox, Birkholz said that it would be possible to achieve the planning concepts presented without major reorientation of the existing streets. Fox noted that replacing the streets would be a costly aspect of the redevelopment project.
- In response to a question of an audience member regarding expanded bus service through the redeveloped Yesler Terrace, Birkholz said that Metro will be consulted as part of the second phase of this process. She said that bus service is an important element, and Phase II would be the appropriate time to address bus service issues.
- Birkholz responded to another question of an audience member saying that resident and visitor parking will be incorporated into the redevelopment design.
- Zavala asked about the impacts of the redevelopment on Bailey Gatzert Elementary School. Birkholz responded that this is dependent on future SHA property purchases and zoning designations of parcels adjacent to the school.
- In response to a comment from O'Donnell, Birkholz said that should rezoning be required, the process would be initiated during Phase II.
- Fox stated that he feels the planning concepts should reflect that the leveraging of Yesler Terrace is primarily for the purpose of increasing the number of low-income units in the community as the mission of SHA is to provide safe, affordable housing to those with low incomes.
- Sherbrooke stated that she supports the notion that leveraging the value of the land is for the purpose of increasing development options with regard many different public amenities, not just increasing the number of low-income units.
- O'Donnell stated that she feels dense areas are not desirable residential options, especially for families.

Rice stated that the purpose of the planning concepts is to help carry out the definitions and guiding principles into Phase II. After discussion, Committee members agreed that an introduction statement should precede the planning concepts that outline the how the concepts are intended to be used in developing conceptual site plans during Phase II of this process.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8.02 p.m.