

ASHLAND SOCIAL EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES
October 3, 2024

I. CALL TO ORDER

(5 min)

Members present: Tara Houston, Emily Simon, Allison Mendel, John Tyler, Gina DuQuenne, Jeff Dahle, and Kerrick Gooden

Absent: Neeta Singh

Guests in person: Veronica Allen, Brandon Goldman

Guests via zoom: Derek Severson, Scott Fregonese, Mackenzie Visser

1. Land Acknowledgment - We acknowledge and honor the aboriginal people on whose ancestral homelands we work - the Iikirakutsum Band of the Shasta Nation, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities who make their home here today. We denounce the egregious acts of the colonizers and government and recognize the horrific impacts that still exist today. We honor the first stewards in the Rogue Valley and the lands we love and depend on: Tribes with ancestral lands in and surrounding the geography of the Ashland Watershed include the original past, present and future indigenous inhabitants of the Shasta, Takelma and Athabaskan people. We also recognize and acknowledge the Shasta village of K'wakhakha - "Where the Crow Lights" - that is now the Ashland City Plaza.
2. Labor Acknowledgment - We also pause to recognize and acknowledge the labor upon which our country, state, and institutions are built. We remember that our country is built on the labor of enslaved people who were kidnapped and brought to the U.S. from the African continent and recognize the continued contribution of their survivors. We also acknowledge all immigrant labor, including voluntary, involuntary, trafficked, forced, and undocumented peoples who contributed to the building of the country and continue to serve within our labor force. We acknowledge all unpaid care-giving labor. To the people who contributed this immeasurable work and their descendants, we acknowledge their indelible mark on the space in which we gather today. It is our collective responsibility to critically examine these histories, to repair harm, and to honor, protect, and sustain their contribution to our society.

II. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

(40 min)

1. Presentation from City of Ashland Planning Department Staff on the Climate Friendly Area re-zoning project

Scott Fregonese and Mackenzie Visser, project consultants, provided a presentation for input from SERJAC on Climate Friendly Areas (CFA). (full presentation in agenda packet). Severson spoke that CFA's are new State requirements that include updating zoning code throughout the City. Fregonese explained which areas in the city are being considered for this designation. CFA's must have housing capacity for 30 percent of the City's need and allow for multifamily homes and mixed-use (commercial with residential). Additional requirements include no parking minimums, a 50 ft. height allowance, and a minimum population density of 15 units per acre with no maximum densities. Severson added that transportation system updates will go along with this in about six months. The initial land use code audit is complete and set for code adoption late spring of next year. The City's planning department hosted an open house, and is also presenting to Committees as part of the public engagement process.

Houston asked how future growth is calculated, and Mendel asked what results from a CFA classification. Fregonese spoke that Portland State University is the state-recognized entity for this population forecast. This report breaks down housing types

and is referenced for the Ashland Housing Needs analysis. CFA designation would result in new zoning for the areas chosen. Fregonese spoke that Ashland's downtown corridor already essentially meets CFA criteria, but this designation continues the City's goals. Fregonese gave an overview of each of the areas being considered: the Railroad Property, Crowman Mill, and Triangle (see presentation in agenda packet for details). Site considerations for CFA's include an anti-displacement analysis to fend off gentrification, as does the City's Housing Production Strategy that includes CFA work.

Mendel asked for the definition of 'town home'. Goldman spoke that these are distinguished from condominiums in that ownership includes the land under the building. Mendel asked about financing obstacles for buildings with mixed-use. Fregonese spoke that financing for mixed-use was difficult when new (to the financing industry), but is now more common and understood. Makenzie spoke they are not harder to finance, but tend to be more expensive.

Dahle asked how gentrification happens. Fregonese spoke that gentrification occurs when values go up, usually in newly developed areas, and is not new to Ashland. The City has done a good job trying to bring in affordable housing, but it is still a reality and mitigation includes planning efforts like this one. The basis of the Housing Production Strategy is to mitigate late stage gentrification.

Houston spoke that Ashland has an affluent white population, that the north end is more developed than the south, and that she is interested to see continued growth on south end. Houston continued she is also concerned development would raise prices there and spoke of the balance between convenience and price. DuQuenne spoke of land banking and of non-profits that provide affordable housing development. Mendel asked how population density is enforced. Severson spoke that this is required for permitting and that mixed zones already have population density minimums. Mendel asked how mobile home parks are impacted by these requirements. DuQuenne spoke that the Council is working on this as part of the housing production strategy. Goldman spoke that a grant from state for rezoning areas to a manufactured home park zone is coming soon. DuQuenne spoke this comes from the community and Council working together. Houston asked if redevelopment only happens when property is sold. Goldman spoke this is usually market-driven but can happen when a tenant comes along that would like to redevelop.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(5 min)

1. Minutes of the 8/1/2024 Regular Meeting

Mendel/Tyler m/s to approve minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(30 min)

1. SERJAC strategic planning--

1. Brief recap of the reorganization proposal and how it ties into strategic planning: How should we consider Parks and Planning? Should those commissions also be assigned a liaison?
2. Overview of strategic planning process: how do we want to work?
3. Brainstorm/Homework: each member could contribute at least one short-term, mid-term, and long-term goal (to continue in November meeting)

Houston spoke of the need for strategic planning for SERJAC and asked for time over the next few meetings to do this with the materials included in the agenda packet. The committee discussed long-term goals for SERJAC to work on. DuQuenne spoke of recruiting from all around the community. Dahle spoke that outreach should be ongoing with a goal to have a full committee. Houston spoke that having a strategic plan will help with outreach by being able to hold and communicate a clear purpose. The committee discussed coming up with a Mission Statement with a clear purpose to include on the committee's page on the City's website.

Houston requested that members of the committee consider and contribute one short-term, one mid-term and one long-term goal to discuss at its next meeting (November 7, 2024). Houston posed the question: What does it mean to be a team that will be evolving for some time to come? Tyler spoke of having goals clarified before outreach is important and Mendel spoke of the benefit to going to other committees. Houston spoke these can be done simultaneously. Houston will work on the list of committee member list for outreach to other committees and get back to members.

Dahle spoke that Council looks to advisory committees as subject matter experts, as it helps to have the most informed advice as possible. Houston spoke of ongoing education for this body is important and has this is on her radar.

V. NEW BUSINESS

(10 min)

1. Pride Parade - October 5, 2024

Simon spoke that she has the SERJAC banner and will march with SERJAC banner next to the City of Ashland Banner in parade group 19B. For those that would like to march, the group will meet at 8/8:30 at corner of Siskiyou and Gresham by the Library. DuQuenne spoke that she will march with the City of Ashland Banner next to SERJAC (see flyer in agenda packet).

2. Indigenous People's Day at SOU, Oct. 19 and 20

Houston spoke of meeting with Keenwani Kravitz, Native Nations Liaison for Southern Oregon University (SOU), with regards to SOU's Indigenous Peoples Day Celebration on October 19-20, 2024. Kravitz invited Mayor Graham to speak during the opening ceremony on Saturday. All were invited. The two-day celebration will include dancing, singing, Native vendors, and a feast in honoring First Peoples (see flyer in agenda packet).

VI. ADJOURNMENT

(5 min)

Before adjournment, Dahle spoke that there is a training for committee chairs coming up in January that will go along with Ordinance 3244 that is being drafted regarding uniform policies and procedures.

1. Wrap up / Assign any action items

Meeting adjourned