



Mayor's Task Force for Racial & Ethnic Equality

REAL ESTATE & HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE **MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

3:30 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

Call to Order

Danita Nias, subcommittee co-chair, called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. Tiffany David, of the City of West Palm Beach Mayor's Office, took attendance of participants for the meeting record. Danita Nias reviewed the meeting minutes.

Approval of Minutes

No comments were made about the July 21st, August 4th, and August 11th meeting minutes; the meeting minutes were unanimously approved as distributed.

Confirmation: Priority One Recommended Ideas

Subcommittee members began reviewing their first policy idea (target vacant lots/build affordable housing). Ontario Davis Johnson, subcommittee member, recommended adding chronic nuisance properties and excessively fined properties under idea one, Tiffany David recommended looking into zoning laws to create more quality affordable housing because programs to address those properties already exist. Ontario Davis Johnson also suggested adding exemptions for "historical" status properties to not hinder progress. Tiffany David recommended increasing funding support for the historical areas. Subcommittee members then agreed to remove the "especially in Historic Northwest" to not add boundary limits on their idea.

Maricela Torres, subcommittee member, asked for clarification on the "safeguards" being referenced under idea two (code enforcement). Subcommittee members then brainstormed specific safeguards to add, which included protection from landlord retaliation such as eviction, increased rental fees, and higher maintenance costs.

Under idea three (promote quality rental housing), Maricela Torres asked what the alternatives were to dilapidated housing. Ontario Davis Johnson suggested adding emergency housing vouchers and access to emergency housing funds to relocate to another living space.

Subcommittee members agreed that idea four (housing for immigrant communities) was clear and sufficient. The idea addresses the issue and has specific guidelines that are actionable and feasible vs. broad recommendations that may not be.



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Confirmation: Priority Two Recommended Ideas

The subcommittee discussed how to clarify their third sub-idea. Members first tackled clarifying which group this bullet point is addressing. The subcommittee group agreed to add the phrase “historically underserved and vulnerable” to clarify the group. Members then debated adding geographical specifications to this sub-idea and agreed to add in parentheses example locations. Members also agreed that the overall goal they want to get across in this idea is that they are trying to protect community members in vulnerable and underserved areas from predatory purchases of their homes and to preserve the wealth they have created by owning the property. Members did not want the phrasing to sound like it would be a handout. The phrasing will be finalized by the JSA team.

Next Steps: Task Force Review

On Friday, the finalized compiled ideas list will be circulated to Task Force members. It will also be available for public comment. At the August 26th Task Force meeting, Task Force members will deliberate on the draft recommendations. There will also be space for public comments. It is undecided whether the subcommittee will have a September meeting, it is dependent upon the outcomes of the Task Force’s meeting.

Adjournment

Danita Nias adjourned the meeting at 4:45 p.m. The next subcommittee meeting will (potentially) take place on September 15th, 2021, at 3:30 p.m. on Zoom.

ATTENDANCE

Public:

Bianca Clarke
William Cross

Present:

Antoinne Wright, Subcommittee Co-Chair
Danita Nias, Subcommittee Co-Chair

Ezra Gene Saffold, Subcommittee Member
Maricela Torres, Subcommittee Member
Michael Odum, Subcommittee member
Ontario Davis Johnson, Subcommittee Member

Tiffany David, City of West Palm Beach Mayor’s Office
Kayla Elson, Justice & Sustainability Associates
Emma Lipsky, Justice & Sustainability Associates

Absent:

Parisa Hamzetash, Subcommittee Member