



Wednesday October 4, 2023

11:00 AM -1:00PM

Virtual Option: [Webex](#)

**Attendees:**

Board Members: Sophia Benalfew, Dr. Mark Jones, Lindsay Goes Behind, Jennell Lee Hicks, Quanlin Hu, Jamie Madden, Kaleb Germinaro, Willard Brown, John Rodriguez, Abdi Yusuf, Evelyn Allen

**Absent:** Diana Parades, Denise Perez

**Public:** Yordanos Teferi, Jenna Franklin, Jennifer Pascoe

**Public Comment**

None

**Welcome & Relationship Building**

Bana Abera, EDI AB Facilitator

*Relationship building and Confirm Attendance.*

**EDI Division Director Candidates Meet & Greet**

Bana Abera, EDI Facilitator

**Comprehensive Plan Updates & Discussion**

*Bana Abera, EDI Facilitator, Board Chair*

Context: There have been discussions and feedback that have been going around and we wanted to create the opportunity to discuss those feedback and also potentially propose any request to the team and or OPCD.

Board member: For the last year, we've been asking for accountability. The last plan, communities were gutted. I was interested in seeing if the board is interested in building an accountability metric or plan for the Comp Plan team and how they can answer to community. They've avoided accountability. They still don't know the difference between RET and the Anti-Displacement Framework.

Board member: I like the idea of an accountability plan. I raised the question in email because City or County planning is making things worse. The City is considering detached house dwellers and in North and South Seattle. The City seems to believe that families don't exist downtown. I've been disappointed in their outreach plan and their lack of accountability and wanted to see if we should be spending our time on EDI priorities.



Board member: It's important to work on this and contribute to this. I think the first step should be getting an understanding of what information and understanding has been shared to the Comp Plan team and what they've done.

Board member: Still don't know how individual neighborhoods can advocate because one neighborhood's input or needs can be harmful to another. Each neighborhood's needs are different, and I don't know how the planning accounts for that. And when communities identify their needs and wants, it should be listed and documented so it's acknowledged that the issues were raised and why it was a no. The whole area around, schools and families and public safety is completely missing. Some neighborhood's priorities are public safety and don't care about what's being built. They care about safety. And when we say comprehensive that that gets folded into this plan and public safety should have it's own sections.

Board member: it makes no sense how they exclude schools and school communities and have been for over a year.

Board member: I noticed a lot of disconnected with the Comp Plan team. When we raised questions, they said we will look into it and work on that, but the following meeting there are no updates or follow ups. So every conversation seems to start anew. How are they incorporating the feedback and input from the board? We don't see that.

Board member: Regarding funding and how housing is funded—first floor commercial on a residential building. It would be a huge change for OH to take responsibility for all aspects of the housing and development of affordable housing projects. Making this easier for the community and the developer. How are these kinds of concerns and issues being incorporated into the Comp Plan. Shifting costs from communities to the City like permits. High costs are there and issues around connecting to utilities, etc. are huge issues for small community projects and the City and its departments are the barriers for these small community projects.

Board member: I agree with the comments re: Office Housing covering the different costs including parking and covering that for families. It is also horrible for community development projects with empty commercial spaces because businesses and org need to own these spaces and it makes it challenging when we can't sell it. And for the Housing Levy: regular services for homelessness and keep families in their homes and prevent displacement and homelessness and providing funds for the services community orgs provide. This is critical for families, especially coming out of Covid 19.

Board member: totally agree mr. brown and miss evelyn! i do negotiations with OH all the time and I can tell you they are eagle eyed on funding anything that doesn't qualify as "residential" but that doesn't mean we shouldn't advocate for some deeper and broader partnership and more creative ways to address the issues. i love the idea of figuring out to maybe do an OH/EDI shared RFP at some point for projects that are both housing and community and business space!



Board member: if folks are interested in pursuing Willard's suggestion around working with Office of Housing policy, I'd be happy to help. I have a good understanding of the federal rules that constrain OH but also can also help identify where they can do more despite them.

OPCD Director: We've been working on accountability specially after the public comments and feedback after the release and the environmental impact report and are trying to be transparent about all the comments. The way the system of feedback/comments are structured it is not done by neighborhoods and through that review process neighborhoods should provide comments based on their neighborhoods and we should be responsible to them. We're trying to be responsible for all your feedback.

Staff is working on the draft, but it's the Mayor's plan and the final decision is the Mayor's and Mayor's staff before it goes to Council. The accountability goes beyond the staff level and is up to elected official. This plan is large.

Board member: agreed all above. so from a comp plan policy perspective, maybe at least a baseline policy to urge collaboration and resource leveraging among city governments (OH, OED, SDCI, SPU, SDOT etc) to expedite EDI type projects, reduce costs and maximize project and community outcomes, and/or part of the anti-displacement framework

Board member: I am really concerned about all the people in these development projects/apartments that don't fit the "affordable housing" requirements or don't meet the area median income or low income. Who is helping them? How can we keep this in mind in this planning?

Board member: those eligibility rules are set at the federal level unfortunately.

EDI Facilitator: Thank you for all your comments and thoughts. How would you like to move forward? Do you want to move forward with the path of the letter?

Board member: Let's compile the notes and draft something to send to Rico to share.

Board member: I think we should work on a draft letter at the Executive Committee meeting and circulate it with the board before sharing with Rico.

Board member: Sharing concerns sounds great, but let's also include specific asks based on those concerns/issues we raised.

EDI Facilitator: Next steps: notes will be shared with you, then EC will draft a letter to circulate within the board, and then share this letter with OPCD leadership.

### **Approval of August Meeting Minutes**

Bana Abera, EDI AB Facilitator



**Seattle**  
Office of Planning &  
Community Development

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Willard Brown moves to approve. Seconded by Mark Jones.

Call for additional comments/edits

- All in favor as is – all
- No – Nay or abstain – 0
- Abstain – 0

Minutes approved.

**Announcements & Adjourn**