

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, January 15, 2019

Committee Members Present: Edward Reynoso, Nelima Sitati Munene, Leah Goldstein Moses, Jennifer Munt, Aarica Coleman, David Ketroser, Miah Ulysse, Metric Giles, Mohamed Sheikh, Tommy Sar, Sonya Lewis, Tie Oei

Committee Members Excused: Leslie Redmond, Shirley Cain

Committee Members Absent: Harry Melander, Samantha Pree-Stinson

CALL TO ORDER

Committee Co-Chair Sitati Munene called the regular meeting of the Council's Equity Advisory Committee to order at 6:09 p.m.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

The agenda was moved by Coleman and seconded by Sheikh.

The meeting minutes from December 18, 2018 were moved by Goldstein Moses and seconded by Coleman.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES ACT GRANT

Libby Starling, Deputy Director, Community Development, led a discussion with the committee to identify opportunities to advance equity and promote equitable development through the Livable Communities Program. Libby asked for the EAC's input in three particular areas.

Committee members responded to the questions with the following comments, ideas, and suggestions:

1. How to better recruit representatives from community-based organizations to the Livable Communities Advisory Committee?

The time commitment may pose as a barrier for community-based organizations to participate in the Livable Communities Advisory Committee. To address this barrier, committee members suggested to:

- Compensate members representing community-based organizations
- Use a fellowship program or the Urban Scholars Program as a means to compensate members representing community organizations
- Reduce time commitment by dividing time obligation among more committee members representing community-based organizations

2. How to better encourage effective and early neighborhood engagement on projects by cities and developers?

To better encourage community engagement, committee members recommended that:

- Grant applicants demonstrate they are familiar with the demographics of the proposed project area and have taken steps to engage these communities.
- The Council clarify why effective community engagement is valued and questions in the application are tailored respectively
- More questions in the application ask about community demand and community need

- Staff host workshops to assist grant applicants to plan and implement meaningful community engagement that informs the scope and goals of the project
3. How to more effectively align the Livable Communities scoring criteria with the principles of the Equitable Development Scorecard?

To improve the effectiveness of the scoring criteria, the following actions and considerations were recommended:

- State or clarify the connections between the values represented in the scorecard and outcomes expected as a result of grants
- Clarify or add scoring criteria that directly asks about how the project affects communities that are underserved
- When evaluating proposals, recognizing the importance of accountability (intent versus impact) for proposed outcomes
- Consider how grant investment may lead to regenerative or sustained growth in wealth for community members
- Mixed-use developments do not necessarily have equitable impacts; the Council should encourage grant applicants (for development projects) to include local and neighboring businesses
- There is a shortage of accessible housing for people with disabilities; encourage grant applicants to prioritize accessibility in their housing development projects

Libby stated they would come back in early summer to engage the EAC on the scoring criteria. In February or March, staff can distribute a memo about how the EAC's input was incorporated.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVIEW

Lisa Barajas, Director of Community Development; Angela Torres, Manager, Local Planning Assistance presented a brief overview of the Council's role in regional planning, the plan review process, and opportunities for future engagement.

Throughout the presentation, committee members had the following comments and questions:

- Many community members feel the Council does not adequately review the plans –some plans do not meet the state minimum requirements. From an equity standpoint, we should not be accepting those plans.

Staff spend a lot of time making sure the plans meet minimum requirements; not only that they have met the minimum but provide clear and consistent information that regarding how they plan on accomplishing them. The plans must be consistent with the Council's requirements, particularly if they want to be eligible for grant funding like Livable Communities. Staff send back the plans many times with detailed information and instructions on how the plans should be revised.

- There are communities that have requested extensions for submitting their plans, what happens if they don't meet the deadline? Are they barred from funding? During the City of Minneapolis' comprehensive plan public hearings, I was told from the City that they couldn't request an extension to hear more perspectives because it would affect their funding.
- It is important that comprehensive plans are as specific as possible; because as community organizers, then we can hold our local government accountable.

OFFICE OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND SMAL BUSINESS INCLUSION OVERVIEW

Cyrenthia Jordan, Director of the Office of Equal Opportunity, and Elaine Ogilvie, Supervisor of the Small Business Unit, presented on the Council's Small Business Inclusion Programs. Due to time constraints, Cyrenthia will present an overview of the Office of Equal Opportunity at a later date.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Sitati Munene had several announcements for the committee:

- In December, we briefly discussed the service reductions to Route 16— members have asked for additional information regarding all the December Service changes and staff have provided a memo with the information. If the committee wants to take up the issue of how service reductions are made and communicated generally, we can do that at a future meeting. Please let me or the Standing Committee know.
- Please fill out the post-meeting survey. It only takes a few minutes complete, and your feedback is really useful. Yolanda will send the survey link.
- The Standing Committee Meeting this week will be rescheduled, Yolanda will be sending the new date.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.

Yolanda Burckhardt
Recording Secretary