



Portland Housing Bureau

N/NE Neighborhood Housing Strategy Oversight Committee

March 9, 2017

6:00 -8:00 pm

New Song Church

2511 NE MLK Jr. Blvd. Portland, OR 97211

✓ = Oversight Committee Action item

▶ = PHB staff member action item

March 2017 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Felicia Tripp, Virgie Ruiz, Dr. Steven Holt, Jillian Saurage, Reverend T. Allen Bethel, Marlon Holmes, Dr. Lisa Bates

Members Excused: Orlando Williams, Lorenzo Poe, Lisa Faust, Katrina Holland, Sarah Zahn

Staff Present: Matthew Tschabold, Areale Hammond, Dana Ingram, Sawyer Sheldon, Leslie Goodlow, Victoria James, Andrea Matthiessen

Guest Presenters: Dan Valliere and Jessica Woodruff – Reach. Trina Whitman, Joy Davis, and Cynthia Parker – Bridge. Julia Metz – PCRI

Agenda Item	Discussion Highlights	Outcomes / Next Steps
<p>Welcome</p>	<p>Dr. Holt welcomes the committee and the public. He reminds the public in attendance that this is a public meeting, and not a public forum. He invites the public to comment on any of the current agenda items. For comments, issues, or concerns not related to the current agenda items please speak with one of the committee members or PHB Staff present, or use the contact information on the business cards provided.</p> <p>Admin Note - Contact information on the business card is as follows: N/NE Neighborhood Housing Strategy 421 SW 6th Ave., Suite 500, Portland, Oregon 97204 Phone: 503.823.1190 Fax: 503.823.2387 Email: NNEstrategy@portlandoregon.gov Web: http://www.Portlandoregon.gov/PHB/NNE</p>	
<p>Interstate URA Projects Update: Port City / Williams</p>	<p>Dan Valliere gave the update for the Reach CDC project on the NE corner of Argyle and Kenton. Says that Reach manages the buildings they develop, which includes 5 other buildings in NNE. Jessica Woodruff says that they have begun their community outreach to several community organizations and have held a public forum on the development. Says one thing they have learned from those residents is a concern about parking in the neighborhood, and the safety of crossing the street to the building. Jessica says that there is a lot of excitement about the affordable housing coming to the area. Says that</p>	

some of the finer details people have brought up is a concern about security for the buildings, people want a safe indoor place for children to play, open floor plans and storage in the units, and a community computer room. Jessica says they allowed the residents to vote on the building styles they liked and the architect was there to hear this feedback. Says they have done their due diligence process both internally and externally with a third party. Says they have defined numbers now: 211 units total, 161 affordable to people making 60% or less of AMI, 50 market rate units for people making 80% - 100% AMI. Says the community made it very clear that they want 3 bedroom units, so some have been added to the plans. Says there will be 8,000 – 9,000 sqft of ground floor retail space. Says, at the request of the community, they have planned a courtyard for the corner of Argyle and Denver. Next steps are the architects designing the exterior of the building using the community feedback; then Reach will show the renderings to the community.

Cynthia Parker, President & CEO for [Bridge Housing](#) gave an overview of Bridge. Says she was raised in Portland and that is a big reason she wanted to the open an office in Portland to help alleviate the affordable housing crisis. Says Bridge started in California 35 years ago, and has now expanded to Washington and Oregon. [Joy Davis](#) is introduced, she is a founding partner and Racial Equity and Cultural consultant from [Design Culture Lab](#), says that they focus on design and place, and how communities of color interact with the built world. Says they are having an event on April 27, 2017 at New Song Community Church in NNE Portland, from 6:00 – 8:00pm. Says that this event will focus on community engagement, they will ask for input from the community.

Virgie asks for an example of a difficult project that Bridge has had, wants to know how they succeeded in that project. Cynthia says that most affordable housing is difficult, says that there are a lot of moving parts. Says that a recent example is a project in Los Angeles; says the neighborhood is wary because they have been cheated many times. Says that Bridge is working on the first 100 of what will be a 1,000-unit project; says that they need to bring in jobs because the community says that is important to them. Says that there are always obstacles, but that they want to succeed in NNE Portland because the community is counting on them.

	<p>Dr. Holt says that this property is in a historic community that has been ravaged by gentrification and displacement. Says that is the reason why people are so concerned with this project and why he is happy to see that Joy Davis and her firm are here to help consult on that specific “place based” issue.</p> <p>Jillian wants to know what happens if there is a problem? Says because Bridge is not located here, there is a worry that if there is an issue the problems won’t be heard by the people that can actually do something about them. Cynthia says that they are planning on building up the Portland office and expanding it soon. Says their commitment is to be accessible to needs of their projects, says she is always reachable by e-mail and her staff are very good at keeping an open dialog for all projects.</p> <p>Reverend Bethel asks how diverse the Bridge staff is? Wants to know about the staff in Portland; says it is important that they have staff that “look like” the tenants. Cynthia says they have a very small staff in Portland right now and are mostly in the room, says it is not very diverse in Portland right now; says that overall the whole company is very diverse though. Says that they are committed to diversity. Bethel says that he would rather see that sooner rather than later, doesn’t want to see months and months go by with promises of “soon” but wants to see it actually happen in a timely matter. Cynthia says fair enough; actions speak louder than words. Trina says they have an open Project Administrator position for their Portland office right now, says they have put out the word through community leaders and hopes to have a good batch of people apply.</p> <p>Julia Metz gave the update for PCRI on the Beatrice Marrow (formally known as the Grants Warehouse site), located on MLK and Fremont. The project will have 80 apartments; 4 studios, 32 1-bedrooms, 32 2-bedrooms, and 12 3-bedrooms. Serving 0 - 60% MFI with 20 Project Based Section 8 units, and will utilize the PHB Preference Policy. Julia says they have gone through design review and are wrapping up the building permit process. Says that there are several financial check points forthcoming as well, and that should be all done in April. Says that construction is targeted to start in late April, with 14 months for construction, completion date around August 2018. Says that they are on track to exceed 30% of their MWESB (Minority, Women Owned, and/or Emerging Small Businesses) goals on the contracting side.</p>	
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	<p>Leslie asks about the ground breaking. Says they need a date and to get with the mayor’s office to plan something for the ground breaking. Julia says she will make a note to get that date hammered down as soon as possible and let people know.</p> <p>Jillian asks for more information about the additional environmental hazards that were found on the site. Julia says it was remaining lead contamination in the soil; says that there were a lot of chemicals used on the site, and the remaining lead contamination was found in a small section, so they need to remove the soil from that area. Jillian asks what remediation is being done on the remainder of the site. Julia says she is not sure.</p>	
<p>Preference Policy – Planning / Update</p>	<p>Victoria James and Matthew Tschabold gave the update for PHB. Victoria says that all of the selected applicants are on the active or inactive waitlist; all on the active wait list are being routed to community partners. She refers to the <i>Preference Policy Process Refresher</i> slide in the presentation, which outlines the time line for an applicant going through the program / working with community partners. Victoria then presented the data on the next slide, <i>Data on the Process</i>, explaining that any applicants under “Terminated by PHB” did not return multiple calls, voicemails, and letters requesting verification information. Victoria then shows the next three slides and explains that these are some complaints they have had about the process, such as PHB’s verification process is lengthy, and explains some possible solutions / tradeoffs, such as stricter enforcement of deadlines, but that could lead to people lower on the list having a harder time getting verified in time. Several of these examples given on these three slides. Victoria asks the oversight committee to think about ways that PHB could overcome these obstacles and confusion during future use of the Preference Policy.</p> <p>Victoria explains how the Preference Policy would be applied to the rental market. Says it will be mostly the same as the homeownership process but that a few things will need to be done differently. Says PHB will need to build relationships with property managers, figure out how to advertise unit availability, set up designated application sites, reform the application, work on waitlist management, get all the applicants information to the property managers, and be really good about tracking whether an applicant is approved or denied for a unit and why. Says the following up on whether someone is approved or not will be critical to make sure people are not removed from the list before getting into</p>	

a unit. Victoria says that they are working on procuring a waitlist management software. Says that next they will look at how regularly to open and close the applications. Says they will need to be updated when new units come online, and finally working with property management and developers to see what their concerns and recommendations would be.

Virgie asks if there was enough PHB staff to help applicants fill out the applications and gather verification materials? Victoria says yes for filling out the applications. Says that they have a dedicated administrative assistant to help applicants on the verification side.

Jillian asks if there is a condo homeownership option. Victoria says there was but only a few people were interested. Andrea Matthiessen comes forward and says that two or three individuals were interested in the condos, but were not able to become home buyer ready. Says the condo builder then opted out of the Preference Policy entirely and paid PHB back for the invested resources.

Jillian asks if the Preference Policy will be as arduous for renters as it is for homeownership. Says that it seems like a lot to ask of renters. Victoria says that they are open to suggestions and to having that conversation, but that the basis of the Preference Policy is to give people who were displaced from the area a chance to come back; says that is hard to do without verifying addresses. Matthew says that they have already had people try to pull one over on the Preference Policy, by claiming points that they were not supposed to. Says this is why he is nervous about pulling back any of the verification processes. Says they want to streamline the process but not to the point that it compromises the edict of the Preference Policy. Jillian says that makes sense, it just seems like it's taking a long time to verify their preference; says she doesn't want it to be a barrier for people apply. Says that she worries people will not apply because they don't have three months to wait; says that people with no cause evictions don't have three months to wait to be verified then be put on a housing waitlist. Worries it will keep renters from looking at the area. Matthew says that makes sense, but that applications have to open and then close. Says that the less time they are open, the less applications they will need to verify, and the faster that can happen – but that means there will be people that qualify for the maximum number of points who are unable to apply in that short window. Says that is not really a staffing issue right now, more of a question of

	<p>how much time should PHB give people to gather documentation. Says that is something they would like the Oversight Committee’s input on that. Says that two weeks felt tight for homeownership, but that any longer dramatically effects the wait times. Says that he would like a separated meeting, or time on the agenda, to hash that out more thoroughly.</p> <p>Dr. Holt asks how many people are actively engaged in the process for homeownership and how many units available. Victoria says there are 65 slots available and there are 31 applicant households working with partners. Dr. Holt asks about the other available slots. Matthew says that there are some in process and two have filed grievances – says they can’t give those slots away until that process is done. Victoria says there are 17 pending with partners to see if they are able to be homeowner ready. Dr. Holt asks about the other 17 units. Victoria says this is an ongoing process, says they are verifying people on the timeline previously presented. Says this was one of the problems they are facing; do they go deeper on the list and verify more people than the 17 program slots they have available, or should they not risk getting peoples hopes up that they will have a slot and go through that long process when they very well could not. Dr. Holt says that is a long conversation they will have to have at a later date. Says they all want the same thing, to get people into their homes as fast as possible.</p>	
<p>Homeownership Planning</p>	<p>Andrea Matthiessen gives the update. Says that for the new Preference Policy round they have anywhere between 120 – 130 new homeownership opportunities in the NNE. Says they are looking to roll that out in May, once they get clear marketing materials, and are able to have those conversations mentioned above with the Oversight Committee. Says they are looking to improve this next round, based on what they have learned on this first round. Says in addition to those 120 – 130 program slots PHB is working with PDC and their NNE Economic Development Commission on the \$1.6M approved by City Counsel for homeownership opportunities for people making 80% - 120% MFI. Says that PHB’s opportunities are for people making under 80% MFI, and that PDC wants to bring similar opportunities for people making 80% - 120% MFI. Says that PDC is having a community forum on March 23rd to see what sort of home buying help people want. Says they anticipate PHB being involved on how those funds are used and the Preference Policy will be used, which would add an additional 20 slots to the May applications. Says that they would like input from the committee on the types of units</p>	

	<p>those Preference Policy slots should be funding. Says they hear that 3-bedroom family sized units are the priority, but they want to know if there is support for 1 or 2-bedroom units as well. Jillian wonders what the mix from the last Preference Policy was, wonders what those people said they were looking for; would like to see that compared to who was homeowner ready. Andrea says they learned last time what you say is available really impacts what people say they want or even if they apply. Says she doesn't want to promise units to people that don't appear. Dr. Holt says they need to organize a time when they can talk about all of these issues before the May Preference Policy goes out.</p> <p>Virgie asks if those who did not qualify this time around for the Preference Policy would be notified about PDC's new program. Andrea says it was a very small number of households that were over income. Says PHB can proactively reach out to those people to make sure they know of these new PDC slots. Says that the rest were households that were not mortgage ready and that this new program could buy them time to get mortgage ready. Virgie asks if they could make a hand out that explains what is needed to be mortgage ready so that people can know without having to make an appointment. Andrea says that did not want to prescribe household income limits on the first round, but there should be a balance for this next round. Virgie asks if it could help people get through that timeline faster. Andrea says that they are learning that it is taking more time for the households to become mortgage ready. Says that some community partners are floating a lease to own option where a household rents for 12 – 24 months instead of losing their slot on the Preference Policy list. Dr. Holt says that we will have to be forward thinking and creative in those problems.</p>	
<p>Public Comment</p>	<p>Suzanne Veaudry Casaus says that this is a large amount of money but is still not enough to combat gentrification. Says that she is concerned about the money being kept in the community and being made available to those in that community. Specifically wants to know about MWESB contractors. Says that Reach and PCRI are local, wants to know what Bridge plans to do. Says she wants to see the people in her community have employment opportunities. Says that the PHB website was not very helpful, wants to know how is she supposed to stay informed; would like to see some of that time and money be used to making that site a better resource. Jillian says that people from Reach, PCRI, and Bridge are here and that she should take advantage of that and ask them.</p>	

	<p>Leslie says that she knows that the PHB website is crappy and they are working on fixing it.</p> <p>Curt Mueller says he lives near the Grant Warehouse Site (Beatrice Marrow). Says that with the construction of Magnolia at Cook and MLK parking has become very scary. Wants to know what the plan is to address the parking issues in the neighborhood. Says that litter is also becoming a bigger issue as well. Says that several times a week he has to go pick up litter because it will just pile up if he doesn't. Asks what is being done to keep the neighborhood livable for all the residents, now and going forward. Secondly wants to know what the committee does after the projects are complete to see how they are being ran. Says that Dr. Holt gave him Travis' e-mail from PCRI to follow up but found him to be unresponsive. Says he has been in his home for 20 years, says that he would ask the committee to push the developers to keep the area livable, so that current residents aren't feeling pushed out. Dr. Holt addresses the parking question, says there is a city ordinance in place about parking, says that it is a concern that they have addressed in the past, and will continue to address going forward. Says that post completion of these projects the committee will follow up, how that looks and what that will be is unknown at this time as the NNE Oversight Committee is the first of its kind and there is no example to follow. Says that in his report to city council he will ask for forethought as to how these new units will fit into the community as a whole; says that is just as important as new units coming on line. Curt says that the city ordinance is always the answer for parking but that needs to be addressed because it's not fixing the problem, its making it worse.</p> <p>Linda Tellis Kennedy says that she is representing the community and PCRI as a program coordinator. Wants to know if it is too late to address the Preference Policy process to have a more informed process where people are assessed earlier in the process instead of after so many steps. Says that she has had to rescind some of those slots, says that people didn't know what was needed and they are overwhelmed. Says that if they could be screened before they get to the community partners it would be easier on the clients. Wants to know from Reach how people will apply for the units, and what that process looks like. Dr. Holt says that they are still working on adjustments to the Preference Policy. Matthew says that there are things to consider, one is it possible to screen people earlier in the process, yes but there are a lot of different programs the partners offer and</p>	
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	<p>worry they could miss an opportunity. Secondly is staffing at the nonprofit partners, says that if they clear people through the process earlier, then there would be a lot of people who go through the process when there is no money to help them. Jillian says this goes to the work group the committee was talking about earlier, says that they know it's hard to tell someone they are not mortgage qualified after doing all this work, and that is something the committee will take into consideration. Dr. Holt suggests that all of the community partners send them all the application processes and screening criteria so they can compile them in one spot on a website so people can have one place they can go to get all the information.</p> <p>Andrea Debram says that she is a community member and with PCRI, says that there are only 31 people in a program that has 65 slots for homeownership. Says that we need to look at what is going right and wrong. Says that it is important for the group and the non-profit partners need to get together to see what can be done to address the massive need for this program. Says she has come to many of these meetings and would like to see some thought put into the low attendance at these meetings; says that a different location, day, or time should be considered so that more people can come.</p>	
<p>Wrap-Up</p>	<p>Dr. Holt thanks the community and the committee for their time and for coming. He thanks the members of the community that spoke for public testimony. Says that they will be presenting their second annual report to City Council on March 16th at 2:30pm in the Portland Building on the 2nd floor; says they will be presenting what has been accomplished. Says that they have been working on more community outreach so that people can be engaged in this process. Says he welcomes all ideas on how to better reach and connect to the community. Dr. Holt says that he has been personally affected by displacement so this is not an abstract "concept" to him, it is real life experience which is why it matters so much to him. Reminds the audience that these meetings are available on cable channel 30 and on YouTube.</p> <p>Next meeting May 11, 2017.</p>	