

Minneapolis Advisory Committee on Housing

Regular Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2019, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

City Hall Room 333

Board/Commission Members: Coriner Boler, Mary Christianson, Brittany Lewis, Brenda Kay Marcos, Colleen O'Connor Toberman, Scott Shaffer, Shanea Turner-Smith, Colleen Ebinger, Damaris Melo, Queen Maletta Kimmons, Rose Teng, Annie Wells, Ryan Strack, Joanna Dobson, Cecil Smith, David McGee, Sebastian Rivera

Members absent: Barbara McCormick, Michelle Basham, Jeff Horwich, Hukun Abudullahi

Others in attendance: Katie Topinka, Kellie Rose Jones, Lisa Smestad, MJ Bauer, Elizabeth Dressel, Cacje Henderson, Robin Garwood, D'Ana Pennington, Dani Hans

Members participated in an Ice Breaker activity to open the meeting.

Presentation on Renter First Housing Policy

Council President Lisa Bender and Council Member Jeremiah Ellison presented the City's new [Renter First Policy](#). The council members shared the following:

- The policy is focused on what city departments do and how they do it
- It is similar in concept to the Complete Streets Policy around transportation planning
- The Council members invited the group to help shape the policy as it moves forward
- The idea came after residents were displaced when property owners had repeat violations of code

Questions from committee members:

A committee member asked what tangible processes are identified that you don't think are renter first and what could be shifted. Council Members shared examples such as License Revocations, the Conduct on Licensed Premise ordinance and the tiering system for rental licensing.

A committee member asked whether the City has the right criteria to protect people who are living in buildings. Council Members responded that we could consider using the tiering system as an incentive, such as incentives to provide a yearlong lease.

A committee member asked if the policy applies to new properties. Council Members responded that the City will think about how it applies to new development, and that it could apply to regulation of building materials.

A committee member asked for advice as to how the Housing Advisory Committee could help identify potential areas for implementation for the policy. Council Members shared that it would be helpful for the committee to build consensus around new ideas and bring them to Council, think about budget investments that are most impactful, think about policy ideas that are most impactful and that bringing voice of community back and forth is really helpful.

A committee member asked whether other cities are doing similar things. Council Members responded that cities are doing a lot around renter protections, but they're not sure that it's been adopted in the same way.

A committee member commented this is a document to guide departments and asked what's the "perfect world" for implementation. Council Members responded that the policy creates and affirms the lens of people who are doing the work. The purpose is for everyone at the City to be on the same page and it helps to establish a lens for figuring out how to deploy funding.

A committee member expressed that it seems to miss naming immigrants as a group particularly vulnerable to displacement and exploitation.

A committee member commented that this could be educational piece from the City to the community. The Council President shared that about 85% of rental units are owned by 15% of property owners in the city. Many rental units are owned by people who own 1-4 units. There is a potential to use the lens of Renter First policy to consider targeting funding for Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing to local owners, particularly people of color and Indigenous Peoples who own property to build wealth in communities.

A committee member asked how we teach residents to know they have rights and another member asked whether there was a plan to communicate to the community about tenants' rights. The Council Members responded that it is important to get the word out. The City is building a website to communicate information. The City could consider working with community based organizations that directly interact with renters.

A committee member asked how we make sure renters who are homeless because of bad management can get evictions expunged. The Council Members responded that there are pathways for addressing retaliation, but that the City needs to get better at making sure the timing for addressing it is helpful for renters. Council Members shared they're interested in increased funding for right to counsel, limiting lookback period for eviction filings, and that they also would like to look at reform in county courts and state law.

Overview of the State of Housing in the City of Minneapolis – Michael Peterson, Research Analyst, CPED

Michael Peterson presented demographic data and housing statistics for the City of Minneapolis.

Adoption of By-Laws and Selection of Committee Leadership

Members had lengthy discussion of by-laws, including discussion of decision-making rules and how leadership should be structured. There was conversation about whether to use Robert's Rules. Several committee members spoke about the benefits of establishing a clear decision-making process and also the drawbacks of complicated procedures governing discussion. The group ultimately decided to agree upon a decision-making process, but the by-laws do not specifically name Robert's Rules as required. The group also talked about how to set up its leadership structure. There was conversation about what types of officers to have and what their role would be.

The group decided, based on seeing the interest in leadership roles, to have two co-chairs and a secretary. All three officers will participate in agenda-setting calls with staff between meetings. The Secretary will review meeting minutes before they are posted. In the future, more committee members may join the leadership team once the committee has decided whether to have subcommittees and what the make-up of the subcommittees will be. The by-laws were edited to state that terms for officers are one year.

The group voted to adopt the by-laws.

The committee selected Colleen Ebinger and Joey Dobson as co-chairs and Scott Shaffer as Secretary.

Before adjourning, there was discussion of ongoing meeting dates and times for the year. It was decided that the meetings will be the second Thursday of each month from 3:30 – 5:00.

Next Meeting: April 11, 2019, 3:30 – 5:00 p.m.