

## MEETING MINUTES

### CITY OF LA HABRA GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (GPAC)

February 4, 2021

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carrie Surich, Community Services Commission Representative  
Randy McMillan, At-Large Community Representative  
Rose Espinoza, City Council Representative  
Jose Medrano, City Council Representative  
Michelle Bernier, Planning Commission Representative  
Marie Laveaga, Chamber of Commerce Representative  
Ray Fernandez, At-Large Community Representative  
Teresa Kempker, At-Large Community Representative  
Jim Leonard, At-Large Community Representative  
Sylvia Badillo, At-Large Community Representative

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

Daisy Ibarra, Youth Services Commission Representative

#### OTHERS PRESENT:

Andrew Ho, Community and Economic Development Director  
Roy Ramsland, Planning Manager  
Veronica Lopez, Community Development Secretary  
Mark Hoffman, PlaceWorks  
Woodie Tescher, PlaceWorks

#### 1. Call to Order- Chair Carrie Surich

Chair Surich called the GPAC meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The GPAC meeting was held telephonically through Zoom.

#### 2. Roll Call

Roll call was taken with Members Present or Absent as noted above.

#### 3. Committee Minutes

Chair Surich asked if there were any public comment on the Minutes. There were no public comments. Seeing no comments, the chair asked for a motion

Moved by Member Rose Espinoza and seconded by Member Teresa Kempker to approve the GPAC Meeting Minutes of November 19, 2020. The motion passed

#### 4. Public Comments

The Chair asked if anyone from the public wished to address the committee. There were none. The chair asked if anyone had sent an email. Roy Ramsland, Planning Manager, informed the Committee that an email had been received prior to the meeting and that it had been forwarded to the Members before the meeting. He noted that the email was from Mr. Peter Cruz. In his email he was advocating higher densities and inclusionary housing ordinances to meet the City's need for affordable housing. He added that the email will be made part of the public record for this meeting and posted with the other GPAC materials on the City's website.

5. Consideration Items-

a. Housing Needs Assessment

Mr. Woodie Tescher made a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee on the City's housing needs.

The Chair asked if there were any members of the public that wished to address the committee. Ms. Lopez noted that there were people on Zoom that had "raised their hands" that wished to address the Committee.

The first caller experience technical difficulties and was unable to unmute themselves. The caller was Mr. Berry Ross of Saint Jude's. He sent a follow up email the following morning. That email will be included in the agenda package for the next meeting.

The second caller was Mr. Cesar Covarrubias, Executive Director of The Kennedy Commission, 17701 Cowan Street, Irvine. Mr. Covarrubias acknowledged the need for affordable housing in the City. He encouraged the Committee to look at what policies are working and which ones are not to incorporate affordable housing. He recommended that the City look at inclusionary housing ordinances and housing opportunity ordinances as a way to address the critical need of affordable housing.

The third caller was Rochelle Mills, Innovative Housing Opportunities, 501 North Golden Circle Drive, Santa Ana. Ms. Mills said that she agreed with Mr. Covarrubias and noted that the presentation did not show the number of homeowners that have been in their homes for a while. With the housing stock being 50 years old and the lack of affordable housing, seniors can't afford to move out and families can't afford to move in and renovate. There needs to be a broader spectrum of affordability.

The fourth caller was Monica Faith. Ms. Faith mentioned that we need more inclusionary housing in La Habra. She mentioned that the City Council has voted against inclusionary housing measures. The more citizens expressing the need for inclusionary housing the more their voices will be heard.

The fifth caller was Anakaren Cervantes, 1016 E. Third Ave., La Habra. Ms. Cervantes said that based on the data presented, housing prices both for purchasing and renting are out of reach for most in the City based on income levels even with the growth of higher income levels within the last several years. There is a shortage of high-quality options for renters and a need for other housing types beyond single family homes. She said that she looks forward to following through this process and participating in future meetings.

The sixth caller was Elizabeth Hansburg, People for Housing Orange County. She said that as cities are looking to accommodate new housing, they should consider a housing overlay zone and consider affordable inclusionary processes in that change in zoning. It's scary that La Habra will potentially lose 40% of their affordable units this year.

The final caller was Manuel Munoz, 301 Lois St., La Habra. Mr. Munoz said he sees the importance of having higher density in the right locations as well as affordable housing in our community. As a Planning Commissioner for the City he has first hand experience with the affordable housing ordinance currently being tabled by City Council and having a new policy that goes in that direction. As a Beautification Committee Member, he stressed the importance of looking at good quality housing design as it goes a long way on how we look at our community and providing a sense of ownership.

The Chair thanked the callers for their participation and closed the public comment portion of the meeting. She asked if any of the Committee Members had any questions for Mr. Tescher or wished to make any comments.

Member Ray Fernandez addressed the Committee and said that this is a very important topic and it seems that everyone who participated in the call also agreed that this needs to be addressed. His concern was that as soon as any housing project is proposed in the City, the "Not in my back yard" people come out and bully Planning Commissioners and Council Members by complaining about overcrowding. He asked staff if they had the number of ADUs approved and built in 2020. Planning Manager Ramsland responded that 40 ADUs had been permitted in 2020, but that not all are built yet. Mr. Fernandez asked about the

City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) number of 803 units; he wondered if that number was just for 2021. Woodie Tescher said that the Housing Element time span is from 2021-2029. Then Mr. Fernandez asked if staff could comment on the Westridge project. Could staff go back and negotiate with the developer to ask for more low to moderate income housing. Andrew Ho responded by saying that the City won't comment on existing litigation and advised the Committee not to discuss the project either.

Member Michelle Bernier expressed concern on the 40% of affordable housing that the City will be losing. Ms. Bernier stressed the importance of the Inclusionary Housing ordinance that went to Council.

Member Jose Medrano shared Michelle's concern about losing 40% of affordable housing in the City. Mr. Medrano asked Mr. Tescher if 38% of the RHNA numbers are going towards very low and low income housing. Mr. Tescher said that was correct. Mr. Medrano expressed his concern over the legislation coming from the State taking away local control. He assured the previous speakers that he hears their concerns and he understands the issue now more clearly.

Member Ray Fernandez asked about considering an incentive to encourage more ADUs, perhaps maybe waiving the permit fees, to help the City meet their low income (RHNA) numbers. Mr. Tescher said that those are the kinds of solutions they are looking at for future meetings. He also shared what other cities are doing, for example, providing a set of predesigned plans with environmental clearances and clearances from departments speeding up the process so people can build houses on lots. Director Ho said it would be beneficial for staff to hear from the Committee on how they felt about ADUs. He added that from a technical perspective they can help solve our very low and low categories of the City's RHNA numbers. From a community perspective it does bring along its challenges. For example, how would their neighbors feel about people converting their garages and building units in the back and then parking their vehicles on the street.

Member Teresa Kempker mentioned that issues are being created in her neighborhood because someone is adding a unit and subdividing the existing home. She believes that if done properly they can work because homeowners today, as they age, have less and less disposable income due to the increased cost of living. Ms. Kempker then asked how the formula was created to compare La Habra to cities like Brea, Whittier and La Mirada. Mr. Tescher referred to the "black box" formula used by SCAG. Mark Hoffman gave additional details on how the formula is generated. It covers growth, vacancies, demolitions, transit and the income structure of the city.

Member Ray Fernandez asked if Prop 19 would apply to creating new inventory. Mr. Tescher said that it will be interesting to see if that will have a positive or negative effect. Mr. Fernandez also mentioned that the figures mentioned in the presentation regarding the average home price for a single-family dwelling in the City is low. He said that if he puts something on the market for \$770,000, he would get 25 offers, because of the lack of inventory. The housing crisis is getting out of hand and he is glad they are addressing it now.

Member Michelle Bernier said that that is why the inclusionary housing should be including in each build. Andrew Ho said that the ordinance would set standards for developers. Setting triggers that would set aside a certain percentage of those units for very low and low income levels to meet the City's RHNA numbers. Mr. Ho said that some of the projects reviewed by the Planning Commission over the last five years, have included conditions for affordable units.

Member Rose Espinoza affirmed that the item of inclusionary housing did come before the Council in January. The item was not voted down, one of the Council Members wanted more data. Ms. Espinoza said she looks forward to having that item come before the City Council again. She gave her own experience on how a nonprofit was able to help her buy a home back in 1990. If she had not acted then she would not be able to afford a home now. She hopes that the City can partner up with nonprofits to help build affordable homes as she is concerned that renters will not be able to save enough money to transition to homeownership due to the high rental fees.

Chair Surich closed the Committee comments portion of the meeting.

Staff noted that the date for the next meeting has not yet been established., but that it would take place approximately a month from now. Mr. Ramsland asked the Committee Members to email their available dates to him for the last week of March, to assist in determining the exact date of the next meeting.

6. Adjournment-

Chair Surich adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.