

June 28, 2016

MEMO: Housing

Welcome to the fifth meeting of the Eastside Working Group (EWG). This meeting will be focused on housing programs, issues and opportunities for the Eastside. The meeting will be led by Raimi + Associates and RSG, with assistance from City staff. Here Design will also be present to continue the discussion of the urban design quality of residential areas from the May 24th EWG meeting.

The City has been a strong advocate for affordable housing since incorporation. The City was founded in part on protection of renter's rights and rent stabilization. Shortly after incorporation, the City established its inclusionary affordable housing requirement and affordable housing trust fund. The City also formed the non-profit West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation, who is now the City's preferred partner for development of affordable/supported housing projects. Further, housing affordability, quality, and diversity have been major themes in the City's housing policy and programming, and were key reasons for City investment in the Eastside Redevelopment Area (before the State disbanded redevelopment agencies).

RSG will kick off the meeting by providing an overview of housing statistics in the Eastside for context. This will include information on the number and type of housing units, the age of housing units, housing prices and affordable housing. This will be followed by a review of the suggested programs and recommendations the EWG provided during Phase 1 of the working group meetings, which included:

- Encourage programs to support renters
- Support tenant education programs
- Support programs that preserve existing, quality housing units
- Support proactive code compliance
- Explore opportunities to meet the housing needs of new residents and residents of all income levels
- Consider additional incentives for moderate income housing
- Develop strategies to incentivize maintenance of residential buildings
- Support homeownership opportunities

Following this, there will be a presentation on existing and planned housing programs. For example, the City provides educational sessions on topics in housing and rent stabilization at Plummer Park. Additionally, we will discuss major housing studies and initiatives that are currently underway. Finally, Here Design will provide a brief summary of their urban design analysis of residential areas.

This will lead into a conversation about housing issues and potential recommendations for housing on the Eastside. The conversation will be divided into the following housing-related topics:

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- Housing Affordability, including actions targeted to providing new inclusionary housing and non-profit affordable/supportive housing. Topics such as aging-in-place can also be discussed.
- Housing Tenure, including programs to encourage property owners to make major systems upgrades to rent stabilized housing stock, tenant homeownership, and other programs to support tenant's rights.
- Building quality and character, including programs for improving the visual appearance of housing and code enforcement.
- Design of new development including housing both on the commercial corridors and in residential neighborhoods. Streets and public spaces including street trees and new parks and open spaces.

EWG members will have an opportunity to suggest additional programs, provide feedback on existing ones, and help brainstorm additional ways to get information on the programs to residents. Since most housing programs are implemented citywide, recommendations should focus on how existing and ongoing programs can be targeted to the Eastside. Please note that the City is currently beginning a study of multifamily housing (for the R-2, R-3 and R-4 zones) and some citywide recommendations may be incorporated into that study.

Prior to the EWG meeting, we encourage all working group members to:

- Review the notes from the first round of the EWG (in 2014);
- Review the “About the Town “Catalytic Change and Housing” report;
- Review the housing programs currently being offered by the City;
- Review the West Hollywood Housing Element;
- Think about the most critical housing needs on the Eastside; and
- Review the PPT from the May 24, 2016 EWG meeting, with a focus on the information and questions from the residential portion of the presentation.

Following the housing discussion, we will shift into a conversation about the July EWG meeting, the walking tour and some ideas on additional community engagement. For the July EWG meeting, we are proposing to discuss the following topics: public safety, public events, sustainability, and public art. (Note that public safety will only be discussed if a staff member with expertise in this topic is available.) Please think about whether there are any other topics that should be discussed in July.

For the walking tour, City Staff and Raimi + Associates have brainstormed some ideas for dates and routes. We are proposing to hold the tour on a Saturday afternoon (from approximately 3 to 6 pm). The tour would start at Plummer Park and include both residential areas and Santa Monica Boulevard. Please let us know if you have any ideas about specific areas that you would like to look at with your fellow EWG members. A few dates to consider for the walking tour are:

- Saturday, July 23 (3-6pm)
- Saturday, July 30 (3-6pm)
- Saturday, August 6 (3-6pm)
- Saturday, August 20 (3-6pm)

Finally, City Staff is looking for additional opportunities for community engagement, as was discussed at the last meeting. Staff is planning to attend some community events to obtain input on key issues and recommendations for the plan. Several potential events are below. Please let us know if you know of any other events City Staff should attend.

- Helen Alberts Farmers Market: Every Monday from 9AM-2PM in Plummer Park

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- Summer Sounds: July 24 and August 7 in Plummer Park.
- National Night Out: Tuesday, August 2 @ Eastside neighborhood block party
- Puppet Theatre on Wheels: Slavic Folk Tales / Славянские Народные Сказки, Sunday, August 28 @ Plummer Park Community Center 5+6

If you have any questions in advance of the meeting, please feel free to contact Garen Srapyan, Associate Planner, at 323.848.6827 or GSrapyan@weho.org.

We look forward to seeing you next week.