

REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CULVER CITY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

February 21, 2023
7:00 p.m.

Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Daniel Behrendt called the regular meeting of the Culver City Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness to order at 7:07 p.m. in the Patio Room.

Present: Daniel Behrendt, Chair
Bubba Fish, Vice Chair
Amy Cherness, Committee Member
Darryl Cherness, Committee Member
Khin Khin Gyi, Committee Member
Leonardo Wilborn, Committee Member

Absent: Emily Dibiny, Committee Member
Rachel Feldstein, Committee Member

Staff: Tevis Barnes, Housing and Human Services Director
Christina Stoffers, Homeless Outreach Coordinator

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Chair Behrendt reminded everyone of the purview and goals of the Committee.

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The Pledge of Allegiance

Member Darryl Cherness led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Public Comment – Items NOT On The Agenda

Chair Daniel Behrendt invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Committee:

Frank Clark received clarification that all Committee Members were residents of the City; he questioned whether Committee Members were taking homeless individuals into their homes or providing them with food or shelter; he asserted that Committee Members should not ask things of the City that they are not willing to do themselves; questioned how many of the homeless were actually from Culver City; discussed reasons people become homeless; efforts of the City Council to address issues; homeless prevention; storage of possessions; and the need to focus on at-risk residents.

Tevis Barnes, Housing and Human Services Director, discussed the background of those serving on the Committee; studies showing that people are homeless in a specific place for a reason; the By Name List for Project Homekey; family reunification programs; the most recent LAHSA (Los Angeles Housing Services Authority) Count; data indicating that the majority of homeless individuals in the City suffer from mental health and substance abuse issues; and the LAHSA demographic survey indicating that 75% of those counted are from the region.

Member Darryl Cherness noted that a request at the previous meeting to agendize a discussion of all subcommittees at the next meeting had not been included on the current agenda.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding instructions from the City Clerk to have all CBCs (Committees, Boards, and Commissions) do their work plans; items bumped from the agenda in order to discuss the 2023-2024 Work Plan; and agreement to consider the item at the next meeting.

Vice Chair Fish requested an update from staff regarding communication with the City Council's Ad Hoc Housing and Homeless Subcommittee.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding quarterly updates to the City Council; the Ad Hoc City Council Subcommittee dealing with Housing and

Homelessness; Brown Act considerations; plans for the Chair and Vice Chair of the ACOHH to make a presentation to the City Council Ad Hoc Subcommittee; and the inability to engage in a discussion since the meeting is not public.

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Receipt of Correspondence

None.

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Consent Calendar

Item C-1

Approval of Minutes for the Regular Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness Meeting of January 17, 2023

MOVED BY MEMBER LEONARDO WILBORN, SECONDED BY MEMBER DARRYL CHERNESS AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 17, 2023 (ABSENT MEMBER EMILY DIBINY AND VICE CHAIR RACHEL FELDSTEIN).

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Action Items

Item A-1

Update from the Homeless Initiative Subcommittee to Discuss:

- **Adoption of a Vacancy Tax**
- **Increase Housing Production and Streamlining**

Chair Daniel Behrendt indicated that the adoption of a vacancy tax had been brought up at the last meeting of the Homeless Initiative Subcommittee meeting by Member Emily Dibiny who was not currently present.

Vice Chair Bubba Fish indicated that he, Chair Daniel Behrendt and Members Emily Dibiny and Leonardo Wilborn serve on the Homeless Initiative Subcommittee; discussed consideration of a vacancy tax; exploration of the tax by other cities; large companies that are buying housing in Culver City without using it for housing while they wait for the value to increase; SB (Senate Bill) 10 that allows for up to 10 unit housing developments in industrial and commercial zones; allowing for gentle density on the corridors; the Livable Communities Initiative (LCI); and support for Safe Camping and Safe Parking.

Chair Daniel Behrendt reported that the Subcommittee had agreed that when a suggestion is made for an action, the Member who suggested it becomes responsible for the item, and he noted agreement by Emily Dibiny to research the proposal for a vacancy tax.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding goals for inclusionary housing; intensifying density along commercial corridors; requirements to set aside a percentage of units for affordable housing with increased density; inclusionary zoning; under-utilized commercial land; use of the vacancy tax on affordable housing; finding the true number of vacancies in the City; newer buildings that are not under rent control; City Council determination of an appropriate fee; additional information from Member Emily Dibiny; length of time the unit must be vacant before the tax takes effect; corporations that buy banks of apartment units; the requirement to have a business license for 10 units or more; and the difficulty of finding out information.

Member Wilborn indicated that he had not been present at the meeting where the proposed vacancy tax was discussed.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding clarification that Member Wilborn served on the Subcommittee, but was not present at the meeting being discussed; the next meeting of the Subcommittee; other cities that have considered utilizing a vacancy tax; feasibility of such a tax; further consideration after additional research is done; supply and demand economics of housing; and legal enforceability.

Chair Daniel Behrendt invited public comment.

The following member of the public addressed the Committee:

Max Sherman, Apartment Association of Los Angeles, provided background on the organization; discussed small rental housing providers; naturally affordable housing; financial hardships for small landlords as a result of the pandemic; concern with the constitutionality of a vacancy tax; reasons units remain vacant; legal action challenging the vacancy tax in San Francisco; rental subsidies; support for solutions that encourage and expedite the development of housing; and he indicated that they were available to offer resources to help the conversation move forward.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding the timeline around Safe Parking; required implementation of state law; options vs. mandates; tools; the inclusionary program; intensification of density in commercial corridors; adding affordable housing; bringing substantive research forward; weighing in on actionable items; and subcommittee consideration of items to create something concise before coming forward to the full Committee.

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Item A-2

(1) Discussion of Draft Written Report to City Council Regarding 2022 Accomplishments and 2023 Proposed Activity/Upcoming Agenda Items for the Next Six Months; (2) Authorize Transmittal to City Council

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding frequency of reports to the City Council; clarification that CBCs do not present reports to the City Council; the ability of members of the public to fill out a speaker card to address the City Council; providing substantive presentations once per quarter; accomplishments from the past year and a general plan moving forward; budget presentations; the end of the year update; the timeline; site identification for additional Homekey projects; proposed work plan items including the exploration of any legislation that provides affordable housing, Project Homekey, prioritizing Safe Parking, and the proposed vacancy tax; wasted space in the Virginia lot; City Council direction regarding additional lot space; pilot housing; long-term leases; opportunities for cities to apply for Homekey funding; specifying that the review of legislation would include, but not be limited to,

a review of SB10; the feeling that Safe Parking could be done fairly quickly; priorities; additional information regarding Safe Camping; concern with potential problems related to the constitutionality and enforcement of a vacancy tax; length of time to get Safe Camping up and running; and information available on the City website.

Tevis Barnes, Housing and Human Services Director, discussed the emergency declared on homelessness by Culver City as well as by the city and county of Los Angeles allowing resources to be activated in a more expeditious manner; direction from the City Council to pursue and prioritize Safe Camping; the prohibition of camping in public places; providing a place for people to go; use of a City-owned lot; long-term leases; programming for Safe Camping; the ordinance; the prohibition on tents and make-shift shelters; other cities with anti-camping ordinances; fire safety concerns; development of a Safe Camping site on Virginia Avenue; number of people that could be accommodated; the onsite service provider; security; case managers; conflict resolution; harm reduction; meals provided; weekly access to laundry services; showers; the pet area; the storage facility; the picnic area; the covering over the site to protect people from the rain and sun; outdoor seating areas; fencing; mobilization of different vendors; lighting; landscaping; pest control; the platform and tent provided; furnishings; providing an inviting place to stay; the ability of people to come and go; the go-live date in April or May; evaluation of service providers; and encouragement for families to use Upward Bound House.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding criteria to determine who utilizes Safe Camping; availability for Culver City residents who have been unhoused for at least a year; addressing those with substance abuse and mental health issues; capacity of the project; impacts of exploring the vacancy tax vs. harm reduction techniques; housing production; abolishing parking minimums City-wide; increases to housing costs due to the high cost of parking; exploration of a maximum parking allotment; major job centers; luxury housing catering to high-end residents; companies that are allowed to build as much parking as they want or feel they need; land parcels used for parking garages; the lot on Ince; changing land use; the need for additional staff resources; a suggestion to narrow down the list of work plan items to ensure efficiency; creating tiers for different priorities; City Council priorities; Upward Bound House; and the process moving forward.

Chair Behrendt invited public comment.

The following members of the public addressed the Committee:

Rachel Feldstein, ACOHH Member participating via Webex as a member of the public, expressed support for continuing research on the vacancy tax; discussed observing the experience of San Francisco; the importance of not keeping units vacant for years; Rest Stabilization Ordinance requirements in Los Angeles; following up on vacancies; prioritizing items; the importance of building more housing; and the importance of creating additional places for people to get off the streets.

Ruth Roofless discussed her experience being unhoused; vacancy rates; landlords that will not accept vouchers; she asserted that opening up affordable housing units would not help if they are not accessible to people with vouchers; issues with affordable units administered through the developer rather than through the City; concern with demolishing a hotel that could be used as affordable housing to build unaffordable housing; she pointed out that people in Safe Camping and Safe Parking are still on the streets; she noted that the success of Project Homekey would depend on the provider; reported that sometimes people are taken against their will by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to Exodus; discussed the large increase in 5150s; people who end up back on the streets in Culver City; she asserted that people would die next week when the rains began again; and she asked that the City give out tarps and make sure everyone makes it through the rain and gets dried off.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding appreciation to Ruth for providing comment; the importance of hearing comment from those experiencing homelessness; parcels that could be used for affordable housing that are used for market-rate housing with a few affordable units; clarification that comments from the speaker were about the city of Los Angeles; utilizing parts of the commercial corridor; intensifying density; providing an affordable housing overlay; and leveraging state legislation.

Member Leonardo Wilborn moved that the following items be included in the 2023 work plan: Safe Parking, Safe Camping,

Project Homekey, review of legislation including, but not limited to, a vacancy tax, SB2011 and SB10 to help create affordable housing including state, federal and municipal, parking reform, the Homeless Plan Element, the Mobile Response Team, and the lease of rooms in hotels to provide temporary housing for the unhoused. Member Amy Cherness seconded the motion and the discussion continued.

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding prioritization of the items; inclusion of the vacancy tax under the broad heading of review of legislation; a suggestion that the vacancy tax be placed in a lower priority; being realistic; the slow pace of City government; prioritization of Safe Camping, Safe Parking, and Project Homekey; deferring parking maximums to the state; shortage of staff resources; clarification that nothing is being introduced on parking maximums during the next legislative session; measuring the impact of the parking minimums bill; the complicated nature of parking maximums on a state level; local control; the City Council motion that included beginning a discussion of parking maximums; and a suggestion to prioritize items into tiers:

First Tier: Safe Parking, Safe Camping, Project Homekey, Mobile Response Teams, and securing hotel rooms for those out on the streets.

Second Tier: Legislative review that includes, but is not limited to consideration of a vacancy tax, SB2011 and SB10.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding items centered around harm reduction and housing production; engagement of different teams inside the City; reliance on Planning and Development; concern with not addressing the root causes of homelessness; mental illness and substance abuse; housing costs in the region; a suggestion that state legislation and parking reforms be moved into the first tier due to their acute impacts on the housing market; finding proactive preventive intervention items; helping those vulnerable to falling into homelessness; making a recommendation that the City Council prioritize utilization of legal counsel to investigate legislation, and to Public Works to focus on the other items; prioritizing by resources in the City to address the issues; modifying the motion to create Tier 1 as a priority for Housing staff, and Tier 2 as

priority for the Legal Team as part of the draft written plan for 2023-2024.

MOVED BY CHAIR DANIEL BEHRENDT, SECONDED BY MEMBER DARRYL CHERNESS AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS DIRECT STAFF TO TRANSMIT 2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND 2023 WORK PLANS TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS INCLUDED FOR THE 2023 WORK PLAN: HOUSING STAFF TO IMPLEMENT SAFE PARKING, SAFE CAMPING, PROJECT HOMEKEY, MOBILE RESPONSE TEAMS, AND SECURING HOTEL ROOMS FOR THOSE WITH IMMEDIATE NEED, AND A RECOMMENDATION THAT THE CITY COUNCIL INSTRUCT THE LEGAL TEAM TO DO A REVIEW OF LEGISLATION TO HELP WITH THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING CRISIS IN CULVER CITY INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, SB 2011 AND SB 10, VACANCY TAX, AND PARKING REFORM, WITH THE ACHOH TO REVISIT THE HOMELESS PLAN ELEMENT (ABSENT MEMBERS VICE CHAIR RACHEL FELDSTEIN AND EMILY DIBINY).

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Item A-3

Discussion on Conducting an Internal Homelessness Count Three Times Per Year

This item was moved to the March meeting.

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Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

Chair Daniel Behrendt invited public comment.

No requests to speak were received.

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Items from Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness Members/Staff (Continued)

Discussion ensued between staff and Committee Members regarding consensus to agendize a discussion of the purpose and function of the Outreach Subcommittee; ensuring that Assistant to the City Manager on Homelessness Aremes White is able to attend; agreement to hear a report from Member Wilborn on a conversation he had with an unhoused person; consensus to request that an unhoused person or formerly unhoused person

provide input on the Safe Camping Program; agreement to request that staff fill the open ACOHH member seat with someone who is unhoused or was formerly unhoused in Culver City; communication with Exodus; agreement on March 21 for the date of the next ACOHH meeting; a reminder to Committee Members to use their City email address; and subcommittee meeting schedules.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, at 9:00 p.m., the Culver City Advisory Committee on Housing and Homelessness adjourned to a meeting to be held on March 21, 2023.

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TEVIS BARNES

SECRETARY of the Culver City Advisory Committee on Housing
and Homelessness, Culver City, California

APPROVED

Daniel Behrendt

CHAIR of the Advisory Committee on Housing and
Homelessness, Culver City, California

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that, on the date below written, these minutes were filed in the Office of the City Clerk, Culver City, California and constitute the Official Minutes of said meeting.

Jeremy Bocchino
CITY CLERK

Date