

City of San Antonio



Minutes Planning and Community Development Committee Meeting

2023 – 2025 Council Members

Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, Dist. 4
Phyllis Viagran, Dist. 3 | Teri Castillo, Dist. 5
Manny Pelaez, Dist. 8 | John Courage, Dist. 9

Friday, December 13, 2024

10:00 AM

Council Briefing Room

The Planning and Community Development Council Committee convened a regular meeting in the City Hall Council Briefing Room beginning at 10:08 AM. Deputy City Clerk Aurora Perkins took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Committee Members present:

Members Present: Dr. Adriana Rocha Garcia, *Chair*
Teri Castillo, *Member*
Manny Pelaez, *Member*
John Courage, *Member*

Members Absent: Phyllis Viagran, *Member*

Approval of Minutes

1. Approval of minutes from the November 6, 2024 Planning and Community Development Committee Meeting

Councilmember Pelaez moved to Approve the minutes of the November 6, 2024 Planning and Community Development Committee meeting. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Pelaez, Courage

Absent: Viagran, Castillo

Public Comment

Ryan Baldwin of the San Antonio Apartment Association (SAAA) spoke in support of Item 2. He noted that City staff had contacted SAAA to provide feedback on the pet deposit initiative and concerns.

Briefing and Possible Action on

2. Briefing and possible action related to the Council Consideration Request for establishment of a Pet Deposit Assistance Program. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services Department]

Vanessa Jimenez, Neighborhood and Housing Services (NHSD) Department Administrator provided an overview of the Pet Deposit Assistance Program Initiative which was presented to City staff by CCR # 2024-0002 submitted by Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez. She noted that the program would create a program to assist apartment residents with pet deposits at apartment facilities within the city limits. She added that NHSD had initially presented the Item to the Planning and Community Development Committee (PCDC) on August 24, 2024, seeking input from the Committee on establishing a pet deposit assistance program.

Jimenez noted that the proposed Pet Deposit Assistance Program was created to reduce the burden of pet adoption and fostering for renters. She stated that the Program was specific to renters who were applying to foster or adopt a dog/cat from Animal Care Services (ACS), were income-eligible, and lived within the city limits. Jimenez added that staff worked closely with the ACS and the San Antonio Apartment Association.

Jimenez reviewed rental properties' feedback gathered on pet deposit assistance which noted that 76% of them had breed/weight restrictions, 70% charged a one-time pet deposit/fee, and the average fee was \$300. She noted that the majority of housing providers were interested in participating in a pet deposit assistance program.

According to Jimenez, City Staff recommended a one-year pilot program with a budget of \$50,000 to provide 100 grants for pet deposit assistance from the FY 2025 Housing Assistance Program. She reviewed eligibility which included applying to adopt/foster cats or dogs through ACS shelter, submittal of a pet deposit assistance request, applying the City's Equity Atlas for income qualification, City residency, and the fee request must not exceed \$500 per pet (maximum \$1,000 for all pets). She provided an overview of the review process performed through ACS.

Jimenez noted that staff recommended that PCDC forward the pilot program to the City Council for consideration.

DICUSSION

Chair Rocha Garcia noted her support of the pilot program and due diligence conducted by staff. She spoke to the importance of pet companionship and the challenges of pet deposit requirements at rental facilities. Chair Rocha Garcia was pleased that ACS was partnering on the pilot program and incentivizing pet adoption.

Councilmember Courage expressed concern of the misallocation of funds to assist residents on pet deposits and that he felt that \$50,000 could be better spent on more critical issues needing funding such as ACS programs and other housing initiative needs.

Councilmember Pelaez asked if there was any data that expressed a need for pet deposit assistance from renters. Shannon Oster-Gabrielson, ACS Assistant to the Director, stated that there were instances where owners or fosters returned animals to ACS due to moving and not being able to afford

rental deposits at new rental facility/home. Councilmember Pelaez asked for specific numbers and Oster-Gabrielson stated that she would provide that data.

Councilmember Pelaez stated that he did not fully support the Program and needed more data to show support. Assistant City Manager Lori Houston stated that the pilot program was being created to gather more information on why people were returning or surrendering pets to ACS and the hope was to gather data to determine if pet deposits were the true issue. Councilmember Pelaez stated that he sought data on what were the true issues of pet ownership and wanted to use the funding for more appropriate challenges to housing. Houston clarified to staff the data sought related to all factors hindering individuals from keeping pets and surrendering pets to ACS.

Jimenez stated that in rental assistance surveys, 77% of individuals stated that they would adopt pets if they had pet deposit assistance available. She noted that pet owners surveyed stated that they kept their pets current on pet vaccines and other wellness needs. She also noted that the majority of those surveyed were at or under 30% AMI and considered housing vulnerable.

Councilmember Castillo thanked the SAAA for their input on the issue and on eviction data for residents who had pets illegally at apartment sites. She spoke to \$50,000 not being able to make significant changes and wanted to make sure that pets were getting to final homes. She stated that she was not supportive of the initiative but supported funding going to ACS for marketing. Houston clarified that the funding for the pilot program came from NHSD housing assistance funding and would not be eligible for ACS-specific programs.

Councilmember Pelaez stated that he was supportive of assistance to the disabled community receiving assistance with pet deposits or other pet costs.

NHSD Director Veronica Garcia noted that if the funding for this initiative was not approved, the \$50,000 would remain within the Housing Relocation Program to continue to assist individuals with housing needs which could include pet deposits under the relocation program. Chair Rocha Garcia requested data on illegal pet issues.

Councilmember Pelaez noted that if the Item was not approved, there was no impediment for the authors of the program to use their CCPF funds towards funding non-profits such as the SAAA to assist individuals with pet deposits.

Councilmember Pelaez moved to Deny moving forward to City Council for full consideration the creation of a pet deposit assistance program. Councilmember Castillo seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Pelaez, Courage

3. Briefing and possible action on the recommended update to Chapter 10, Building-related Codes, and Chapter 11, Fire Prevention, by adopting the 2024 editions of the International Code Council (ICC) building-related and fire codes with local amendments. [John Peterek, Interim Assistant City Manager; Amin Tohmaz, Interim Director, Development Services Department]

Crystal Gonzales, Development Services Department Assistant Director, provided an overview of the recommended FY2024 Chapter 10, Building Related Codes and Chapter 11, Fire Prevention. She noted that under the International Code Council (ICC) 2024 Codes there were nine building related and fire

codes utilized for new and existing construction. Gonzales stated that the Code was updated every three years and would adopt current national safety codes, consider the latest construction methods, and new options for compliance.

Gonzales stated that Building Related Fire Codes Appeals and Advisory Board Committees were created to review 2024 ICC codes pertaining to building, fire, residential, existing building, mechanical, plumbing, fuel gas, and swimming pools and spas. She noted that staff conducted two informational sessions on the updated codes with 14 subcommittee meetings and two full board meetings held on the issues.

Gonzales reviewed the composition of the committees and the timeline for the review of the codes which included two community meetings conducted in August 2024. She noted that 14 subcommittee meetings were held between September 2024 through October 2024. Gonzales added that in November 2024 the full board meetings occurred and staff would present the results to the Committee today.

Gonzales spoke to the significant changes to the 2024 IBC Building categories which included changes associated with lithium-ion batteries, standpipes for stages, the addition of shade structures for Group U occupancies, signage, structural design requirements, and adoption of appendix P for sleeping lofts.

Gonzales reviewed the significant changes associated with 2024 IFC – Fire code categories which included uses of lithium-ion batteries for sprinklers and alarms, sprinkler updates for multi-family uses, audible alarms, energy storage systems, fire lane capacity, and updates to key box location requirements.

Gonzales reviewed the significant changes associated with IRC – Residential categories which included fire separation distances, attic and loft fire requirements, vapor retardant, roof replacement, and auxiliary pan drain line requirements.

Gonzales reviewed the significant changes associated with existing Building Codes which included requirements for travel distances for remodeled buildings, allowances for stairwells, and emergency responder communications coverage.

Under 2023 NEC Electrical requirements, Gonzales noted significant changes associated with GFCI replacement requirements, 10-amp branch circuit disallowance, island and peninsula receptacles, and surge protection device requirements for sleeping units. She added that under 2024 IMC Mechanical significant changes were associated with permanent ladder requirements, exhaust outlets and return air in closets.

Gonzales noted that 2024 changes to swimming pool and spa construction included requirements for barriers, color and finish specifications, elevated pool requirements and those associated with dressing and sanitary facilities.

Gonzales spoke to the 2024 Chapter 10 amendments under requirements for home improvement contractors and on-site supervision for residential projects.

Gonzales reviewed the next steps in the implementation of the codes which included City Council consideration in January 2025, training on code changes from January to March 2025, and the actual 2024 ICC codes updates going into effect on April 1, 2025.

DISCUSSION

Chair Rocha Garcia acknowledged the work performed on the updates of the codes. She asked for clarification on plumbing inspections during rough-in work. Gonzales confirmed that inspections needed to be performed at the rough-in stage to insure there were no leakage issues.

Chair Rocha Garcia asked if the swimming pool recommended changes were made to prevent recent fire events at pool facilities due to chemicals. Gonzales clarified the codes associated with chemical storage at pool facilities and other associated equipment code requirements. Chair Rocha Garcia stated that she supported the recommended changes.

Councilmember Courage asked for clarification on shade structure setback requirements. Gonzales clarified setback requirements for fire safety and fire separation requirements.

Councilmember Pelaez was not aware of swimming pool coloring requirements and safety concerns. Gonzales clarified the requirements for residential and commercial pool surface coloring and safety-related concerns.

Councilmember Pelaez asked if code recommendations had been presented to the Housing Authority. Gonzales confirmed that the recommended changes had been presented to Opportunity Home and that there were no concerns expressed.

Councilmember Castillo asked for further clarification on lithium-ion battery restrictions. Gonzales stated that lithium-ion battery regulations had been very stagnant to date and the recommended changes brought further clarification for storage and manufacturing requirements. Councilmember Castillo asked if this addressed recycling facilities.

Chair Rocha Garcia asked if this addressed outdoor battery facilities. Gonzales clarified that the code changes only pertained to physical structures.

Councilmember Pelaez moved to Approve. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Pelaez, Courage

Absent: Viagran

4. Briefing and possible action on the recommended update to Chapter 6, Buildings, by adopting the proposed 2024 San Antonio Property Maintenance Code (SAPMC) based off the 2024 International Code Council (ICC) International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC). [John Peterek, Interim Assistant City Manager; Amin Tohmaz, Interim Director, Development Services]

Amin Tohmaz, Interim Director of the Development Services Department, provided an overview of the recommended updates to Chapter 6, San Antonio Property Maintenance Code. He noted that under Chapter 6, codes were established to ensure public health, safety, and the welfare of residents and the community. Tohmaz added that the codes applied to all existing residential and commercial buildings and structures and were reviewed every three years.

Tohmaz stated that the Building Standards Board (BSB) reviewed, considered, and made recommendations to the San Antonio Property Maintenance Code (SAPMC) to the Development

Services Department (DSD). He noted that the BSB ruled on appeals to violations of the SAPMC, and ruled on these cases, and ordered the repair or demolition of structures.

Tohmaz reviewed the timeline for the review of Chapter 6 which included community meetings, committee meetings and BSB meetings which were conducted from September 2024 to December 2024. He also reviewed the composition of the BSB members and their fields of expertise.

Tohmaz stated that DSD received 101 proposed amendments brought forward by ICC updates, staff, or external sources. According to Tohmaz, upon their review, the Subcommittee recommended 25 for full approval, six were recommended for approval with modifications, 68 were recommended for denial and two items had no action taken on them. He stated that most of the changes were under Chapter 1.

Tohmaz provided an overview of the significant changes to the code which were in the areas of liability, notice to person responsible requirements, forms, general definitions, boarding standards, ceiling heights, and efficiency unit sizes.

Tohmaz reviewed the next steps in the approval process which included briefing to the Committee and final consideration by the full City Council in January 2025. Once approved, training would take place in February 2025.

DISCUSSION

Chair Rocha Garcia thanked staff for their work and noted that Michael Shannon was recently named Building Official of the Year.

Councilmember Courage asked for clarification on enforcement of the availability of access to alleys. Tohmaz clarified requirements of residents and commercial owners of alleys and other easements and that enforcement was based on proactive inspections and addressed as discovered. Councilmember Courage spoke to concerns of non-maintenance of easements and enforcement.

Councilmember Pelaez expressed his concern regarding issues where inspections were performed, and additional issues being discovered at each inspection event at construction sites. Tohmaz clarified that inspections were performed for specific items scheduled but that items were brought forward and cited if there were controls to safety or meeting code standards.

Councilmember Castillo supported the recommendations but asked for clarifications on Sec. 102.6. Tohmaz stated that he would meet with staff to provide clarifications.

Councilmember Courage moved to Approve. Councilmember Castillo seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Pelaez, Courage

Absent: Viagran

Consent Agenda

- 5. Resolution of No Objection for Emberstone Apartments, LP's application for 2025 Non-Competitive 4% Housing Tax Credits (HTC) from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) for the construction of a 240-unit affordable multi-family**

rental housing development named Emberstone Apartments, located at Watson Road and State Highway 16 South in Council District 4 and acknowledgment that more than 20% of the total housing in the Census Tract is supported by HTC. [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services]

Councilmember Castillo moved to Approve on the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Pelaez, Courage
Absent: Viagran

- 6. Resolution of No Objection for Lakeside Lofts, Ltd’s application for 2025 or 2026 Non-Competitive 4% Housing Tax Credits (HTC) from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) for the construction of a 336-unit affordable multi-family rental housing development named Lakeside Lofts, located at 5606 Highway 87 in Council District 2.** [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services]

Councilmember Castillo moved to Approve on the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Courage seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Pelaez, Courage
Absent: Viagran

Adjournment

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Approved

Adriana Rocha Garcia, Chair

*Debbie Racca-Sittre
City Clerk*