

# City of San Antonio



## Minutes Planning and Community Development Committee

### 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

Thursday, January 23, 2025

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 10:00 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*  
Phyllis Viagran, *Member*  
Teri Castillo, *Member*

**Members Absent:** Manny Pelaez, *Member*  
John Courage, *Member*

### Approval of Minutes

#### 1. Approval of minutes from the December 13, 2024, Planning and Community Development Committee Meeting

Councilmember Viagran moved to Approve the minutes of the December 13, 2024, Planning and Community Development Committee meeting. Councilmember Castillo seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

### Public Comment

None.

### Briefing and Possible Action on

**2. Briefing on Council Consideration Request by Councilmember Phyllis Viagran (District 3) on the Planning Commission Diversification.** [Debbie Racca-Sittre, City Clerk]

Deputy City Clerk Aurora Perkins provided an update on the Council Consideration Request (CCR) submitted by Councilmember Viagran on the Planning Commission Diversification (CCR 2024- 0019). She noted that the CCR directed the Office of the City Clerk to increase community engagement and elicit Planning Commission applications from all areas of the City. She noted that it also directed staff to explore options and to develop an Ordinance establishing a process which would allow the City Council to ensure diverse representation on the City's Planning Commission. Perkins indicated that the CCR was presented to the Governance Committee on August 16, 2024, where the Item was assigned to the Planning and Community Development Committee (PCDC). She added that the CCR was presented to the PCDC on October 24, 2024, to gain feedback on the Item.

Perkins reviewed the current Planning Commission's composition and noted that there were five positions for consideration and appointment. She noted that the PCDC had provided feedback and requested that the Commission's application be updated to include questions which provided knowledge of major issues in each of the City's sectors (North, South, East, and West Sides). Perkins added that an additional question was included requesting information on which council districts applicants had lived in.

Perkins provided an overview of the outreach conducted by the Office of the City Clerk, Community Engagement, and the Development Services Departments which included social media outlets, SASpeakUp contact e-blasts, and City website postings to include departmental, trade organizations and stakeholder sites. She noted that a City-wide text notification had been released which was not done in the past. Perkins added that the Development Services Department had also hand delivered flyers to all registered Neighborhood Associations, Community Centers, Senior Centers, Libraries, and Council District Offices.

Perkins reviewed the Items to date and next steps which included the application period from December 1 to December 30, 2024, the vetting of the 28 applications received, and the creation of a Governance Committee two-member Ad-Hoc Subcommittee to review shortlist applications of approximately 12 applicants. She noted that Mayor Nirenberg had appointed Councilmembers Cabello Havrda and Courage to the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee. Perkins added that shortlisted applicants would be interviewed by the Governance Committee on February 19, 2025, and the recommendations would be brought before the full City Council for consideration.

## **DISCUSSION**

Chair Rocha Garcia thanked Councilmember Viagran for authoring the CCR and noted that the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee did not have any representation from the South or West Sides of the City which the members of the PCDC present represented. She stated that it was important to recruit on the South Side to bring representation to the Planning Commission and that she was committed to assist in gaining that representation.

Chair Rocha Garcia stated that not having representation from the South Side could be due to the fact that many interested individuals worked during business hours which was when the Planning Commission meetings occurred. She noted that recently, the Bexar County Appraisal District, in which she served as a board member, had moved meetings to the evening in order to allow for increased participation and engagement during public comment by individuals who were not able to attend during business hours.

Councilmember Viagran requested information on outreach conducted and specific dates released. She noted that many of her neighborhood associations did not meet during the month of December, and she did not recall seeing any information on the application process for the Planning Commission.

Councilmember Viagran expressed concern that the vetting process of the applications were being conducted at the Governance Committee and she felt that there was not a sufficient representation of the South and West Side council districts within that committee. She stressed that her council district had very distinct characteristics and she felt that not having representation from the South Side would not serve her residents well.

Councilmember Viagran requested demographics of the 28 applicants to determine what representation there was from the southern sector as well as outreach data specifics. Perkins stated that the Committee would be provided with that data. Councilmember Viagran stressed that the Committee needed to make the Governance Committee aware of their concerns.

Councilmember Castillo concurred with Councilmember Viagran on representation from the south and west sectors but acknowledged that City Clerk Debbie Racca-Sittre had kept her updated on the status of applications received and whether any were from her council district. She stated that she provided her own outreach to individuals to apply but she did not think that they had completed the application process.

Councilmember Castillo stated that there was opportunity for targeted outreach and social media to areas within Council Districts 3, 4, and 5 and requested that staff investigate those options. She also acknowledged her concern of the Governance Committee reviewing the applications and the need for representation in the southern sector.

Chair Rocha Garcia requested that staff discuss with Mayor Nirenberg consideration of representation from councilmembers from the southern sector on the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee. She noted that Mayor Nirenberg had asked her to sit on the Subcommittee along with the two Councilmembers already named, but when made aware of quorum issues, she did not move forward. Chair Rocha Garcia reiterated that she would serve on the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee and provide representation from the southern sector council districts if requested.

Chair Rocha Garcia stated that she was open to discussions for other Councilmembers from the southern sector representing at the Ad-Hoc Subcommittee and asked if it was possible to hold a joint committee review. Perkins stated that discussion with the City Attorney's Office would need to occur to ensure representation from both committees and did not break quorum of the City Council.

Assistant City Attorney Jameene Williams agreed that discussion would be needed and that if quorum was an issue, the meeting would need to follow Open Meetings Act requirements.

Chair Rocha Garcia clarified that she was suggesting representation of both committees on the two-member Ad-Hoc Subcommittee and not a joint committee review. Perkins confirmed that staff would still need to discuss quorum concerns and would provide a determination response to the Committee.

No action was taken on the Item.

**3. Briefing and possible action on existing rules and regulations for new cemeteries within the City of San Antonio and other Texas cities.** [Michael Shannon, Director, Development Services Department, John Peterek, Interim Assistant City Manager]

Development Services Director Michael Shannon provided an overview of current legislation and Unified Development Coded (UDC) associated with opening a new cemetery within the City limits and a comparison with other Texas cities. He noted that House Bill (HB) 783 allowed cities to develop requirements for approval of new cemeteries. Shannon stated that prior to HB 783, cemeteries were banned within five miles of city limits based on population under State Law. He noted that currently, properties needed to be subdivided through the platting process and that the State required a “cemetery map” to be recorded with the Bexar County Clerk. Shannon added that under the UDC, regulations were in effect requiring specific use authorization for new cemeteries and predated the five-mile ban.

Shannon reviewed what other Texas Cities allowed for new cemetery approval which included the cities of Austin, Dallas, El Paso, and Houston.

## DISCUSSION

Chair Rocha Garcia thanked Councilmember Viagran for submitting the CCR and supported the new legislation that was passed at the State level. She asked if there was any impact associated with the new legislation that was currently performed in zoning process. Shannon stated that the approval of a new cemetery would continue to go through the zoning process and that an individual could now request a new cemetery approval.

Councilmember Viagran noted that there were currently cases for new cemeteries in her council district and this impacted the aging community in San Antonio. She wanted to ensure that the cities growth needed to address the need for new cemeteries without impacting schools, residents, and traffic patterns. Councilmember Viagran wanted to determine if a subcommittee of staff and stakeholders was needed to address the concerns of new cemeteries and how it would impact areas or if it should be kept at the staff level.

Councilmember Viagran requested additional information on current cemeteries by council district and where there was a need for additional cemeteries. She wanted a thoughtful process for the approval of future cemeteries. Councilmember Viagran expressed concern on ensuring proper planning for future cemeteries. She stated that she did support staff reviewing the review

process but wanted input on a subcommittee level to ensure that school district concerns were considered.

Councilmember Castillo stated that she understood zoning for cemeteries, and she supported the staff review process especially for Council District 5 land use.

Chair Rocha Garcia asked if the Development Services Department had an expert on staff for cemetery issues. Shannon stated that staff would reach out to outside consultants to gain more information and data on the subject.

Councilmember Viagran requested an update at the March PCDC meeting on what staff recommended, with the use of a consultant, and if there would be a need to develop a subcommittee to review cemetery zoning approvals and the impact on school districts within close proximity.

No action was taken on the item.

**4. Briefing and possible action on the construction of La Ventana Apartments by the San Antonio Housing Facility Corporation, a public facility corporation created by Opportunity Home San Antonio.** [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services]

Neighborhood and Housing Service Deputy Director Ian Benavides provided an overview on the construction of La Ventana Apartments which were to be constructed by the City's housing authority Opportunity Home (OH). According to Benavides, OH created the Housing Facility Corporation (SAHFC) as a public corporation for the Project which was partnering with Marcus Equities to construct the Project. He added that the Project would be located at 2802 Cinema Ridge in Council District 6. He added that through the establishment of a Public Facility Corporation (PFC), the project would qualify for a full tax exemption.

Benavides stated that 272 units were proposed for the complex with 28 units at 60% Average Median Income (AMI), 108 at 80% AMI and 136 units at market rate. He reviewed the total number of one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom units proposed for the site.

Benavides stated that OH developed a policy that provided that the proceeds from PFC transactions such as this would be used to: 1) Create new units below 50% AMI; 2) Preserve and upgrade public housing development whose residents typically have income below 15% AMI; 3) Provide supportive services for public housing residents and affordable housing residents; and 4) Provide fund reserves for future projects/budget.

According to Benavides, due to recent legislation, Section 303 of the Texas Local Government Code, now required any PFC governed by non-elected officials to obtain approval from the municipality in which the project was located. He stated that the SAHFC Board of Directors were not elected officials and that approval was needed by the City of San Antonio to complete the Project.

Benavides stated that staff recommended that the Planning and Community Development

Committee forward the Item to the full City Council for consideration and approval of a Resolution supporting the construction of La Ventana Apartments by the SAHFC.

## DISCUSSION

Chair Rocha Garcia asked why the Project had more market rate housing than other lower AMI projects. Benavides stated that the Project would not receive housing tax credits and thus the only incentive being offered was the property tax exemption. He noted while this was not a fully affordable housing development, proceeds from the Project would fund future affordable housing units under OH projects.

Chair Rocha Garcia asked what the set aside for each bedroom size would be for each AMI. Benavides stated that staff would gain that data from the developer. Tim Alcott with OH stated that under PFC law, a units' affordability was distributed pro-rata throughout the development. Alcott stated that the project developer concentrated on units for non-commissioned military veterans.

Chair Rocha Garcia asked how market analysis was conducted to identify leasing availability. Alcott stated that an analysis was performed by housing consultant CBRE to make sure the area supported the development.

Councilmember Castillo stated that she supported the housing for military veterans but asked what the average AMI for veterans in the area was. Alcott stated that when consulting with the developer that specific AMIs were not identified but he did confirm that veterans AMI levels were in all AMIs. Councilmember Castillo requested that data be evaluated to assist in identifying future project locations and need for housing in those areas.

Councilmember Castillo asked if there was data available on what funding was used at OH from prior PFC projects. Alcott stated that there had not been many PFC projects performed before this project, but that funding was divided into each of the categories mentioned prior to support future construction of 50% AMI units, upgrades to current OH units, providing supportive services, and proceeds for OH fund reserves. Councilmember Castillo requested proceeds return data on past PFC projects.

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

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

## Consent Agenda

5. **Resolutions of Support for multifamily rental housing developments seeking 2025 Competitive 9% Housing Tax Credits from the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs.** [Lori Houston, Assistant City Manager; Veronica Garcia, Director, Neighborhood and Housing Services]

Councilmember Viagran moved to Approve on the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Castillo

seconded the motion. The motion carried by the following vote:

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

### **Adjournment**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 10:38 p.m.

### **Approved**

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*Adriana Rocha Garcia, Chair*

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*Debbie Racca-Sittre  
City Clerk*