

# HOUSING COMMISSION OFFICIAL MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 2021, 11:30 AM  
VIDEO CONFERENCE

**Members Present:** Robert Abraham, Member  
Pedro Alanis, Member  
Jeff Arndt, Member  
Kristin Davila, Member  
Shirley Gonzales, Chair  
Taneka Nikki Johnson, Member  
Amanda Lee Keammerer, Member  
Sarah Sanchez, Member

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**Members Absent:** Ed Hinojosa, Member

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**Staff Present:** Mark Carmona, *City Manager's Office*; Verónica R. Soto, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*; Juan Valdez, *Mayor's Office*; Teresa Myers, *Mayor's Office*; Jameene Williams, *City Attorney's Office*; Michael Shannon, *Development Services Department*; Melissa Ramirez, *Development Services Department*; Crystal Gonzales, *Development Services Department*; Ian Benavidez, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*; Sara Wamsley, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*; Allison Beaver, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*; Rachel Smith, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*; Crystal Grafft, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*; Erika Ragsdale, *Neighborhood & Housing Services Department*

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- **Call to Order** - The meeting was called to order by Chair Shirley Gonzales at 11:35 AM.
- **Roll Call** – Allison Beaver, Housing Policy Manager, called the roll. At the time when roll call was conducted, eight (8) members were present representing a quorum.
- **Public Comments** – Rachel Smith, Housing Policy Coordinator, announced there were zero (0) residents signed up to speak for public comment.

*Staff note: The Housing Commission deadline for submitted written comment is 24 hours before the meeting. The reason for this is because it takes 24 hours for comments received in a language other than English to be translated. Speakers can leave a voicemail to be played during the meeting up to three hours before the meeting. Speakers can sign up to speak live during the meeting virtually up to 3 hours before the meeting or to speak during the meeting in person up until the meeting starts. Speakers who call past the deadline are given the opportunity to submit a written comment to be included in the minutes but not read during the meeting, and to sign up in advance for the following meeting.*

**1. Item #1: Approval of the Minutes from the San Antonio Housing Commission meetings on October 27, 2021, and November 17, 2021.**

Commissioner Jeff Arndt motioned to approve the amended Minutes for October 27, 2021, and November 17, 2021, Regular Meetings. Commissioner Pedro Alanis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. **Item #2: Briefing and possible action related to the Unified Development Code (UDC) amendment recommendations proposed by the Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing Development & Preservation Subcommittee (RBSC).**

Gonzales requested Jim Bailey, Chair of the RBSC, present.

Bailey stated the RBSC met frequently to discuss recommendations for UDC amendments concentrating mainly on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), a topic brought up first by the first iteration of the RBSC. A list of a dozen items that were previously suggested were also discussed, but members agreed that some items would need further development and community input before making a recommendation. Gonzales thanked the subcommittee members for the dedication and quick work on the UDC amendment recommendations.

Sara Wamsley, Housing Policy Administrator, continued that the RBSC subcommittee was instated in October 2021 to assist in proposing UDC amendment recommendations to the PCTAC (Planning Commission & Technical Advisory Committee) by February 1, 2022. She acknowledged Michael Shannon, Director, and Melissa Ramirez, Assistant Director, were in attendance and thanked DSD (Development Services Department) for their help on this task. Wamsley noted that RBSC was initially a workgroup established by the Mayor and co-chaired by Bailey, Steve Poppoon, and Cynthia Spielman. The workgroup met 27 times between August 2019 and February 2020 before pausing due to the pandemic. All information regarding RBSC's work is still listed online, and meetings will continue to be public.

RBSC drafted 20 UDC amendments for public consideration regarding the following: ADUs, parkland dedication, stormwater detention, street and sidewalk construction, and tree preservation. Wamsley noted that RBSC convened 4 public meetings between November and December 2021 and held a public comment period between December 20, 2021 and January 14, 2022 (comments were accepted through SASpeakUp, phone, and email). A public meeting was held with virtual and in-person options on January 5, 2022, with Spanish and ASL interpretations. A total of 114 comments were received and are posted on the Removing Barriers webpage.

Wamsley stated that the first batch of proposed UDC amendments are related to ADUs. She noted that there are two types of ADUs, attached (part of housing structure) and detached (separate, smaller dwelling unit on same lot; also known as DADUs). Of the 13 ADU related amendments, 5 pertain to both ADUs and DADUs, 6 for DADUs, and 2 for attached ADUs. Examples of proposed amendments included the following:

- Removing occupancy limitations (Overcrowding is prohibited by the Property Maintenance Code)
- Allowing for more flexibility in ADU size
- Removing floor area limitations on DADUs
- Clarification that DADUs are permitted only in the rear yard (though a variance can be requested)

Other UDC amendments proposed that affordable housing developments could use an alternate method to determine parkland dedication, to allow trees located within the right of way and easements for all developments, and not requiring affordable housing developments under 20,000 square feet to repave existing streets or provide sidewalks for

the entire block. Wamsley noted that the sidewalk, curbs, and pavement construction amendment would mainly pertain to infill affordable housing. She stated that following the public comment period, four of the twenty proposed amendments were not being submitted to PCTAC, and would be reworked by the subcommittee for possible consideration in future amendment periods.

Wamsley continued by outlining the next steps of the UDC amendment process. After Commissioner consideration and action, the recommended amendments would be due to DSD on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February where DSD will oversee the UDC amendment process and propose recommendations to City Council in October 2022. The RBSC will continue to monitor the process during this time and further discuss mid-term policy changes. Between October and December 2022, DSD will launch a public engagement effort to educate residents on the new changes before the UDC amendments go into effect in January 2023.

Gonzales asked for clarification on Slide 19 regarding the proposed amendment for trees that wasn't moving forward and the portion of amendments that were recommended. Rachel Smith, Housing Policy Coordinator, noted that the amendments stated if a tree was removed within the boundary during an affordable housing development project, the development wouldn't have to pay into the tree mitigation fund. As this proposal only garnered 48% approval during the public comment period, it would be re-evaluated by the RBSC and not included in the amendments submitted at this time. Bailey stated that the goal wasn't to provide blanket protection to developers but to encourage developers to have good urban design and include the existing canopies available in the space. He acknowledged that the amendment could be abused and would further discuss with DSD and technical experts to refine the language and ensure the public would be comfortable with the proposal.

Gonzales noted previously a developer wanted to create an infill development on two empty lots with two to three structures. The public didn't support this development as the lots were zoned for single family units. Gonzales stated that an ADU could also be used in the example. Bailey agreed that an ADU could be used, and the proposed amendments could assist in ensuring that it would be robust enough to properly support a family. He noted that in Gonzales' example, the zoning district would only allow for single family units, which RBSC would be discussing in the upcoming year. They will be looking to include potential density bonuses. Gonzales inquired if all ADUs would also need to go through a zoning change process. Bailey stated that ADUs could be constructed without a zoning change process based on the size of the structure, but the RBSC would be discussing how to ensure a more robust structure could be constructed without a zoning change. Shannon agreed that a zoning change was not needed for an ADU to an existing structure. He noted the example with the empty lots proposed for two to three full units would need to request a zoning change.

Davila inquired regarding Slide 15 if a variance could be requested for the parking lot requirement. For example, if a senior didn't own a vehicle. Bailey noted that a variance could be requested. He stated they wanted to ensure that homeowners could have the flexibility to be creative in their designation and with demonstratable compliance with parking requirements. Wamsley stated the parking requirement is only for ADUs over 800 square feet.

Arndt asked for clarification on Slide 17 regarding whether the distance from a public park, the capacity of a development, or a combination of both factors determine the parkland dedicated the development. Smith noted that the distance to a public park is the determining factor. Arndt inquired about the intended purposes of the original Code and if there were any negative impacts of not having the original Code. Bailey stated that the core goal of the UDC amendment proposals for RBSC was to remove unnecessary tasks or fees from the affordable housing development process with minimal negative impact to residents and finding other sources to shift the certain cost burdens of affordable housing preservation and development.

Keammerer inquired about the work done by the previous iteration of the RBSC and if the current subcommittee included their work in the current set of recommendations. Wamsley noted the previous iteration concentrated on the ADU amendments. The subcommittee reviewed the ADU amendments completed previously and reviewed them for any updatable changes then moved forward to the cost burden conversations. Bailey stated from the 16 proposed amendments, 13 were from the previous iteration and 3 were from the current RBSC. He stated the others were not ready and will need further evaluation and discussion.

Keammerer asked if any of the proposed amendments overlapped with community submitted proposals. Smith noted there was no overlap at this time; but if there was, both groups would discuss together. Ramirez elaborated that DSD oversees the community submitted recommendations and would place them with the appropriate City department to ensure no conflicting language between recommendations and/or they can combine the recommendation to meet each other's concepts.

Abraham inquired about the 114 comments and how they were addressed. Wamsley noted that the 114 comments were addressed with some recommendations being removed for more discussion. She noted going forward with any work by staff with public input would have all public comments posted with staff responses online, similar to the SHIP (Strategic Housing Implementation Plan) public comment process.

Commissioner Arndt motioned to approve the recommended amendments presented by staff and to have staff submit to the Development Services Department by February 1, 2022. Commissioner Alanis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**3. Item #3: Briefing and possible action related to the formation of a Renters' Issues Subcommittee (RISC) of the Housing Commission including the subcommittee's purpose, charge, composition, and recruitment of members.**

Gonzales asked Wamsley to present.

Wamsley stated the subcommittee was proposed from a Council Consideration Request in June 2019 by Councilman Trevino to elevate renters' issues citywide. Staff conducted a SASpeakUp survey and focus groups in Fall 2020 and over 3,600 responses were received. The Housing Commission voted to recommend a renters' focused subcommittee with a mix of renters, landlords, and property managers; but a majority to be renters. In June 2021, the Culture & Neighborhood Services Committee (CNSC) of City Council recommended the subcommittee have a composition of 9 members (4 renters; 3 property managers/owners; 2 Commissioners). They recommended the charge of the RISC should be to advise the Commission on issues such as emergency rental assistance, education, outreach, and

training. Wamsley stated a highlighted goal from the survey results was to encourage development of relationships and understanding between property managers and renters.

She noted the next steps to were to approve the subcommittee's formation and appoint two Commissioners to the RISC. The Commissioners would work with the PEO and staff to develop an application and recruitment plan. The public recruitment should run from March 1<sup>st</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup> and appointments made at the Commission's regular April meeting. She inquired if any Commissioners would like to volunteer for the subcommittee and noted the Johnson, Davila, and Hinojosa would be good candidates as they have experience in different capacities with rental issues.

Keammerer noted that a two-year term for community members, particularly seniors, may be a potential barrier along with other factors (ex. Transportation and technology). She inquired how the term was decided upon. Wamsley noted the two-year term was preceded from the other subcommittee terms but could be amended to what Commissioners feel best. Keammerer stated that the term may be difficult for some renters given the time commitment and fluctuating living situation. Alanis mentioned that the two-year term would give consistency to the subcommittee. If the member was not able to serve the full term, they could resign, and the subcommittee would search to find an alternate member.

Johnson agreed that the term was to create consistency with the other subcommittee terms and that they should not have members serve longer before the membership be re-evaluated.

Gonzales stated the subcommittee members could also discuss how often they would convene to meet the needs of the charge and adapt to their individual situations.

Alanis inquired if at the end of the term, a member would need to be renewed. Beaver stated that they would need to be renewed as there would be a two-term limit. Alanis suggested that the community member could serve for one year and optionally serve the second year. Gonzales stated as a member could resign at any time, it may be best to stick with the two-year term. She asked if there was a stipulation of attendance and resignation if there were too many absences. Alanis stated that there should be a clause for absences as the space should be occupied by an active member. Jameene Williams, Assistant City Attorney, stated the Boards and Commissions' ordinance established three unexcused absences as a standard for board members. As a subcommittee is being discussed no formal rule is in place but would be in the Commission's best interest to set attendance to be consistent with the ordinance.

Commissioner Davila motioned for the Housing Commission to form a 9 person Renters' Issues subcommittee of the Housing Commission to be comprised of 4 renters, 3 property managers or owners, and 2 Housing Commissioners; that the members serve staggered two-year terms, with a two-term limit; and that the charge of the subcommittee be to advise the Housing Commission on renter related issues. Commissioner Arndt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Alanis motioned for Commissioner Johnson and Commissioner Davila to serve on the Renters' Issue subcommittee. Commissioner Arndt seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. **Item #4: Briefing by Commissioners related to the work of the Housing Commission Subcommittees.**

Beaver stated that Commissioner Alanis would report the Commission on the Dashboard & Annual Report subcommittee (DAR) and Commissioner Abraham would report regarding the Public Engagement & Outreach subcommittee (PEO).

Alanis stated the DAR has had several meetings to determine the look for the dashboard and types of data that can be provided. With the adoption of the SHIP, the DAR can properly align the data reported with the SHIP's goals. He noted that the dashboard will give residents a location to review the Commission's and SHIP's progress.

Keammerer noted that as a new member of the DAR, she was eager to help develop a dashboard that provides residents with more clarity to the City's affordable housing objectives.

Abraham stated that the PEO has had 2 full meetings and provided public engagement strategies to staff regarding the SHIP and RBSC public comment periods. The members have checked in with staff regarding the progress on the recommendations. Staff has implemented ASL interpretation, publicly accessible locations (such as libraries), and hybrid meeting options. He noted continuing discussion with VIA for transportation and advertising in their vehicles. He noted that the next PEO meeting will be held on February 3, 2022. Abraham highlighted that he spoke to Billy Mahone, Director of Community Engagement for SARA (South Alamo Regional Alliance for the Homeless) and recommended inviting Mahone to present at a Commission meeting.

5. **Item #5. Director's Report.**

Gonzales requested Soto present.

Soto stated that answers to follow-up questions regarding DSD permit data were placed in Commissioners' packets. She stated the SHIP was adopted by Council but is now seeking adoption by SAHA, SAHT, and Bexar County in Spring 2022. Soto noted public engagement would be a part of every strategy and encouraged individuals to help develop the strategies by signing up on SASpeakUp. Staff would reach out when the policy development begins and highlighted progress would be tracked on the Commission dashboard as well in the monthly meetings.

Soto stated the 2022-2027 Housing Bond recommendation was approved by the Housing Bond Committee for Council consideration. The breakdown of how the \$150 million would be allocated was as follows:

<b>1. Homeownership rehabilitation and preservation</b> to include minor repair and remediation of code violations with a priority for homes at risk for demolition for households making up to <b>50% prioritizing 30%</b> of the Area Median Income (AMI) and below.	\$45 Million
<b>2. Rental housing acquisition, rehabilitation, and preservation</b> to prioritize public housing & income-based housing for households making <b>up to 30%</b> of the AMI	\$40 Million

<b>3. Permanent supportive Housing for people experiencing homelessness</b> to facilitate a housing first approach in line with HUD guidance.	\$25 Million
<b>4. Rental Housing production and acquisition</b> to prioritize public housing/income-based housing for households making <b>up to 50% AMI with a priority for 30%</b> of the AMI.	\$35 Million
<b>5. Homeownership production</b> for households making <b>up to 80%</b> of the AMI prioritizing households making <b>60% and below</b> of the AMI	\$5 Million

She noted that Council will call for the election including the whole Bond package on February 10, 2022, for a public vote on May 7, 2022.

Soto continued to the HOME Investment Partnerships Program – American Rescue Plan (HOME-ARP) Program. The City received \$20 million to benefit “qualifying populations”. She stated that funds could be used for affordable rental housing, tenant-based rental assistance, supportive services, and non-congregate emergency shelters. After consultations and a community input process, the following funding plan was proposed:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Estimated Clients Served</b>
Permanent Supportive Housing	\$10,500,000	85
Property Acquisition/Rehabilitation	\$6,500,000	
Supportive Services	\$4,000,000	
Tenant-based Rental Assistance*	\$5,200,000	275
Homelessness Prevention/Case Mgmt	\$2,342,085	285
Administration	\$2,000,000	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$20,042,085</b>	

\*Priority for survivors of domestic violence and people experiencing chronic homelessness

She stated that after an extensive public comment period, the proposal will be brought for Council consideration also on February 10, 2022.

Soto stated with guidance from the Five-Year Consolidated Plan and SHIP, a competitive RFP (Request for Proposal) was utilized in the recommendation of awarding CDBG (Community Development Block Grant), HOME, and NSP (Neighborhood Stabilization Program) funding to 8 affordable housing projects (6 rental; 2 homeownership).

Lastly, Soto briefed on the Emergency Housing Assistance Program (EHAP). She noted that after receiving funding from several sources and different iterations of assistance allowances, a total of \$173,873,938 has been awarded to City and County residents. As funding is running out, NHSD is recommending re-allocation of an estimated \$4.5 million from the CARES-ERA funding and a portion of the local recovery funds from the ARPA funds to EHAP. However, as the program cannot be sustained, the program will cease current intake on March 1, 2022, and will continue under the guidelines of the Risk Mitigation Program and be rebranded to the Housing Assistance Program (HAP). Applications that are taken before March 1<sup>st</sup>, will be processed accordingly and remaining funds will be transferred to the HAP along with a base of \$1 million from the City’s General Fund.

Gonzales requested clarification on Slide 44 between tenant-based rental assistance and homelessness prevention and case management. Soto stated that the rental assistance is

much like the current program assisting directly with rent and some supportive services while homeless prevention would concentrate on the supportive services in efforts to help people experiencing homelessness locate housing. Gonzales inquired if the latter was more costly. Soto acknowledged that the case management was more costly as they would be checking in more frequently with their clients and noted that the funds would be stacking over funds already in use by non-profit partners that are assisting with the case management.

Alanis inquired if the tenant-based rental assistance's (TBRA) funding would be over a two-year timeframe. Soto confirmed that the TBRA, homeless prevention, and case management would be over a two-year period. The permanent supporting housing funds would be over a longer course due to the slower pace of developing.

Johnson inquired regarding Slide 53 and the CPS Energy allowances. Soto stated that the allowances were effective February 18, 2021 and allowed people that requested assistance before to apply again for up to 9 months of assistance with rent, mortgage, and utilities, including CPS. If an applicant received 2 months of assistance but needed additional assistance, they would be able to apply again until the maximum limit was reached. Johnson inquired about who applicants should reach out to if they didn't reach their max limit, reapplied, and were denied assistance. Soto stated if they applied multiple times before February 18, 2021, they were denied as the limit was not reset. If after February 18<sup>th</sup>, appeals for denials could be addressed to the Manager, Anabel Marroquin-Villa, or herself for review. She also noted that mortgage assistance funding was smaller as it didn't have additional federal funding. If an applicant was applying for utilities only, they would need to go through the Department of Human Services (DHS)' utility assistance portal as EHAP must have a portion of the request be for rent. She noted the links to switch between each application could be found towards the bottom of the initial page for NHSD's EHAP and DHS's Utility Assistance.

Johnson inquired if instructions on the appeal process were indicated on the denial emails. Soto stated that applicants can contact the EHAP Call Center to inquire about their denial reason and appeal process.

**Closing-**

**There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned without contest at 1:22 PM.**