Focus Group Session 1 Notes
January 27, 2022 12:00pm-1:30pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Resources Referenced by CPD Staff:
Staff provided the following resource in response to the question about equity:
https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ae0db4c873544b76b99401cb340b3a57
Project webpage: www.denvergov.org/equityinrezoning

Questions and Discussion:

Can you tell us about your experience with rezoning - both the successes and the challenges?
• Planning process can result in less options for affordable housing; think more broadly about what the city needs and the outcomes
• ADUs moved to “use by rights”
• Process is difficult and accessible only to those able to hire or personally have expertise
  o Difficult for homeowners and for smaller developers
  o A challenge for those who support to actively stay engaged as less motivation to participate
• Engagement with more diverse neighbors and from throughout the City is needed
• Public Health Safety and Welfare criteria is seen by neighbors as a reason to object; needs clarity
• Rethink public input, more involvement is not the same as greater equity
  o Often primarily those who are angry or scared; hard to attend when supportive changes
  o The process makes it difficult to stay consistently involved for those who might want to support

Are there ADDITIONAL rezoning issues or questions you would like to see the Task Force address in relation to rezoning and equity within the process?
• Process requirement that engages lower income neighborhoods and people of color and an analysis of the equity of the outcome regardless of size
  o Environmental justice rules require engagement MUST make acceptable efforts to engage people of color and low income
  o Ask if this rezoning will enhance or detract from people of lower incomes being able to live in a community
● Consider more area wide rezoning to allow greater access and more equity within the plan
● Simplify the criteria and make more quantifiable, and add equity measurements (access, income levels for resource)
● Add Tenants to notice requirements
● Use of overlay should look more carefully at affordability and the loss of affordability in relation to what is being lost

How else might we engage broader communities?
● Need for deliberate outreach - door-to-door canvassing and leveraging community outreach staff
● Door knocking and deliberate outreach has helped in some communities
● CPD keep adding videos, information and outreach for education
● Coordination of permits which may together impact an neighborhood such as closure of sidewalks on both sides of the street
● Utilize the legislative process of City Council which may increase participation.

Have you personally experienced inequities in the rezoning process or heard from other community members?
● Immigrants and new residents can find the process to understand

What else would you like the Task Force to know or consider?
● Make the process also easier for a diverse set of developers from individuals to smaller developers
● Consider the transportation needs and access to transportation for multi-modal (climate change, ozone, sidewalks)
● Planning board role should continue to think about longer-term and continue to have an important role
● Get to appoint that consultants are not necessary to get through the process
  ○ Market rate is dominating the field at the expense of affordability
  ○ Financial risk of going through the process is significant at this time
● What does equity mean for the community and for the applicant