

City and County of Denver, Community Planning & Development

Advancing Equity in Rezoning – Task Force Kickoff Meeting Notes

Wednesday, January 12th – 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Notes

Welcome by Sarah Cawrse, CDP (Community Planning and Development)

Sarah introduced herself and presented slides on the Task Force and why we are doing this project (reference recording for presentation overview and discussion)

CPD members introduced themselves to the Task Force: Kye Dalton, Elizabeth Weigle, Andrew Webb, Robert Haigh, Mike Ramsey, Genna Morton

Icebreaker lead by Yvonne Miranda, SWR (Strategy with Rox)

True of Me Denver Edition (reference recording for introductions)

Project Background and Goals - CPD (reference recording for presentation)

- Sarah provided background information on rezoning and the goals of the Task Force.
- Discussion during the equity maps portion of the presentation (recording time 43:00):
 - “housing diversity” = different types of housing, single-family housing, duplex, etc?
 - Response: Yes, that is what we mean by housing diversity: the range of housing types, sizes, number of bedrooms, etc.
 - While those were pretty infographics, what did the colors represent?
 - Response: The maps in today's presentation are intended as a general overview, but we'll dive deeper into them in future meetings. Generally speaking, those maps use color gradients to show where areas of the city are more or less equitable based on a variety of measures. You can read more about the methodology [here](#).
 - Can you explain what a text amendment is in simple terms?
 - Response: Put simply, a text amendment is a change to a regulation, such as an amendment to the Denver Zoning Code or the Denver Revised Municipal Code.
 - Response: When we make a change to the Denver zoning code, it could be as simple as fixing a spelling error or as complicated as adding an

entire new zone district to the Denver Zoning Code. A Text amendment is identified as a change to the Denver Zoning Code.

- How do the terms supermajority, areas of change, and areas of stability effect the zoning process?
 - Response: This will be addressed in a deeper capacity at the next Task Force meeting. Refer to Blueprint Denver for the terminology the City uses for these concepts.
- In relationship to DEI, I'm wondering if it is possible to invite children's voices to this Task Force? There is a consistent problem in DEI work of othering those we want to include. Including them on the Task Force would address this.
 - Response: CPD will consider options to achieve this.
- Is this process ultimately about improving the equitability of the rezoning process, not making the City more equitable through rezoning?
 - Response: Yes, that is the focus of the project. We will consider other additional requirements that are linked to the rezoning process to comprehensively support equitable outcomes.
 - Response: The process through which someone goes through the rezoning process is a facet of this project.
- It is important to have voices from those who will pursue rezoning projects in focus groups and other input opportunities.
 - Response: We are planning on holding space in focus groups for people with direct rezoning experience and need. We will also be reaching out to the broader community for feedback.
- Are there going to be criteria change for rezoning? (The 5 existing criteria are being referenced here). It's very easy to tick the boxes of the criteria, and they should be looked at.
 - Response: That is a facet of this project.
 - Councilwoman Sandoval and her aide Naomi offered their support in this process and echoed the need for the rezoning criteria to be revised and clarified. These criteria impact Councilwoman Sandoval's life, and is an essential issue to address.
- The rezoning process is complex, and we will only be able to streamline it so much. We should keep in mind that, even in the best of circumstances, rezoning is a 6-12 month process. This can create a feeling that the process of implementing plans in the City is unfair as areas that don't need rezoning can move forward while areas that need rezoning are waiting up to a year to proceed. We should consistently compare the experience of someone moving forward with a project needing a rezoning vs. not needing a rezoning. Consider: City Council proactively addressing rezoning when a City plan is passed rather than waiting for residents to bring forward requests.

- Response: We will take note of that and are trying to make the rezoning process clearer and less difficult to navigate.
- When we talk about equity, a lot of that has to do with representation. One of the important things we should discuss is the process through which Task Forces are created. Who is represented, and who is missing?
 - Response: CPD has selection criteria (listed on the webpage), and we reviewed who applied to be on the Task Force before inviting people. We tried to be equitable and inclusive in our recruitment but are of course aware that inclusivity can always be increased. Please send CPD thoughts on how we can be more inclusive in this process.
 - Response: CPD reached out to those who applied to be on the Task Force, but were not selected, and offered for them to be involved in potential focus groups or other forms of community engagement.

Breakout Groups - SWR & CPD (reference recording for overview and discussion)

Breakout Group Report Back and Discussion – SWR (reference recording for overview and discussion)

- The groups shared their work, and discussed high-level themes.

Closing - SWR Team reminded Task Force members of upcoming meetings and to reach out for scheduling questions. Sarah thanked everyone and informed members of future engagement opportunities and orientation/education session.

Upcoming Task Force Meetings will occur on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 3-5pm

January 26 - Orientation, optional