

City and County of Denver, Community Planning & Development
Advancing Equity in Rezoning project

Focus Group Session 2 Notes
January 27, 2022 5:00pm-6:30pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Resources Referenced by CPD Staff:

Resource on equity:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ae0db4c873544b76b99401cb340b3a57>

Project webpage: www.denvergov.org/equityinrezoning

RNO is a Registered Neighborhood Organization, webpage:

<https://www.denvergov.org/Government/Agencies-Departments-Offices/Agencies-Departments-Offices-Directory/Community-Planning-and-Development/Community-Engagement/Registered-Neighborhood-Organizations>

ADUs in Denver project webpage: <https://www.denvergov.org/Government/Agencies-Departments-Offices/Agencies-Departments-Offices-Directory/Community-Planning-and-Development/Denver-Zoning-Code/Text-Amendments/ADUs-in-Denver>

Questions and Discussion:

Can you tell us about your experience with rezoning - both the successes and the challenges?

- Neighbors really struggle to understand the code and requirements
- ADUs should not have to go through the process especially if all are approved
- Current policies does not support walkability, affordability of housing
- Notice process needs to be broader than RNO
 - Greater public notice
 - Sign up for specific notices for area of interest
 - Should not rely on RNO for notice functions
 - Inconsistency in RNO noticing process
- Engagement
 - Engagement process is missing people of color and people who are lower income
 - Too much reliance on community meetings for input
 - Ease of attendance through virtual meetings should be continued for access
 - Fear tends to increase engagement rather than support
 - Need for more people to be involved
- “Insider baseball” and process is biased towards those who understand the process and need to have the historical information to participate
- Financial risks are significant for affordable housing developments; goal becomes working

to avoid the process

- Criteria needs to consider priorities
 - Affordability
 - Climate goals
 - Walkability

Are there rezoning issues or questions would you like to see the TF address in relation to rezoning and equity within the process to overcome the challenges?

- Criteria for Public Health, Safety and Welfare needs clarity to avoid it being, “neighbor doesn’t like the use or the person” - or eliminate it
 - Burden is on the applicant
 - Increase burden to quantify resistance and move beyond opinions and fear to factual information
 - One neighbor shouldn’t be able to hold up a process when the rezoning meets the overall needs of the city and meets the plan definition
- More quantifiable criteria and reduce potential bias
- Consider use of climate examples for increased quantifiable
- City should increase requirements for RNO input if used
- Rezone to allow greater building of greater affordable housing instead of having to use parking lots for Safe Outdoor Space

What do you want to make certain the Task Force does NOT change?

- Once a plan is made, reduce the number of opportunities for changes; don’t repeat the process through rezoning