

Whittier Housing Issues Committee Visioning Session Pt. 2
Wednesday, May 23, 6:30-8:30pm
Calvary Church (2608 Blaisdell Ave)
Group Reporting/Next Steps

Group Reporting

Group 1:

Resident Support & Resource

- Building out neighborhood resource hub - for residents and property owners and property managers → identify what we can do to improve our situation.
 - Nobody wants to own a bad building; no one wants to live in a bad building
 - House list of property owners
- Don't want to reinvent the wheel; lots of great groups doing this work already; how can WA redistribute the work
 - Multilingual, multiple channels, plain language, meet people where they are
 - Identify what they're asking for; spend time finding out what people are dealing with
- Tenant & Rental Property Owner Forum
 - Conversation between the two; different ways to create opportunities for tenants and property owners to get to know each other → develop creative solutions that work best for everyone

Group 2:

Outreach

- "Outreach" implies a power dynamic
 - Instead, relationship building, meet people where they are
 - Cultural liaisons for various communities that haven't been regularly involved
 - Translate & identify issues
- Rental rebate for volunteering in Stevens Square
- Every hour put in per month, renters get \$10 off their rent up to \$100/month
- Need to meet people where they are

Group 3:

Gov & Elected Officials

- Over time, build expertise on committee
 - Find people that really can navigate gov. Processes
 - Know housing codes
- How can we make regular meetings with City Council more effective?
 - Right now, it isn't the best use of time
 - Work more closely with them so it works for both WA & Ward 10
- Build more clout & power → work with other organizations
 - Staff limitations, time commitment, etc
 - Triangle of relationship building → build better relationship with developers, City Council & City Planners
 - Get involved from the beginning rather than be reactive
 - Work in what we want to see

Group 4:

Development Oversight

- Discussion on neighborhood data & what we can get our hands on vs what developers look for
 - Our preference on new developments vs what would be most profitable
- Attention to zoning
 - Committee has understanding of neighborhood zoning
- Get ahead by going to developers regarding vacant land or soon-to-be vacant land
- Education
 - Many don't know the process the developer goes through on the City side to get their building up
 - Connect with City planners, City Council, Historical Preservation, developers to gain knowledge base → better understand the processes to inform our efforts
- Ideate what we want, rather than what we don't want → what does a new development in the neighborhood that we want look like
- Strong Approval Process
 - Firm criteria for developers

Group 5:

Structure

- Laying out what developers need to bring to us
- Barriers/Opportunities
 - Regular consistency of who comes//when meetings happen
 - Need for expertise → inform developments
 - Need for flexibility & willingness
- Don't want to start out with too complicated of a structure
 - Potentially, switch after trial period depending on what comes out of this
- Need for committed chair & group - for consistency's sake
- First part of first meeting -- people writing job description for the chair
- Need for core team
 - Ask people to volunteer extra two hours a month - door-knock, go to city planning meetings → then go to larger group
 - Recruit folks with expertise
 - For ex: architect volunteering time to inform members on building practices
- Every other meeting or quarterly meeting could have different themes → incentivizes, helps build knowledge base
- Establish conflict of interest policy

Next Steps

What needs to happen between now and June 18th, & what will happen then that we should know about?

- Between now & then
 - Significant outreach
 - door knock, Aldona can host training
 - Get as many people as possible out
 - Business to donate food?
 - At the meeting
 - People introduce themselves, say why they're here
 - Have job description for the chair, lay out expectations for who best fits
 - People can stand up & talk about why they're interested in running for chair
 - During doorknock, let people know that this is something they can do - run for chair
 - Possibly accept bios in advance for promotion via WA social media channels
 - Sign up list for the extra two hour volunteer spots
 - List for the every other or every third meetings - trainings, special speakers, etc.
 - Determine special materials for presenters
 - What do we already have?
 - Design guidelines, materials already made, etc.