

Housing Element Community Engagement and Outreach Committee



REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Date: 6/10/2021
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Zoom.us/join – ID# 978 0188 5004

All members present except Members Cline and Dao.

Link to June 10, 2021 Meeting Agenda and Materials:
https://www.menlopark.org/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_06102021-3627

Link to June 10, 2021 Meeting Video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwFN3EonQ>

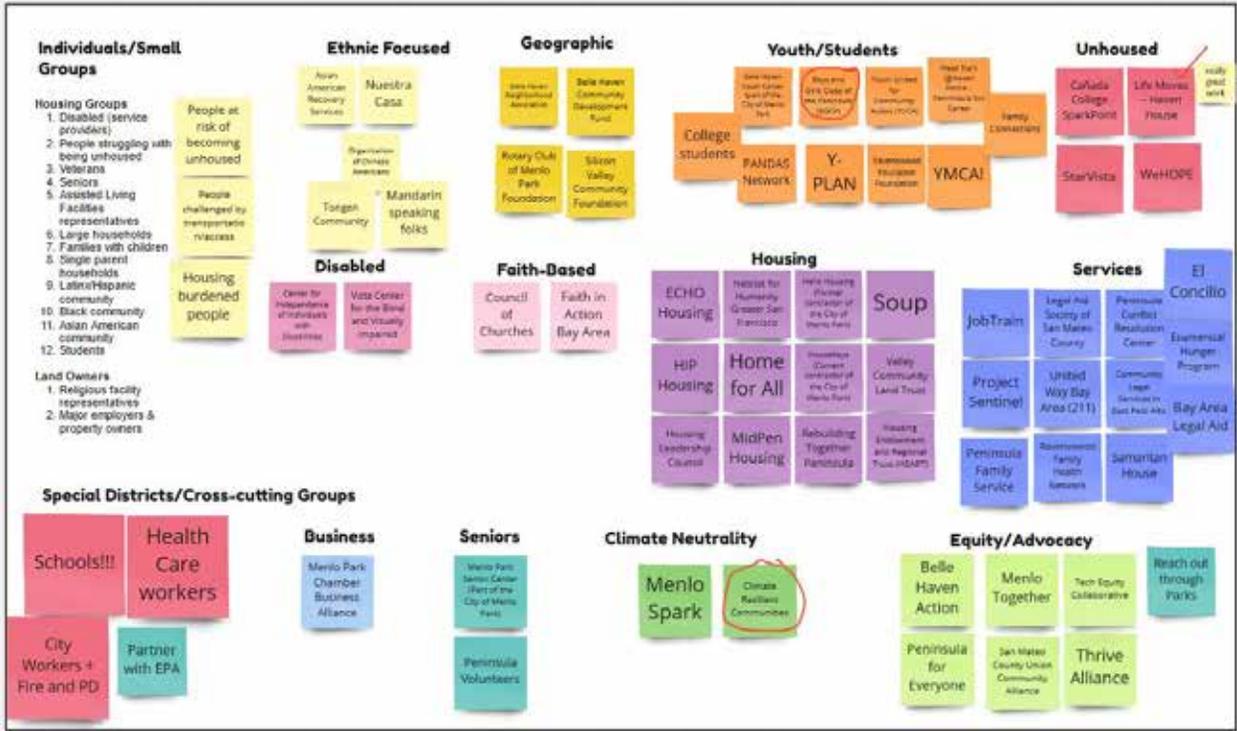
At the beginning of the meeting, there was a discussion regarding the roles and responsibilities of the various reviewing and decision-making bodies for the Housing Element Update project. The Mayor and City Manager participated in the discussion.

The CEOC also welcomed its newest member, Richard Li, from District 5.

Advocate Groups/Organization Activity by M-Group

M-Group discussed the outreach approach and focus group meetings.

Using a digital whiteboard, M-Group displayed a draft list of community groups organized into different categories (same groups as listed in meeting materials). The purpose of this activity was to list various groups that serve different communities of Menlo Park. Organizations that represented businesses, seniors, faith-based, equity, and more were added to the list as potential points of contact. The CEOC reviewed the list of groups and added to this list. Members of the CEOC were thoughtful in their recommendations to add groups that serve a diverse array of communities/interests within Menlo Park. Snapshots from the digital whiteboard are provided on the following page.



Summary of Questions from CEOC Members

- Who qualifies for responding to the community survey?
- Should there be limitations on who participates in the focus groups?

Additional Summary Comments from CEOC Members during Digital Whiteboard Exercise

- The proper length of the community survey is key for effective outreach.
- Proper representation by City Council District is important.
- Homeless should be referred to as “unhoused.”
- “Special needs housing groups” should be referred to as “housing groups”
- Each survey should be tailored to the audience it would be sent out to.
- Ideas for gift cards/compensation were discussed to increase community participation.
- Focus on pollution, including noise, as part of the preparation of the Environmental Justice Element.
- Outreach efforts should address people at risk of losing housing and those experiencing rent increases, evictions, and/or transportation challenges.
- Provide opportunities for intimate conversations in smaller groups where participants can share their feedback outside of a larger group setting.

Public Comments

- Committee meetings should be posted on the City’s website. This would allow for greater project transparency.
- Outreach should reach seniors and the elderly.
- Please make sure good information is provided.
- Zoning is key to where we put housing.

Focus Group Questions by M-Group

M-Group provided background information for the focus groups questions for the CEOC to review. Members of the CEOC reviewed the questions and provided their comments. The CEOC generally had the following comments on the focus group questions:

- A variety of housing types is good to explore with the Housing Element Update but be aware of leading questions that may skew how individuals respond; encourage open feedback. In discussion of housing types, be aware of pipeline projects, such as Facebook’s Willow Village effort that folds into meeting Menlo Park’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation and the potential effects these pipeline projects have for the community.
- Focus group participants can and should be encouraged to talk about their experiences at the neighborhood level, not limited to discussing only citywide issues or concerns.
- Consider documented/undocumented status as part of discussions for housing opportunities.
- Narrow down focus group questions with the intent to make responding easier (less overwhelming in scope) and include discussion of disparities in education and schooling opportunities based on residential location.
- Consider discussion regarding what is the appropriate mix or balance of rental versus homeownership in Menlo Park.
- Provide homeownership rates and other supporting background data prior to sending out survey.
- The recorded CEOC meetings should be available on the project website.

Next Steps

M-Group let the CEOC know that an Introduction to Housing Seminar was scheduled for July 1, 2021.

Link to July 1, 2021 Presentation:

<https://www.menlopark.org/DocumentCenter/View/28722/Housing-Element-Update-introduction-webinar-presentation?bidId>

Link to July 1, 2021 Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zEPeKqbfWY>

The CEOC desired formation of a subcommittee to work with the M-Group and City staff to refine the draft survey prior to review at the next CEOC meeting on July 15, 2021. Committee members Feldman, McMahon, Ollarvia, and Robledo were appointed to the ad hoc survey subcommittee.

Approved by the Menlo Park Community Engagement & Outreach Committee (CEOC) on July 15, 2021