

3.26.2024 RBSC Meeting Summary

Present: Melanie Cawthon, Pete Alanis, Seema Kairam, Jim Bailey, Michael Taylor, Meredith Siegel, Nikki Johnson

Absent: Taylor Beaver, Jordan Ghawi

Staff: Sara Wamsley-Estrada, Jacob Floyd, Joyce Palmer, TC Heydon, Siboney Diaz-Sanchez, Jason Grey, Teresa Myers, Juan Valdez, Krystin Ramirez-Ponce, Rachel Parrish

Audio recording started at 2:10 with start of meeting.

Meeting called to Order

Item #3 – Continued Subcommittee Goal Discussion

- Review February 20 goal statement put forward by Meredith
 - Proposed guidepost to center discussions for work around Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)
- Acknowledge process going through – identifying process and solutions, should be part of the goal framework (Pete)
- Feel “quality of life” is a loaded phrase; consider what that includes (Meredith)
 - Access to quality food, access to resources, institutions, transportation choice (Jim)
 - Maybe “increasing access to civic amenities/spaces” (Meredith)
 - Sounds similar to existing goals; make the work specific to this group a part of the statement in the second section (Pete)
- Everything in goal statement is what we want to do along TOD (Meredith)
- Preservation and cultural identity added; reduce long-term cost burdens to allow people to access transportation affordable to families; ... to support meaningful growth with connections ... (Pete)
- Think goal statement should connect to affordable housing policy for TOD (Michael)
- Equitably responsible housing development (Pete)
- Regarding overall TOD work, RBSC focused on non-zoning parts of affordable housing policy (Jacob)
- Cat, staff, and Jim and Pete agreed to create one cohesive TOD deliverable – develop TOD policy framework (Jim)
 - Immediate applicability to Green and Silver Lines, also applicable to future ART projects
 - RBSC can provide general recs for TOD Task Force

- TWG will do TOD zoning review / input (thru a housing lens)
- *(Question)* As identifying established set of phrases/goal, should we include TOD framework in the phrases and goal? (Pete)
- RBSC is writing (in Goal discussion) a preamble to framework, or at least contributing what RBSC thinks is important (Jim)
- Start with “TOD policy works to remove barriers to ...” (Seema)
- Agree that TOD policy needs to be whole environment (Meredith)
- *(Question)* TOD Task Force will focus on specifics – ex. TOD means 1 space per unit instead of 1.5; would this group look at “an affordable unit would/wouldn’t include ...” (Teresa)
 - Zoning people will look at that, RBSC will look at it to see if it meets intent (Jim)
 - Agree; more granular, and point to goal language (Meredith)
 - Agree; general enabling language here; UDC section will have the specifics (Jim)
- TOD is the charge for the “season” (Teresa)
 - Not restating what’s been stated in previous goals and documents, but specifying how this work is related to TOD
 - **RBSC is not making a standalone document, but contributing to part of larger framework**
 - Just need summary/pitch of what doing (Teresa)
- Alternate path would be to go back to RBSC charge and add “along transit corridors” (Jim)
 - And align where RBSC role is within process (Michael)
- On TOD work: RBSC doing high-level non-code; TWG looking at more technical code/UDC (Jacob)
 - Also important to include SAWS, CPS policy, Major Thoroughfare Plan, other areas that are relevant (Jim)
 - May give general recommendations – ex. Hanging lines over streets and funding for tree maintenance in those areas; don’t want to be so specific that there’s no latitude for better/appropriate solutions (Jacob and Jim)
- *(Question)* Timeline on TOD zoning typologies (draft TOD amendments)? Giving input or reacting? (Michael)
 - Zoning won’t happen until ordinance in place (Jim)
- On applicability beyond zoning, whatever policies and UDC changes are recommended City Council need to be non-geo-specific (Jim)
 - Agree, degree of specificity needed for typologies, but typologies also need to be broad enough to apply across entire transit system (Jacob)
 - Agree, same with zoning types (Jim)
- **Jacob will share VIA’s draft UDC amendments with RBSC**

- Consider it within RBSC's purview to generally review code and note what's missing, impacts that may not have been addressed (Jim)
- On initial code creation process: never time to take VIA's draft code for engagement; VIA needed city partner to start additional review, which it didn't have until this process (Krystin)
- **Task Force meeting this Thursday, with Code Studio team; TWG meeting on April 2 (Jacob)**
- **Ask Christine/VIA to brief RBSC on code amendments at next meeting (Jim)**
- **Ask RBSC to review code before April meeting and come with questions/high-level thoughts (even if not completely clear on details of draft code)**
- Agree; focus groups previously did similar work (to what's suggested above) (Michael)
- Jordan is also on the TOD Task Force – can provide updates, and also acts as RBSC rep in Task Force meetings (Pete)
- **Staff will send out revised goal for review**

Item #4 – Review Barriers and Policy Spreadsheet

- Spreadsheet will help RBSC determine focus and what want to work on
- Need process in place for when, where, and how processes get utilized (Jim)
- Put together themes based on existing feedback (identified in last meeting) - still space to add and change things, but current spreadsheet is a leaping-off point (Sara)
 - With specific types of spaces in mind, can RBSC start identifying and matching what barriers and solutions may be most applicable (ex. Wat's appropriate in a very dense neighborhood area versus a less dense area with more commercial uses)
 - Ex. For X type of area, more older adults and demolition orders – which may make people more vulnerable to displacement
- Understand zoning changes are about future production/what could be, and that's TWG; other things in policy list are about protection – maybe that's where RBSC wants to focus, since can't necessarily protect with (only) zoning (Seema)
- Spreadsheet is master list of things/solutions - this is the beginning of that and RBSC will add (Jim)
 - And agree on point about protection
 - (*Question*) Should that emphasis on preservation be more explicitly stated or more explicitly focused on (Seema)
 - Production is important too – ensuring that not only current, but also future residents will be able to live along TOD corridors; RBSC needs to consider both sides (Jim)

- Need to say how feel about given policies within TOD and given typologies
 - Basically making a list and having an opinion at this stage, rather than developing fleshed-out policy
- Feel like RBSC is trying to do everything right now – what's RBSC's focus? Concerned that preservation will get lost among various groups' focus on production (Seema)
 - Acknowledge who's being served now and who's being served in the future (Nikki)
 - Feel TOD almost inherently decreases homeownership rate (in Austin at least) - ensure also pushing for ownership units, as well as rental units (Michael)
- RBSC will go through list and determine what feel is still relevant (Jim)
- Identify neighborhood areas along the Green Line as example, run DIA tool on them to see what aspects most at risk, then categorize types of resources most useful in those cases (ex. This is what's most useful in small neighborhoods; this is what's most useful in large neighborhoods); informed by data, and then have set of toolkits within a toolkit (Sara)
 - Ex. In area an area experiencing X, Y, and Z, it's important to prioritize preservation, with solutions like ...
 - General right-sizing policy solutions
 - Ex. In area with higher levels of disrepair among homes, important to prioritize home repair/rehab programs before looking at policy or programs to increase housing production
 - And also identify who is being served now and in future (Nikki)
 - Agree important to decouple solutions/typologies from specific areas, to allow residents to see where their neighborhood falls within typologies, and what tools would be most useful for them (Seema)
 - Understanding current needs is good; also need to understand future goals/what trying to get to (Michael)
 - Future-facing piece is more the zoning/land use plan, while typologies could be based on current state, since that's what will be (and is) on the ground (Jacob)
- Typology discussion – using SA Corridors (Jacob)
 - Typologies had market strength and urban form indicators, but missing some of the human element – want to include that element in TOD station area typologies
 - Strategy clusters from SA Corridors: Nurture, Catalyze, and Support
- **Suggest staff goes through spreadsheet and begins color-coding along lines like nurture, catalyze, and support (Jim)**
 - **Add some sort of demographic criteria (likely through DIA tool) and do first round of ranking along those criteria**
 - **Then bring to RBSC for review in April**

- Not necessarily those three categories as typologies evolve, but will use as launch point (Michael)
- Agree
 - Ex. In X area, push development and production; in Y area, don't encourage development at all – high risk of displacement (Jim)
- Maybe pair with urban form/existing land use classifications (Seema)
 - Ex. Low-income with vacant land, v. low-income with high amount of residential housing
 - Can base on appraisal values
 - Need 2 axes on chart when identifying typologies: look at the physical capacity for change and social goals (Seema)
 - One axis is equity score, other axis is proportion of residential to non-residential, or percentage vacancy (Sara)
 - Prefer not focusing on vacancy, since subject to fluctuations (Juan)
 - Think need finer tool than equity scores; identify SHIP vulnerability index for typologies (Juan)
 - Less an equity analysis, more trying to create equity through this (Jim)
- Explained DIA tool and the six categories within it (Sara)
- Maybe use buckets from DIA and put tools in that order
 - Then have toolkit for addressing a given set of issues
 - Goal to ultimately give staff methodology for identifying which items will go where
- If goal is to redevelop underutilized land, how protect adjacent residential land and ensure affordability in newly developed land, too (Michael)
 - That's what this policy and hierarchy/set of toolkits will hopefully achieve (Jim)
 - Always trying to increase density and protect neighborhoods (Michael)
 - Different conditions along corridor; want to develop policies/solutions that are condition-specific, not location-specific (Meredith)
 - If mindset is "that's everywhere" and throwing more policy at it; want to ensure actually tackling barriers (Nikki)
 - Excellent feedback from Nikki, and think may need to reframe task (per Meredith: system to identify policy); think need system to identify barriers at specific stations – that will tell you what barriers are there using DIA and land use (Juan)
 - Ex. If housing not in best condition, there's a barrier to housing right there – go in with toolkit for that issue
 - Also need to set guardrails to ensure zoning doesn't exacerbate issues, since zoning is usually a broad brush (Juan)
 - Some policies appropriate for one or the other situation

- Need way for staff to see that since doing large-area rezoning in next phase
- Some is new policy, some is strengthening/editing current policy, some is practice and guidelines (Melanie)
- Think done well, a framework for selecting how policy is applied will become a tool for Able City (Community Engagement Consultant) to take to communities and let them place their neighborhood on typology, identify types of tools/policies that would best benefit them (Sara)
- Important to have community engagement process (Jim)
- Important to give community opportunity to identify barriers they see and experience (Nikki)
- Gives opportunity to say here's what data says, what do you (community) say/see? (Pete)
- Agree with Meredith, base on condition of neighborhood (Juan)
 - Think location factors in, because regional stations and neighborhood stations will have different needs
 - Agree, need to know where station areas are (hypothetically) and discuss typologies within rezoning process (Jim)
 - Capacity for change on horizontal axis may somewhat include station types (ex. regional has more potential capacity) (Seema)

Closing Thoughts

- Concerned don't have enough time to complete necessary work (Jim)
- Could create mini-working groups within RBSC (Jacob)
- **Put together calendar; Jim and Pete meet with staff and look at calendar** (Jim)
 - Worry about reporting back taking too much time out of meetings; maybe better to all work together, meet more often (Seema)

Updates from DSD and NHSD

- Rachel – will release new ITE rates on April 1
 - ITE estimates how much traffic will be caused by development
 - Developers expected to mitigate impacts based on expected trip rate
 - Changes to estimates only for affordable MF housing mean these developments less likely to trigger mitigation requirements
- Krystin – released ADU permit-ready plan RFQ (informal solicitation)
 - Goal to solicit 15 designs for permit library
 - 3 specific to historic neighborhoods/housing

Next Meeting:

- **Discuss VIA draft code amendments at next meeting for ~60 minutes**

- **Ask that RBSC review code before meeting and come with questions/high-level thoughts (even if not completely clear on details of draft code)**
- **Review second draft of Barriers and Policies Spreadsheet**
 - **Spreadsheet will be color-coded by potential strategy clusters (ex. Nurture, Catalyze, Support) based on demographic criteria such as data from the Displacement Impact Assessment tool**