

RACE EQUITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MAY 2, 2024
MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Members present: Renni Bispham, Raul Camacho, Jing Fong, Olivia Hall, Caitlin Lombardi, Savanna Rovelstad, Eric Stahl.

Excused: Lynn Beck

Liaisons: Brenda Fantroy-Johnson, Jon Quitslund

Also present: E&I Manager Anshu Wahi

MOTIONS

1. Motion to accept March 7, 2024 minutes. Approved 7-0.
2. Motion to adopt resolution regarding 625 Winslow Way E. Approved 7-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Barbara Rise (via Zoom) shared that there will be an informal potluck to celebrate Race Amity Day Sunday June 9 1-3pm at Strawberry Hill Park.

EQUITY & INCLUSION MANAGER REPORT (Anshu)

- REAC Workplan presentation to Council—Will be taken up at the Council's June 18th study session. Anshu is drafting using COBI's template and will discuss with REAC at our June meeting. It will be an overview of our accomplishments over the last year and plans for the year following the plan's presentation in June.
- Zero emissions hand tools update— Anshu reports that the council will receive a presentation on this ordinance at the May 28 Council meeting and encouraged REAC members to submit public comment. COBI has discussed REAC's 2022 recommendations; some were implemented; full community outreach has not been. There will be time for outreach before implementation and to make sure the ordinance is equitably implemented.

Discussion followed regarding REAC's previous recommendations, focusing on the need for actual outreach, not just a survey, of those most affected by the proposal. Renni asked to see the finding of the study COBI has done to date. Jing expressed concern that REAC was not consulted in drafting the ordinance and emphasized REAC has said repeatedly it wants to be part of the process. Olivia and Renni mentioned the 2022 recommendations included more than just outreach, including subsidies/rebates for compliant tools.

Council member Quitslund stated he has not seen the ordinance yet. Anshu shared that at this point it is just a presentation.

Report out: Send REAC's 2022 zero-emissions recommendations to the Council liaisons

- UAS Statement of Intent update—Anshu reported the uncrewed aerial system (drone) statement of intent has been implemented, and thanked REAC for its input. Next step is that BIPD and Emergency Management will formalize it into a working memorandum.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING (625 WINSLOW)

Olivia attended the affordable housing open house April 15. The City Manager presented an overview, focusing on what affordable housing is and its importance. Some commenters expressed concern over traffic and pollution. Council members appeared supportive of the project.

Council member Quitslund reported that Requests for Qualification have gone out; potential developers have expressed interest.

Eric presented a resolution expressing REAC's recommendation to COBI to evaluate the proposal through an equity lens; to view critically claims that the location is not suitable for the proposed housing; and noting with concern objections that the development does not "belong" in such a visible location or presents the wrong "image" for Bainbridge Island.

Motion to adopt the resolution (Eric moved, Jing seconded) approved unanimously.

Resolution to be reported out.

PROPOSED CODE CHANGE FOR CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Anshu raised the possibility of revising the municipal code to permit non-Bainbridge residents to serve on REAC. The code currently requires that all advisory committee members be residents. Anshu stated that may be unfair to people with businesses or other ties to island.

Renni questioned whether adding non-residents might be a reason to allow REAC to have more than seven members. Council member Fantroy-Johnson noted the council recently rejected the idea of having more than 7 members.

UPDATE ON BYSTANDER WORKSHOP

Jing reported the anti-racism bystander training workshop is scheduled for May 4. So far 69 people have signed up for. The training will be provided by Healing Equity United.

SCOTT WINN LANES WORKSHOP TAKEAWAYS

Olivia reported that she, Jing, and Eric, along with Council member Fantroy-Johnson, Anshu and Deputy City Manager Ellen Schroer met with Scott Winn to discuss REAC's and the City's respective "lanes." It was a great conversation, focused on how REAC can be clearer about communicating our recommendations in a way that makes them actionable. Part of that is guided by the city code and governance manual, which state REAC acts "as directed by council," and also can make recommendations. Council member Fantroy-Johnson stated it is about having clarity about what happens when REAC acts – e.g., do we want the council to put an item on its agenda, refer to the City Manager, etc. Anshu noted staff needs clarity; its directions need to come through the City Manager, not Council or the advisory committees directly. Also discussed was making sure REAC is tracking its accomplishments to make clear it is a resource for the City.

REVISITING GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Council has asked REAC to review the City Council's "guiding principles" from an equity perspective, ahead of next year's completion of the new comp plan. Council member Quitslund noted the principles come from the introductory statement of the comp plan, each one of which is spelled out in the underlying policies.

Referred to Law & Policy committee for review.

UPDATE ON JUNETEENTH

Juneteenth event will be June 19 3-7 pm at Town Square. Theme will be educate, celebrate, commemorate. There will be panel discussions, a dance troupe, art, food and a DJ. The organizing group will need volunteers.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Anshu: COBI's Civil Service Commission is seeking community volunteers to serve on interview panels as part of the police officer hiring process.

Jing: May is Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage month.

Jing: Want to call attention to a nonprofit called In-sight Collaborative, a humanitarian group focusing on improving the lives of refugees and forcibly displaced people. It is having its "digital culture box" event on May 11 and a community building event on May 25.

Savannah: Is sitting in on the review of applications for the open REAC positions.

Caitlin: volunteering as REAC historian. Renni asked that each member send her three accomplishments from the last year. Hope is to become systematic in recording what REAC does.

REPORT OUT ITEMS FOR COUNCIL

- Zero emission hand tool: Our 2022 recommendations
- Affordable housing resolution

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm.

Approved as modified – June 6, 2024