



Department of Planning and Community & Economic Development

Community Development Division

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Child Care
Community Resources
Community Development Block Grant
Madison Senior Center

Memo

To: Common Council
From: Linette Rhodes, Community Development Grants Supervisor
Date: 3/20/2024
Re: Committee Merger – Housing Strategy Committee & Landlord Tenant Issues Committee

Background:

Introduced into legislation January 2023, Madison's elected officials were seeking to merge City-County Homeless Issues Committee, Landlord and Tenant Issue Committee (LTIC) and Housing Strategy Committee (HSC). Working with City Attorney's Office, Legistar #75926 was introduced as Title Only, Repealing Sections 32.03 and 33.34 and amending Section 33.09(3) of the Madison General Ordinances to combine the City-County Homeless Issues Committee, Landlord and Tenant Issues Committee, and Housing Strategy Committee.

This legislation was referred to the impacted committees with the following recommendations:

- Landlord Tenant Issues Committee; February 16, 2023 → Recommendation to Refer
- City-County Homeless Issues Committee; March 6, 2023 → Recommendation to Place on File w/o Prejudice
- Housing Strategy Committee; April 27, 2023 → Recommendation to Place on File w/o Prejudice
- Common Council; May 2, 2023 → Refer to future meeting to Place on File

Based on feedback from the above recommendations and further conversations with City staff, an alternative proposal was drafted to remove the City-County Homeless Issues Committee. The Attorney's Office created a new draft that would repeal only MGO 32.03 (Landlord and Tenant Issues Committee) and MGO 33.34 (Housing Strategy Committee) to create a new MGO that would provide guidance for a newly formed Housing Policy Committee.

Original DRAFT language for equity review:

Draft of creation of new "Housing Policy Committee" which would merge and replace the Housing Strategies committee and Landlord and Tenant Issues Committee

33.XX – HOUSING POLICY COMMITTEE

(1) Creation. This ordinance creates a Housing Policy Committee for the City of Madison.

(2) Membership. The Housing Policy Committee shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Mayor and subject to approval by the Common Council. Two (2) members shall be alders. The other members shall be resident members that bring a variety of different perspectives and experience on issues affecting housing, including its production and management, financing, purchase or lease. Members shall serve without compensation. The members shall annually elect non-Council members to serve as chairperson and vice-chairperson, however, the initial chairperson shall be selected by the Mayor. The Mayor shall strive to appoint members drawn from the following portions of the community: neighborhood groups, tenant organizations, apartment owners' organizations, college or university students, business people, educational institutions and the development community.

- (3) **Terms.** All resident members shall be appointed for three-year terms, however, the initial terms of two (2) of the resident members shall expire on April, 30 20YY. Initial terms of the remaining three (3) resident members shall expire on April 30, 20YY+1. Thereafter, each resident member shall be appointed for a three-year term commencing on May 1st and expiring on April 30th. The terms of the alders shall expire with the expiration of their terms in office.
- (4) **Powers and Duties.** The Housing Policy Committee shall have the following powers, duties, and functions:
- a) Provide guidance to the City's Department of Planning, Community and Economic Development, the Mayor and the Common Council in the development and furtherance of City goals and objectives around meeting the rental and owner-occupied housing needs in Madison – both market rate and affordable.
 - b) Make recommendations to the Mayor and the Common Council on all aspects of landlord and tenant policies and issues, including landlord and tenant issues in Chapters 27 and 32 of the Madison General Ordinances
 - c) Review, monitor and evaluate available data and reports, including the Housing Snapshot Report and the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, which describe local housing conditions and trends, for information helpful in identifying emerging issues, challenges, or deficiencies in the housing market, with particular focus on lower-income households.
 - d) Provide a forum for raising and discussing key housing issues, trends and challenges the City and its residents face, and issues of interest to the Mayor, Common Council or community members.
 - e) Provide a forum for discussion and communication about landlord-tenant policy issues.
 - f) Solicit input to get a range of perspectives about local housing issues and needs from subject matter experts, including developers, lenders, consumers and advocates, community stakeholders and the public.
 - g) Identify and try to learn from policies, initiatives and best practices that have proven effective in improving housing outcomes in other communities.
 - h) Identify impediments to meeting local housing needs, particularly for households with lower incomes, and recommend proposals to help overcome them. Those proposals may include the adoption, refinement or implementation of City policies, programs, or regulatory frameworks affecting housing in Madison, market rate and affordable.
 - i) Review the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing report prepared by the Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development staff and forward the report with the Committee's recommendations to the CDBG Committee, Mayor and Common Council for their action and inclusion in the 5-year Consolidated Plan required by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- (5) **Staff.** The Department of Planning and Community and Economic Development shall provide staff support for the Housing Policy Committee and shall receive and retain all documents, reports and records relating thereto.
- (6) **Meetings.** The Housing Policy Committee shall meet on an as needed basis, typically once each month, and shall conduct its business in accordance with rules which it may establish.

Equity Review:

This proposal seeks to streamline committee structure based on recommendations approved by Madison Common Council in the [Task Force on the Structure of City Government report](#). Intent of the proposal is to specifically streamline the number of housing related committees by merging two committees that focus on housing and create a new Housing Policy Committee that will continue to support the valuable work of each through continued oversight.

The Task Force recommended reducing the total number of Boards, Commissions or Committees (BCCS) by eliminating or combining BCCs that are redundant or have outlived their purpose will decrease time required of residents, staff, and alders, make the BCC structure easier to support and access, and ensure greater clarity of purpose for each BCC.

In addition, the Task Force noted that many of the ordinances and resolutions creating individual BCCs are not clear as to the BCCs purpose or jurisdiction. Creating a new MGO to establish the Housing Policy Committee provides elected officials the opportunity to edit the language that outlines the powers and duties of the committee.

A meeting was held to review the proposed language of a new Housing Policy Committee, seek feedback on the positive and negative impacts of the proposal and seek recommendations on factors elected officials and staff should consider as they move forward drafting the final MGO.

Recommendations made at the meeting to consider when creating a new Housing Policy Committee (HPC):

1. Currently, the LTIC has 7 members and HSC has 9 members. The proposed draft of HPC limits membership to only 7 members in total, of which 2 would be Alders. This is a significant decrease in resident members to BCCs to provide feedback. It's recommended that the membership of a Housing Policy Committee have a higher number of resident seats for more diversity.
2. The HPC draft states the City will "strive" to pull representatives from particular groups but does not require that representation. While City staff do try to diversify the committee representation it should be a requirement that the representation is diverse so that targeted populations proactively apply to available seats. It's recommended that Tenant Organization, College Student/Tenant, Apartment Owner be included as required representation.
3. The current HPC draft lacks clarity to general public of power and duties by only referencing oversight of MGOs. It's recommended the draft needs to be more detailed and include language about the oversight of the Rent Abatement process and the Hearing process.
4. The LTIC and HSC currently have full agendas and at times unable to discuss all items on the agenda. It's recommended to leave them separate committees to ensure there is adequate time dedicated to the topics.
5. There is concern that platform offered through LTIC for tenants to voice concerns and participate in engagement process will be lost through HPC. It's recommended the City review forums offered to tenants and residents to voice their opinions and support more engagement with residents who are tenants.
6. Must be cautious of who is representing the targeted populations on HPC, have to consider who are currently sitting on BCCs due to institutional knowledge that may be lost with a reduction in resident seats. It is recommended that current BCC members are engaged about possibilities of continuing on HPC, but length of time overall on BCCs should be considered as an opportunity to bring new representation opportunities to the public.
7. If merging BCCs to address quorum issues, it is recommended that the HPC seek members who are committed, have time and are passionate about serving on BCCs. It is critical that HPC agendas are actionable to keep members engaged. Members who are frequently unavailable should be replaced.
8. It's recommended that the word "collectively" be added..... *The other members shall be resident members that bring, collectively, a variety of different perspectives and experience on issues affecting housing, including its production and management, financing, purchase or lease.*

Participating in the equity analysis:

Members of the Affordable Housing Action Alliance (AHAA) were invited to participate in an equity review. AHAA membership is a diverse group of advocates, elected officials, non-profit leaders, realtors, developer, etc. The following members attended the meeting:

- Alder Guequierre – District 19 Alder, Housing Strategy Committee
- Rebecca Hoyt – City of Madison Disability Rights & Services Specialist
- Marily Feil – AHAA Member
- Heidi Weigleitner – Tenants Rights Attorney Legal Aid
- Mitch – Law School, Rental Property Owner, RA Hearing Examiner