

**Attendees:**

- Dani Turk (*HDC*)
- Amber Larsen (*Watershed Community Development*)
- Tara Woodruff (*WSHFC*)
- Tory Drawz (*Imagine Housing*)
- Sophia Benalfew (*Ethiopian Community in Seattle*)
- Patience Malaba (*HDC*)
- Ben Johnson (*Dept of Commerce*)
- Loren Tierney (*HDC*)
- Seth Lundgaard (*SeaMar Community Health*)
- Keri Williams (*WSHFC*)
- Tevin Medley (*The Athena Group*)
- Rhiannon Colaci (*The Athena Group*)
- Bilan Aden (*African Community Housing Development*)
- Grace Kim (*Schemata Workshop HDC*)
- Donald King (*Nehemiah Initiative Seattle*)
- Alfredo-Jude Cari (*LISC*)
- Kristina Hoeschen (*SeaMar Community Health*)

**Agenda:**

- Revisit Community Agreements
- CBO Share-out
- Define Capacity Building for CBO's
- Plan for Next Meeting ®

**Q: Any questions from the group to co-chairs or anything to add?**

- Were there any updates to the three buckets in the workplan chosen from last year?
  - Bucket 1: What needs to be done for us to advance our goal of community ownership in development and increase homeownership.
  - Bucket 2: Capacity building to support CBO's
  - Bucket 3: Eliminating barriers through policy advocacy, systems change & funding. How do we cultivate the necessary relationships and network to support this work.
    - The biggest change has been the policy work that has progressed with the Finance Commission. More work needs to be done on capacity building.

**Q: What does it mean to build capacity for CBO's?**

- Member acknowledges this term is thrown around but not commonly understood, can mean different things to different entities.

- Announcement to group: The plan is to share the conversation in this group with the “Public Funders” group. A subset of the public funders of King County, Commerce, ARCH, City of Seattle, etc. that will be meeting.
- Capacity building is a broad term for a small organization, a need for staff. Need time to invest in staff otherwise no large impact on capacity. Up against lawyers and investors that have been facing these policies for years, there is a need for accessibility legal advice therefore needing funds.
- Understanding how everything works together, for instance the application for the tax credit application. How do you confirm you have the most competitive application? Opportunities to obtain a consultant would be helpful.
- Member of group acknowledges the need to gain trust from communities they work with, taking time to develop relationships. To have this time, need staff to answer questions, calls, etc.
- The needs don’t match the progress in developing, well established CBO’s can expand bandwidth by hiring consultants.

**Q: Hiring staff with expertise or needing training. What does hiring look like? Are you finding this experience? Are you finding trainings?**

- No affordability to hire someone who’s fully experienced, focus is to hire people who understand communities the CBO serves. The base is community engagement. Trying to understand if it’s better to have consultants for expertise regarding the tax credit application vs other abilities. No, have not found any trainings for affordable housing.
- Even if there is budget to hire an experienced developer, there is a sense of doing it in a dominant culture way vs what is important to community. Lack of trust.
- Echo from member that capacity building defines as lack of staff and training, being able to find the correct senior leadership (i.e. developer, business owner and architect). How to have applicable training.
  - Differences in experience
  - When do we hire a consultant?
- Lack of funds to hire staff, how do we make funds available to do this?

**Q (from chat): Could WSFHC provide free consulting services for CBOs without development staff that are submitting funding applications?**

**Q (from chat): Would it be helpful to imagine a pool of development consultants that LISC or WSFHC would employ full time that could be deployed to consult with CBOs for when they have a development project, or to train/mentor their staff?**

- African Community Housing Development: Working with affordable housing developers who are former CEO’s and highly experienced in affordable housing industry, have a 30-year relationship working together. Pre-development unrestricted funds are used to pay for their services, about 20 hrs. per month. Recently hired real estate development project manager.

- Amplifying programs such as LISC, in this space, would be beneficial for other CBO's.

### **Meeting Notes:**

- Community Agreements:
  - Listen with curiosity and willingness to learn.
  - Do what you need to show up fully.
  - Resist the desire to interrupt.
  - Speak from your own story and use "I" statements.
  - Avoid speaking for another individual or group.
  - Be open to the wisdom in each person's story.
  - Not everything will be comfortable to discuss.
  - Include African Languages
  - Anything to add?
- Announcement to Affinity group for newcomers:
  - Group began to convene at the beginning of 2023.
  - Platform for CBO's to come together and collaborate
  - A space to collaborate on how we share practices, resources with each other, build a community to work towards equitable development.
  - Jamie has retired, new cochair introduction: Bilan Aden as co-chair with AJ Cari
- CBO Share-Out:
  - How did your CBO get started? If your CBO had more decision-making power, what would be different in your community?
    - Initiative of Seattle: Started Jan of 2021. Decision making power would be around "Can we elevate our percentage of AMI home purchasers?". Some policies are 120%. Faith based development; initiative works with Black churches in Seattle to build on undeveloped land. Started a decade ago advocating for churches to do this work. Displacement from gentrification began more than 10 years ago and churches were struggling. Churches began to accept the offers given from gentrifiers to then build housing on it that the former community could no longer afford.
    - Imagine Housing: Formed in 1987 as St. Andrews Housing Group. Group was formed due to meeting a young woman pregnant living in car. The congregation wanted to help, snowballed into a non-profit to help with ways to create affordable housing. In the 90's, they were able to do the first project in Issaquah, WA called "Andrews Arms". 15 years ago; rebrand to Imagine Housing. Currently working on a 100-unit project to get approved to build affordable housing on St Andrews site. If more decision-making power, being able to get communities to coalesce around who they want to serve and how they want to serve the affordable housing need.
  - **Q to Imagine Housing**: Can you describe the community you serve?
    - Response: East city communities such as Bellevue, Kirkland, etc. are high income communities; there is a struggle to provide housing for people who may work in that community but are unable to live there.

- Acknowledgement: Commonalities in share out, getting behind a specific vision for decision making process that can be implemented.
- HDC Acknowledgement: Sees an opportunity for agencies to coordinate to allocate resources and enhance access to allocate these resources, to coordinate an approach to help CBO's access the resources proactively.
- The Department of Commerce has a program for technical assistance, has a contract with 3 other consultants, each have 500k to work over 2 years to offer:
  - 1:1 training with organizations.
  - Assist with pre-development planning and design.
  - Contact info provided (*See Key Dates/To Do's below*)
- Acknowledgment from WSHFC: Commonalities heard in this group (trusted messenger, cultural competency, trusted relationships) shows a disconnect between what lenders, public funders, and investors value in development team vs. what the community values and what makes a good experience for the residents.
- Vote for next topics:
  - Definitions of Communities Harmed by Housing Disparities, and Community Based Organizations
  - Incentives for Developers to Partner with CBOs (*2 votes*)
  - Engagement of Communities Harmed by Housing Disparities (*2 votes*)
  - Decision-making Power for CBOs
  - Racial Equity in the Development Team
  - Capacity Building for CBOs (*3 votes*)
- Acknowledgment from group: Synergy between topic subject "Incentives for Developers" and "Capacity Building".
- Need expressed to come up with a goal for capacity building, what does it mean to us? Come together as a group on these goals.

### **Key Dates/To-Do's**

- Shared from chat- Contact info for Dept of Commerce: Benjamin.johnson@commerce.wa.gov 206-454-2226
- Doodle poll to be sent for first week of March for next meeting.

### **Meeting Links:**

- 1) <https://www.housingconsortium.org/policy/2024-wa-legislative-tracker/>
- 2) **LISC Program Application:** <https://www.lisc.org/puget-sound/our-work/affordable-housing/housing-equity-accelerator/housing-equity-accelerator-2024-2025-2/>