

## **Zoning Assessment Steering Committee**

Session 5 | 05/15/23 or 05/22/23 | 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm

*Session 5 was hosted virtually and divided in to two separates sessions. Steering Committee members were welcome to attend one of the two sessions. These meeting notes are a combination of both sessions.*

### **Meeting Minutes**

Attendance: 27 people, including MPC and Urban Institute staff and guests.

### **Welcome and Get to Know You Activity**

To have members get to know each other virtually, participants introduced themselves in the Zoom Chat with their name and favorite place to eat in or around Chicago. Restaurant recommendations included Armitage Alehouse, The Snail, Kasama, Harold's Chicken, Edgewater Tacos, 14 Parish, Aba, Aya Pastries, Parsons, Bistro Campagne, Woo Chon, Del Seoul, Le Bouchon, Herbivore, and even Legs Inn in Michigan for summer outdoor options.

### **Definition Review**

MPC reminded the steering committee that the group agreements and "fist to five" voting tool will remain in place during the session.

Using "fist to five" voting on Menti, 10 members voted a combined (average) score of 3.8 on the Equitable Development definition during the first session and 7 members voted for a combined (average) score of 4.4. There were 17 total responses with an average of 4.1 ("this is fine")

#### (Environmentally) Sustainable Development

Development that **acknowledges the importance of ecology and natural systems and works to** address past environmental harms, reduce current negative impacts – especially the overburdening of marginalized communities – mitigate future harms, and ensure the benefits of economic activity are broadly distributed by **taking positive steps towards a sustainable future.**

Both sessions' participants provided feedback on shortening the text. One session participant provided feedback on the adding "ensuring benefits" achieve a local positive instead of "broadly distributed" or that it is "broadly distributed to neighborhoods (beyond downtown)."

### **Outcomes Theme Review**

The steering committee identified about 120 built environment outcomes to be achieved related to definitions of equity, sustainability, and public health in meeting 3 (March). During that activity, the steering committee members shared their outcomes and discussed whether they could be impacted by zoning or a different policy mechanism. MPC synthesized the outcomes into groups based on similarity of contents. Outcome themes were created to capture the general intent of the outcome groupings. Refer to the supplemental sheet (or slide deck) with the outcomes and categories.

MPC presented the outcome themes to the steering committee. When asked if the themes generally reflected what was discussed in their groups, the first session had 10 members who voted with a combined (average) score of 3.5 (between neutral and agree) while the second session had 7 members who voted with a combined (average) score of 4.3 (between agree and strongly agree). A total of 17 responses had an average of 3.9 (neutral to agree).

Many people liked the outcome themes but would like to see a different type of classification as well (such as formatting to show housing goals vs transportation vs etc.). Members provided feedback on improving the built environment outcomes by combining some of them that are very similar and providing specific changes or additions to a few of them.

### **Outcome Themes Discussion**

MPC hosted four focus groups that were attended by approximately 30 stakeholders where participants noted which of the outcome themes resonated with them and which ones they had more questions about. The top 3 themes:

- Safe, walkable (accessible to people with disabilities) streets, sidewalks and amenities in every neighborhood to access basic needs including work/school, stores, healthcare, etc.
- Diverse housing options (subsidized, affordable, workforce/middle, market, luxury) are available in every neighborhood
- Accessible affordable housing options (cost and types)

Steering committee members shared feedback around the 3 themes with the most questions:

- No engagement on by-right projects
- Productive use for all land - particularly for vacant land
- Fair and harmonious property values throughout the city

### **Review of Outcomes for Zoning / Land Use Relationship**

Urban Institute reviewed the outcome themes and classified them based on their relationship to zoning and land use. Based on the Chicago code text (and other city's texts from prior research), Urban Institute reviewed chapters to determine whether it was clearly zoning/land use related or if it was a combination, such as market or investment dependent (market) or if the outcome was more related to other departmental policies or codes outside the scope of zoning (other departments/codes). In this draft copy for review, Urban Institute classified them into five categories:

- Zoning/Land Use
- Zoning/Land Use PLUS market
- Zoning/Land Use PLUS other department/codes
- Other city departments/codes
- Market/people dependent

When asked if they generally agree with the classification of the outcome themes, the first session had 9 members who voted with a combined (average) score of 3.2 (between neutral and agree) while the second session had 7 members who voted with a combined (average) score of 4.7 (between agree and strongly agree). A combined total of 16 respondents had an average score of 4.0 (agree).

Steering committee members shared feedback on modifying some of the designations (such as to include a people/community-centered focus and a planning focus). They suggested it could also be visualized as a sliding scale of influence if it is not completely in zoning and land use.

### **Process Theme Review**

During the 4th meeting (April), members identified where challenges and successes were experienced as part of the zoning and land use process on the Simplified Zoning Diagram. Members shared with their table where those challenges or successes had occurred, who were impacted and how it may have reflected equity or not. Additionally, focus group participants also completed this exercise with a total of

more than 150 challenges and successes reported across the steering committee and focus groups. MPC categorized the comments into primary and secondary themes. Each individual response received a code denoting the location where it occurs within the overall process, as well as codes related to its thematic grouping. The major categories were:

- Process Participation
- Public Review
- Aldermanic
- City and Departmental
- Accountability
- Applicant Process Requirements

Refer to the supplemental slide deck with the process themes and secondary process challenges and successes.

When asked if they generally agree with the process themes and category classifications, the first session had 9 members who voted with a combined (average) score of 4 (agree) while the second session had 7 members who voted with a combined (average) score of 4.3 (between agree and strongly agree) A total between the two sessions of 16 responses had a combined average of 4.1 (between agree and strongly agree).

Participants shared that there are more successes than those named by the stakeholders, and that these activities tend to highlight more challenges. Some noteworthy challenges that the committee discussed are around engagement (how much is too little and too much) and the balance between citywide initiatives that may be at odds with local community needs.

### **Zoning Map Review**

Several maps and charts were shown based on initial research to provide an overview of what zoning looks like in Chicago 'on the ground'. Slides were shown for Citywide simplified zoning breakdown, zoning breakdown by DPD planning region, comparisons between land use and zoning citywide, zoning breakdowns by racial majority of community area, and next steps and future research questions.

Refer to the maps from the slide deck. Overall zoning takeaways and trends were highlighted for each of the Department of Planning and Development's 7 planning regions. The differences between how zoning designations and land use are quantified were shown by comparing percentage of total area pie charts for each. Additionally, a chart showing the zoning designation average percentages compared to racial majority by community area was presented. Areas of focus included differences in manufacturing, planned developments, and residential breakdowns. Last, some possible next steps and future research questions were shared to spur additional discussion.

Participants shared feedback in areas where they would like to see additional data (including change over time and specific geographies) and data sources (IE county assessor's data). There were also some clarifying questions (IE non-parcel areas).

### **Next Steps**

The next meeting is scheduled for June 12 from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm at the Metropolitan Planning Council (with an optional happy hour from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm). During the June meeting, the approach

to conducting the assessment will be discussed. This will be the final meeting of phase I for the steering committee.