

City of Kenmore
STEP Housing Committee Meeting Minutes
July 30, 2025 @ 6:00 PM

STEP Housing Committee Members – In Attendance

Corina Pfeil
Timothy Marchello
Josh Kurcinka
Jennifer Alderman
Caitlin Sullivan
Juliana Pooley

Staff

Nick Chen, Kimley-Horn (consultant/facilitator)
Sam Matterazzo, Kimley-Horn (consultant)
Debbie Bent, Community Development Director
Brittany Chue, Senior Planner

Meeting Agenda

Overview of development standards, city processes and permitting, good neighbor agreement, and outreach materials to review for the next meeting.

1. Recap of Panel Discussion: Takeaways

Corina Pfeil: Recommendations on project size with family level compared to permanent housing, how funding works, and what makes a healthy place with support services, e.g. medical. Safety and security features suggestions.

Juliana Pooley: Small specialty type PSH units which may also apply for specialty funding for different groups. Need a larger building to be sustainable and meet funding requirements.

Timothy Marchello: Appreciated the openness and helpfulness of the panel.

Caitlin Sullivan: Notes from the panel state overnight guests must sign in but thought overnight guests were not allowed in PSH. Jennifer Alderman: Noted that depends on the project, with some PSH all guests are required to sign in and some allow overnight guests.

Corina Pfeil: Noted medical needs for good neighbor agreement. Bothell has a good example of a good neighbor agreement, addendum in the lease agreement as part of onboarding.

Timothy Marchello: There may be community nervousness over having projects, but rental agreements are in place just like any other multi-family housing.

Corina Pfeil: As a group, can tour different types of PSH sites, could it be done by appointment? Nick Chen: Noted outside scope of work. Noted from the panel that different types of housing have different needs, e.g. open space requirements may not be applicable for all types of housing.

2. Recommendation Memo: Presentation

Nick Chen: Noted deliverables for City Council include code amendments, neighborhood agreement, and community engagement materials. The Open House will be coming up in the fall, is the purpose to inform or engage the community or a combination of both?

Development Standards

Nick Chen: PSH development standards are similar to multi-family housing, development agreements are not required for PSH. Emergency housing is a little bit different. State law does allow some separation. In Lynnwood and Redmond, conditions of development prohibit the clustering of STEP developments.

Juliana Pooley: Small project against a larger project because the buffers can interfere. Nick Chen: More guidance on removing buffering, state code is vague on buffers.

Timothy Marchello: Does city have separation requirements? Nick Chen: No, the city currently does not have buffer standards. Most cities process it as a multi-family project. Commerce recommends lowering parking minimums for PSHs because they are expensive to build.

Juliana Pooley: Panel did note this restriction can cause issues.

What are the biggest physical challenges you see in STEP Housing development that don't typically apply to a multi-family project? (Nick Chen)

Corina Pfeil: Community van to help people have access to appointments for larger developments. Cars are often retained by residents for independence so need some parking but could reduce parking requirements.

Nick Chen: Would van be a good tradeoff for not having a personal vehicle?
Committee members: Yes.

Corina Pfeil: In support of family-like structure with parking garage to keep in mind community needs. Supports reduction in parking, but wants to make sure there is parking, that we are not giving that up and crowding the streets.

Should security requirements and increased safety measures for benefits of residents, e.g. locked doors, timed entry, gates, be included in development code? (Nick Chen)

Corina Pfeil: PSH levels of security are standard in housing design and needed for safety of residents.

Juliana Pooley: Where would this go as this is not zoning, can examples be provided from other jurisdictions? Nick Chen: Operational agreements but some cities put in requirements.

Caitlin Sullivan: STEP is outright permitted where residential uses are allowed, so no development agreement is required. The reason you would want something in the code is because there is no additional process, no public hearing.

Nick Chen: This could be part of a Type 1 process, which is approved by the city manager. A development agreement is not required.

Caitlin Sullivan: SRO counts as a quarter of a unit so could have 24 SRO compared to six single family units. Is PSH counted the same as a housing unit? Nick Chen: Yes, PSH is counted as a housing/dwelling unit. SROs typically have a shared kitchen and density is counted differently.

Josh Kurcinka: What is the max capacity of units on the yellow part of the map, need to be clear on what it is?

Caitlin Sullivan: If allowed 3 units for Middle Housing, then could get 12 SRO units.

Josh Kurcinka: Being clear on how many units is the maximum in the city to address safety concerns for community. Providing sufficient parking is needed.

Juliana Pooley: Supports less regulation on parking and letting the developer decide how many parking spaces are needed. But challenge of determining parking needs, there are creative options. Wants flexibility with parking. It can be hashed out as RFPs with developers, e.g. disabled seniors may have different parking needs than young veterans, so it can be flexible.

Nick Chen: Option is requiring developers to provide a parking plan instead of having parking minimums.

Juliana Pooley: Have Park and Ride and churches with empty lots. If they wanted to offer van services, valets, or contract with the park and ride. Smaller PSH, people might be thinking there will be parking in front of my house and what does that look like.

Corina Pfeil: If the building is mixed use, then businesses want more parking. Supports parking stickers for certain zones.

Timothy Marchello: There are no parking zones where cars are ticketed in Kenmore.

Juliana Pooley: Usually only if a vehicle is abandoned.

Nick Chen: Most developers will want parking on site.

Juliana Pooley: Would like to see that built in.

Nick Chen: Developer could apply for a variance as a separate process. We can build in flexibility or leave the code standards the way they are.

3. Flexibility on standards for STEP? (Nick Chen)

Corina Pfeil: Green or LEED buildings. Buildings are hotter, need AC, especially for elderly residents. We could request that environmental standards be built in.

Nick Chen: Will look at city sustainable building code standards.

Josh Kurcinka: What are the clustering conditions in other jurisdictions, outside of Lynnwood and Redmond?

Juliana Pooley: Are cities meeting the STEP housing numbers?

Debbie Bent: No, these are 20-year goals. Most Comprehensive Plans have only recently been passed. We will know more in 5 years after the reporting requirements if cities are meeting those standards.

Nick Chen: There is still so few STEP housing around.

Juliana Pooley: Those are bigger cities geographically than us.

Corina Pfeil: Size doesn't matter. Challenging for emergency services to find buildings in dense areas, need good signage and way finding for buildings. Bellevue has done some things but also had difficulties in this area.

4. Review and Permitting Process: Type 1 process unless deviation from standards then Type 2, such as a variance or conditional use. Type 5 for development agreements. (Nick Chen)

Juliana Pooley: Can you clarify the process for development agreements?

Nick Chen: Overview of development agreement process. Other cities are similar with only staff approval for PSH.

Corina Pfeil: Concern about how to meet council in the middle.

Nick Chen: How does that fit in with the recommendation for the Council deliverable?

Timothy Marchello: The job of Committee is to make recommendations.

Josh Kurcinka: What are the public notice requirements for Type 1?

Debbie Bent: Type I is a building permit, does not have a notice requirement. With higher levels, such as short plats, long plats, variances, sign goes up on the property and a mailer goes out to neighbors within a certain distance of the property. If it's a city project, there is broader community outreach on the website and newsletter. Will confirm if Step Housing is currently a Type 1, and type of public notice.

Nick Chen: Will confirm with Development Services.

Corina Pfeil: Concern about critical areas and environmental standards. Nick Chen: Critical area regs still apply.

5. Good Neighbor Agreements: Nick will share examples of good neighbor agreements. Kenmore currently does not have a process for good neighbor agreements.

Juliana Pooley: Did Mary's Place or Lake City Partners have good neighbor agreements?

Debbie Bent: Kenmore does not require good neighbor agreements but will check.

Nick Chen: Good neighbor agreements can help with education about project and create assurances for residents who are living in STEP Housing projects.

Josh Kurcinka: Need code of conduct and good neighbor agreement for Kenmore.

What are things in a good neighbor agreement that you all would want to consider? (Nick Chen)

Corina Pfeil: No history of drug manufacturing.

Nick Chen: The good neighbor agreements typically don't cover resident history, like a code of conduct. It's an agreement with surrounding properties.

Corina Pfeil: Did Plymouth Housing have a good neighbor agreement?

Debbie Bent: Will check.

Timothy Marchello: Will we develop a template?

Nick Chen: Yes, this Committee will put a draft together.

Jennifer Alderman: Good neighbor agreements are minimum requirements, what is the minimum the city wants and providers can also add more in rental agreements etc. There needs to be flexibility, not one size fits all, but we are looking for the common denominator minimums. Ones that keep everyone safe.

Nick Chen: Understanding operations, points of contact, what is the course of action for non-compliance.

Juliana Pooley: Assumed some reciprocal things, protection on both sides, e.g. common areas have security so vandalism or crime by residents or by community treated the same way.

Corina Pfeil: Good neighbor agreements address rare occurrences, not a constant issue.

Nick Chen: There is not currently a process in place, should a good neighbor agreement be a requirement or a recommended best practice?

Corina Pfeil: Good neighbor agreements are a useful tool.

Caitlin Sullivan: Rules that govern behavior, short term rental example, lays out what operator can do, quiet hours, contact etc., things different to a single-family resident. Community outreach tool, here's rules and what to do if rules broken so clear expectations.

Jennifer Alderman: Agree with Caitlin Sullivan, role of committee in drafting a template or users guide. Need flexibility as rules may differ. Elements to include, e.g. contact info. Don't want standards to be so high to be a barrier but want the agreement to facilitate conversation between the city and developer.

Josh Kurcinka: Require minimums and go from there.

Jennifer Alderman: The people building or developing the project will take best practices into account and add onto minimums depending on what works best for them, what is most important for all types of STEP housing agreements.

Nick Chen: We can leave it flexible enough to have those discussions.

6. Community Outreach: When a project is proposed, what outreach/engagement should be required from a developer or city led project? (Nick Chen)

Juliana Pooley: Transitional housing or small PSH projects seems very different to a large new project. Different vulnerable populations. Don't want barriers for small PSH.

Timothy Marchello: Could you set a minimum project size for exemption, e.g. 25 units?

Corina Pfeil: With bigger projects, that's when community wants to know. Community announcements, want earlier interaction with the developer.

Nick Chen: Early engagement at time of application or early concept where opportunity for change feels more meaningful for participants. With early application, there's still opportunity for feedback and review.

Josh Kurcinka: Public notice process, is that different depending on project size or level of risk associated? Large building impacts entire city, small project impacts less.

Nick Chen: We will not be able to address every scenario but will keep these things in mind. Should the City provide more informational materials on STEP Housing?

Juliana Pooley: Yes, can learn in advance in neutral situation before there is a housing project to educate the community.

Corina Pfeil: Could have deep dive with links, infographics and bite sized information are helpful, and providing visuals.

Timothy Marchello: The city is good about showing where there are sidewalk improvements happening or downtown, examples from city projects. Can do the same with STEP goals.

Juliana Pooley: Can put info on website about what we currently have existing or anticipated projects in pipeline?

Corina Pfeil: Bothell Planning Commission did a walking tour to understand different concepts, which could be great for Kenmore.

Timothy Marchello: We received a graphic when we first started with numbers, can we include that too?

Debbie Bent: It is on the city website.

Nick Chen: Some people may not know what is considered STEP housing.

7. Open House: How would the committee recommend that we facilitate this community open house and what are our goals? (Nick Chen)

Debbie Bent: This will likely be mid to late September.

Josh Kurcinka: September and October will get more engagement than August, would like to see a draft of materials from consultant to review before the Open House.

Corina Pfeil: Can we do something at the Farmer's Market?

Debbie Bent: Once we have a date for the Open House, we could have a QR code and spread the word at the Farmer's Market.

Timothy Marchello: Can have template of good neighbor agreement and recommendations and ask for feedback from the community.

Corina Pfeil: Board and sticky notes and dots for people to use.

Nick Chen: The structure will be to provide information up front and then have exercises, development standards, processes, and good neighbor agreements, open house format with visuals and boards.

Timothy Marchello: Will this be a standalone meeting or happen before a City Council meeting?

Debbie Bent: Envisioned standalone meeting but having the meeting before Council is an option, later is better for people getting off work.

Josh Kurcinka: There is also Oktoberfest to advertise depending on the time.

Timothy Marchello: How will the good neighbor agreement draft be pulled from?

Nick Chen: Will put together a draft and bring it back for discussion.

***Meeting ends at 7:26pm.**