



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

June 25, 2007

Motion 12530

Proposed No. 2007-0345.2

Sponsors Phillips, Dunn and Hague

1 A MOTION directing the King County executive to review
2 options for the preservation of affordable housing
3 opportunities within manufactured home park communities.

4
5 WHEREAS, the lack of affordable housing is very often a key factor in
6 communities with persistent poverty, and

7 WHEREAS, manufactured home park communities are usually overlooked as the
8 single largest source of unsubsidized affordable housing in the country and are not
9 appreciated as a community asset until they start disappearing, and

10 WHEREAS, nationwide, about fifty-five thousand manufactured home park
11 communities are home to roughly ten million residents or three million five hundred
12 thousand families, of which seventy-five percent are considered low-income, and

13 WHEREAS, in many markets, homes in manufactured home park communities
14 tend to remain affordable, compared to homes on fee-simple land, and

15 WHEREAS, new manufactured homes generally sell for about a quarter of the
16 price of new single-family units, with median sales prices for new manufactured homes at

17 fifty-one thousand dollars compared to two hundred twenty thousand dollars for new
18 single-family units, according to the 2005 United States Census, and

19 WHEREAS, preserved resident-owned communities can remain accessible to
20 low-income families as homes in these communities gain acceptance as a homeownership
21 asset from low-income mortgage programs like the American Downpayment Dream
22 Initiative and the dozens of other demand-side programs, and

23 WHEREAS, although manufactured home park closures and resident
24 displacement is not a new threat to their residents and families, an ever-growing number
25 of manufactured home park communities are coming under threat of closure as cities,
26 suburbs and outlying areas expand and the underlying property becomes increasingly
27 valuable for development, and

28 WHEREAS, manufactured home park community residents are vulnerable to
29 displacement because, although they own their homes, they do not own the land upon
30 which their homes rest, and

31 WHEREAS, this expanding pace and scale of closures has sent thousands of
32 mostly low- and moderate-income manufactured home owners scrambling to relocate,
33 and

34 WHEREAS, although they are commonly referred to as "mobile" homes, this is
35 misleading because most manufactured homes are not easily moved. In fact, most
36 manufactured homes are not moved again once they leave the dealer's lot, due to the
37 high expense of moving and the potential for significant structural damage during a
38 move, especially for older manufactured homes, and

39 WHEREAS, even though most residents of manufactured home parks are long-
40 term members of their local communities, when a park owner decides to sell, the
41 residents usually find themselves faced with eviction and few alternative rental space
42 which would allow them to maintain ties with their local communities, and

43 WHEREAS, several factors are driving the closures, such as landowners having
44 the opportunity to make large profits because of rising land values and the cost of
45 maintaining often-deteriorating infrastructure within manufactured home parks, and

46 WHEREAS, in light of these factors, the county must examine the urgent issue of
47 preserving manufactured home park communities in the face of skyrocketing land values
48 and development pressures, and

49 WHEREAS, King County government actively supports low income housing and
50 has officially endorsed the Committee to End Homelessness in King County's ten-year
51 community plan to end homelessness, entitled "A Roof Over Every Bed in King County,"
52 and

53 WHEREAS, the county should work with residents, land owners, local officials
54 and often banking institutions to preserve and expand affordable housing for low income
55 individuals and families and develop and negotiate solutions that will allow manufactured
56 home park residents to gain the stability they and their families need, by:

57 1. Identifying successful examples of nonprofit practitioners around the country
58 who are preserving and creating economically secure manufactured housing for low- and
59 moderate-income families;

60 2. Reviewing the feasibility of using surplus public lands;

61 3. Examining the reestablishment and implementation of the Residential Mobile
62 Home Park (RMHP) zone, which existed in prior versions of the King County Zoning
63 Code and has been recently enacted in Snohomish county;

64 4. Seeking out and evaluating ideas and policies that can enhance affordable
65 communities where manufactured-home buyers have control of the land and evaluating
66 the need to enact state laws giving residents the opportunity to buy their communities;
67 and

68 5. Expanding access to conventional mortgages and to other financial resources
69 essential to stemming the tide of manufactured home park closures, preserving
70 communities and building healthy neighborhoods with engaged citizen leaders;

71 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

72 The King County executive is requested to conduct a study of options for King
73 County government to assist manufactured home park residents faced with threats of
74 displacement from their homes. Ten copies of the report shall be submitted to the clerk
75 of the council, who shall distribute one copy to each councilmember, no later than
76 September 30, 2007. The report should include, but not be limited to, the following
77 options:

78 A. Reestablishing the "Residential Mobile Home Park" zone designation for
79 existing mobile home parks and for any future mobile home park development;

80 B. Imposing a temporary moratorium on conversions of mobile home parks until
81 research on outcomes of those conversions can be completed;

82 C. Establishing adequate mitigation fees to be paid by land owners or developers
83 seeking to convert a manufactured home park to another use, to be used for direct

84 compensation to manufactured home owners, financing to develop replacement mobile
85 home parks, or the equivalent;

86 D. Using surplus King County government property to build replacement mobile
87 home parks, possibly using developer mitigation fees for this purpose;

88 E. Partnering with nonprofit developers, housing authorities or community land
89 trusts to use public/private funds to purchase at-risk mobile home parks before they can
90 be sold for redevelopment;

91 F. Offering incentives to mobile home park owners to encourage selling to
92 current homeowners at fair market value of property; and

93 G. Enacting local or support statewide "right of first refusal" laws requiring park

Motion 12530

94 owners to give residents notice before selling and the right to buy the park if they can
95 match the terms of the proposed sale.
96

Motion 12530 was introduced on 6/11/2007 and passed by the Metropolitan King County Council on 6/25/2007, by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Mr. Gossett, Ms. Patterson, Ms. Lambert, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Dunn, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Phillips and Ms. Hague

No: 0

Excused: 1 - Mr. Constantine

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON


Larry Gossett, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments None