



Board and Commission Council Committee Agenda Item Request

Name of Board or Commission: Joint Sustainability Committee

Request Number: 20170125-03A Recommendation related to a study of Passive House standards for affordable housing.

Description of item:

The Joint Sustainability Committee encloses the attached Passive House and Affordable Housing resolution for your consideration at the earliest opportunity of a study to help accomplish the following benefits:

- produce evidence of the dramatic reductions in utility bills for affordable housing tenants and other customers.
- produce evidence of the superior interior comfort produced by Passive House buildings, furnishing relief to the asthma and allergy sufferers who disproportionately occupy low income housing. The public health benefits of Passive House are an important consideration in our city.
- demonstrate that Passive House standards meet or exceed the requirements of all versions of the International Energy Conservation Code and would therefore function as an excellent complement should that code be adopted.
- help accomplish an important goal listed in the ACCP by producing quantitative as well as qualitative data about the suitability of Passive House for the achievement of our stated Net Zero energy goals for the year 2020 and beyond.

The JSC supports this resolution because Austin is a signatory to the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, is a member of ICLEI—Local Governments for Sustainability, and is also a C40 Agreement Innovator City. Adoption of the International Passive House standard would place Austin alongside peer cities such as Frankfurt, Brussels, Portland, Vancouver and New York City, all of whom have made Passive House a centerpiece of their climate protection efforts.

Affordable housing buildings, like schools and hospitals, serve a wider range of functions than minimum code buildings constructed by the private sector. They must be built to last. Passive House construction not only produces positive carbon reduction outcomes, it also dramatically improves the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) costs of Low Income Housing Tax Credit funded buildings whose minimum affordability stipulations envision them being in operation for 40-50 years or longer. Accordingly we recommend that the city encourage construction to Passive House standards in its future letters of non-opposition for tax credit funded developments as soon as possible.

We recommend that an RFQ for the study called for in the resolution be issued as soon as possible. We also recommend that the Passive House study be conducted by a qualified contractor in possession of Certified Passive House Consultant credential issued by the Passive House Institute or by the Passive House Institute—U.S. The Joint Sustainability Committee would be willing to provide backup materials and any other assistance as requested by city staff in the drafting of an RFQ and scope of study where necessary.

Board or Commission Vote to refer item to Council: Approved unanimously on a 13-0 vote, with Commissioner Davis absent.

Date of Approval of Request: January 25, 2017

Attachments: Yes No

If yes, please list the attachments: Committee Resolution

Attest:



Jim Walker, Chair, Joint Sustainability Committee

MAYOR'S OFFICE USE ONLY

Council Committee Assigned:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audit & Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Community Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning & Neighborhood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AE Utility Oversight | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobility | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economic Opportunity | <input type="checkbox"/> Open Space, Environment & Sustainability | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Utilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health & Human Services | | |

Recommend a Fiscal Analysis be completed?

Recommend a Legal Analysis be completed?

Notes:

Mayor Signature & Date:



BOARD/COMMISSION RESOLUTION
Joint Sustainability Committee
Recommendation Number: (20170125-03A)
Passive House Study

WHEREAS, the City of Austin's original 2007 Climate Protection Resolution 20070215-023 set a goal for the city to implement the most energy efficient building codes in the the nation; and

WHEREAS, on June 4, 2015 Austin City Council passed resolution 20150604-048 which established the framework for the Austin Climate Protection Plan (ACPP) and established the goal of implementing the most energy efficient building codes and aggressively pursuing energy efficient retrofits; and

WHEREAS, pollution and allergens have been linked to a reduction in children's cognitive functioning, and Austin's interior and exterior air quality is bad and worsening; and

WHEREAS, according to the Austin Climate Protection Plan, 53% of Austin's greenhouse gas emissions are produced by the city's built environment; and

WHEREAS, the international Passive House standard has been shown to produce building energy consumption reductions of up to 90% over conventional code-built structures, produces superior interior air quality, and is now minimum code in European Union cities such as Frankfurt and Brussels; and

WHEREAS, Austin City Council resolution 20140410-024, references the climate reduction strategies of peer cities such as Seattle and Portland, the climate protection plans of cities such as New York have already embraced Passive House as a cornerstone of their carbon reduction strategies for both new buildings as well as existing structures; and

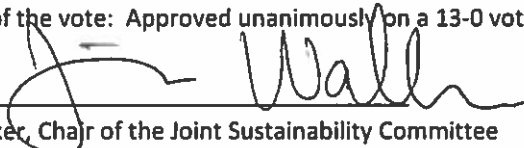
WHEREAS, the City of Austin has the duty to exercise climate and health leadership when it comes to the construction and retrofitting of city sponsored or permitted affordable housing;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Joint Sustainability Committee recommends that the City Council:

- Study Passive House certification for all new affordable housing development.
- Initiate a study evaluating Austin's multifamily affordable housing buildings, including public housing, for the potential energy savings benefits of retrofitting.

Date of Approval: January 25, 2017

Record of the vote: Approved unanimously on a 13-0 vote, with Commissioner Davis absent.

Attest: 
Jim Walker, Chair of the Joint Sustainability Committee

