Snap Shots from the Dialogue Café

The Freo Alternative

big thinking about small housing
The Freo Alternative – big thinking about small housing is about generating a shared community vision on the future of housing in Fremantle. Fremantle has always been a diverse community, yet growth in the number of small households and declining housing affordability have left some people unable to find a small home suitable to their needs.

We’re engaging with the community to understand how our planning rules could be changed to allow for more small housing options in Fremantle’s suburbs without compromising the values of established neighbourhoods e.g. tree canopy cover, open space, garden space etc.

Starting the Conversation
August 2016
We started the conversation around diverse housing by asking people for their housing stories in our online survey.

Focus Groups
October 2016
Several small focus groups to explore how smaller housing types can be built in the suburban areas of Fremantle.

Pop-In Open Days
3-6 November 2016
A four day open event to provide feedback on what we’ve heard and an interactive model to test how providing smaller housing might look in Fremantle.

Dialogue Cafe
September 2016
An opening event to encourage a shared discussion on a variety of considerations in providing diverse housing in the City of Fremantle.

Reporting on our Findings
Early 2017
A report compiling the findings from community engagement on the Freo Alternative produced and presented to Council.

Considering possible planning solutions
Recommendations based on the findings will be used to suggest possible planning approaches to achieve the community vision for diverse housing.

Next Steps
Proposed planning approach to go through statutory processes, including community comment.
How the Dialogue Café Worked

The City of Fremantle in partnership with the Australian Urban Design Research Centre and Creating Communities, held a Dialogue Café on Thursday 8 October 2016. Over 70 community members attended the dialogue café as well as City of Fremantle elected members (Councillors and Mayor) and City of Fremantle staff.

The Dialogue Café included a presentation on the history of housing diversity (or, more recently, lack thereof) in the City of Fremantle and a segment on the stories received from community members during an earlier phase of the engagement process.
Attendees, worked together in 13 separate groups, to complete three key activities structured around a “Menu of Conversation” which was aligned with the courses of a meal. The purpose of the activities were to gain feedback from community members on all aspects of the provision of diverse housing in the City of Fremantle. The following provides a snapshot of the responses on the night.

**Activity Topics**

- Future of our Community
- Guiding Values
- Benefits, Opportunities, Challenges & Priorities
Key Snap Shots

A summary of what we heard at the Dialogue Cafe
What we heard on the night

A variety of responses were provided by the participants that attended the Dialogue Cafe throughout each of the activities on the night. This booklet provides a summary of the most common themes that came from these responses.

This Word Cloud shows the most commonly used words (with size corresponding to frequency) across all of the feedback sheets for all activities completed during Dialogue Café.
Activity One
Future of our Community

What will our community, families and households be like in 20 years’ time?

Demographic Change
Trend Towards Shared & Intergenerational Living

Vibrant & connected neighbourhoods
“Intergenerational living to form support networks”

“Fewer children and small families”

Negative Social Impacts
“Fragmentation and lack of connection”

Sustainability as a key concern
What could the implications be on providing housing for future generations?

A variety of specific responses were heard from each of the tables at the Dialouge Cafe and have been grouped into themes. The size of the word corresponds to the frequency that theme was mentioned by groups.
Activity Two

Guiding Values
What identified values do you agree with?

Values Agreed Upon by Group
- Greenspace and nature
- Safe streets
- Walkability
- Local Food Production
- Streetscape
- Street trees
- Trees and shade
- Ownership
- Private gardens
- Adequate parking
- Open character

Additional Values Suggested by Participants
- Community and social interaction
- Creativity and innovation
- Sustainability
- Alternative tenure models
- Public open space
- Identity and authenticity

Values NOT Agreed Upon by Participants
- Adequate parking

Dialogue Cafe participants were asked to vote within their groups on values they agreed with. The results from each of the values are shown above.
How do we ensure the values provide a sound basis to plan for diverse housing choices?

Themes in size order based on the frequency of answer.
Activity Three
Benefits, Opportunities, Challenges & Priorities

What might be the key benefits, opportunities and challenges in providing diverse housing?

Benefits
- Emotional and Community Health Benefits
  - A Diverse Population
  - More Diverse and Accessible Services
  - Benefits when Ageing
  - Access to Affordability of Housing
  - Vibrant, Thriving, Expressive Freo

Opportunities
- Planning to Support Diverse Housing
  - Potential Land Available
  - Involving Community members in Design and Development
  - Incentivise Sustainable and Small Housing
  - Opportunities for Interesting Design and Architecture

Challenges
- Planning Laws and Policies
  - Negative Social Impacts and Attitudes
  - Parking and Transport Impacts
  - Changing Existing Approaches to Development
  - Retaining what is Liked
  - Changing Ingrained Attitudes and Expectations

Themes in size order based on the frequency of answer.
What are your top 5 priorities for the Freo Alternative project?

1. Sustainability
2. Affordability and Access to Housing
3. Smaller houses & The 'Freo' Identity
4. Sharing of Spaces, Resources and Facilities
5. Implementation of City of Fremantle planning policies/laws
6. Housing options for all demographics
7. Trees and green space
8. Parking and traffic management
9. Innovative and creative thinking
10. Cooperative housing options
11. Values-driven planning
12. Community involvement in planning

Groups were asked to rank their top priorities. From the list of responses these priorities were ranked in importance.
Thank You

Thank you to those that were a part of the Dialogue Cafe discussions
How can I still get involved?

The City of Fremantle is running several focus group events and a ‘Pop-In’ Open Day during the Freo Alternative project. For current events and project information please visit the City’s My Say Freo forum at mysay.fremantle.wa.gov.au/Freo_Alternative

The Snap Shots from the Dialogue Cafe booklet has been summarised from the compiled findings report which is available upon request.

This publication is available in multiple formats upon request.