



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Asian American and Pacific Islanders Commission

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One Ashburton  
Place  
12th Floor  
Boston, MA 02108  
aapicommission.org

### Meeting Notes

**Monthly AAPIC Program & Research Subcommittee Meetings**

Meeting Link: Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/6603360175>

Meeting ID: 660 336 0175

August 6, 2024, at 2 PM

The meeting will be held via teleconference in compliance with the Governor's Executive Order on the Open Meeting Law

\*Meetings occur on the first Wednesday of every month

	<b>Program &amp; Research Subcommittee Team Members</b>	<b>AAPIC</b> Commissioner Saatvik Ahluwalia (Chair) Commissioner Dr. Ekta Srinivasa Commissioner Amy Goh Commissioner Karen Chen Commissioner Moana Bentin Commissioner Dr. Richard Chu Commissioner Jennifer Rubin Commissioner Dr. Marilyn Park Yasmin Padamsee Forbes Shubhechha Dhaurali
	<b>Aim</b>	Spearhead our community engagement and research efforts, ensuring we stay connected and informed about the community's needs. The tag, "Engage & Insight," highlights our commitment to engaging with our community and gaining insights through research.
	<b>Focus Areas</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Health, Education</li><li>2. Youth Council</li><li>3. Pacific Islanders</li><li>4. Western Mass</li><li>5. Listening Sessions</li><li>6. Tracking impact of programs</li><li>7. Conducting Surveys</li></ol>



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**In Attendance:** Candice Cho (guest from AAPI Equity Alliance), Javan Santos (guest from AAPI Equity Alliance), Saatvik Alhuwalia, Shubhechha Dhaurali, Karen Chen joins 2:08 PM,

Candice Cho  
Managing Director of Policy and Counsel  
AAPI Equity Alliance and Stop AAPI Hate  
[ccho@aapiequity.org](mailto:ccho@aapiequity.org)

### **Agenda & Notes**

1. Public Hearings - discussion with Candice Cho & Javan Santos
  - a. Questions:
    - i. Do you mind sharing how you structure public hearings and how you hold such hearings in partnership with elected or government officials?
    - ii. Any advice for the commission?
  - b. Candice Cho gives presentation on what her organization, AAPI Equity Alliance based in LA, California, does surrounding public meetings and public hearings
  - c. DESIGNING PUBLIC HEARINGS
    - i. Key questions:
      1. 0) What is your goal?
      2. Who is your audience?
      3. Why should they show up?
      4. Who should you partner with to make this happen?
    - ii. Things to consider
      1. When and where
      2. Lowering the cost of attending: childcare, gift cards
      3. Making it fun: food, music, emcee
      4. Getting the word out
      5. Following up
      6. Language access
  - d. Things to also consider:
    - i. Who is your audience versus who do you WANT to be your audience?
    - ii. Why should people show up? Time = money, community members both giving TIME AND MONEY - try to make it worthwhile for community members to show up
    - iii. Lower cost of attendance - free child care, gift cards,

 [Copy of AAPI Alliance presentation 4 MA AA...](#)



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making it fun to show up- COMMUNITY SPACE

- iv. Place where it is held- public spaces, no government - usually scary

### e. Questions

- i. Saatvik- hope to have such public hearings as a layer of accountability - trying to then come up with concrete actionable steps to solve XYZ problem - question: How to get reps and officials to come?

- a. Candice Cho - people care about issues to show up, communication in making the case of why they should come

- b. Leverage the relationships staff has - has anyone worked in gov before, etc.

- ii. Karen Chen - how can Commissioners be in unity on the goals for public hearings - how does it align with the strategic plan for the Commission

### f. Saatvik- public hearing structure - Questions from us to organizations, community members, and elected members - then US, the Commission, making recommendations - more institutional

- g. Next- Maybe having a joint proposal with Jennifer Best - ask her to come to next Program meetings

- h. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tKLo8NxDzWI> - link to hybrid public hearing held on 3/28/2024 at the Gardner Campus of Mount Wachusett Community College by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women

### 2. Community Health Equity Survey Results

- a.  AAPIC\_CHES\_Request\_DRAFT.xlsx

- b.  AAPI Community Health Equity Survey Results

### 3. HHS, SAMHSA Meeting

### 4. Public Hearing - bringing up in August Commission Meeting

- a.  Bhutanese Listening Session MBMMxAAPIC 2024 Full Report

- b.  Afghan Listening Session MMBMxAAPIC Full Event Report 2...

- i. Cost of Living & Housing

- ii. Mental Health

- iii. Language Barriers & Communication Gaps

### c. Outline

- i. Present national mental health data and qualitative listening session findings at public hearings



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### 5. Key Issue Area Determination ([link](#))

- a. Emailed Jennifer regarding proposing mental health, housing, and language access as key issue areas for commission vote

The importance of advocating for AAPI communities through hearings and surveys was discussed. Hybrid approaches involving collaboration between community-based organizations and government entities were emphasized. Strategies for engaging the community in urban planning were shared, including identifying the target audience, providing clear information, and partnering with trusted organizations. Speakers also discussed effective ways to engage the community in public hearings, such as understanding their needs and concerns, bringing in subject matter experts, and considering cost-saving measures like childcare. Overall, the conversation highlighted the need for inclusive and effective public engagement processes to serve AAPI communities.

## Transcript

<https://otter.ai/u/CRI9gkfPEp99zPHDTMM8BZug4xM?view=transcript>

## Action Items

- [ ] @Shubhechha Dhaurali - Discuss public hearings and get Commission members' perspectives at a future meeting.
- [ ] Look for a link to a Women's Commission public hearing video to understand their format.
- [ ] Invite Jennifer from the policy side to discuss her experience with public hearings.

## Outline

### **Holding hearings for Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) community.**

- Commissioners seek guidance on designing impactful hearings for AAPI community.
- Saatvik Ahluwalia shares insights on Commission hearings, partnerships, and technology use.

### **Public hearings and community engagement for Asian American and**



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### **Pacific Islander issues.**

- Candice Cho discusses public hearings, questioning who is the "public" in these forums.
- Candice Cho discusses AAPI equity Alliance's presence in public spaces, from minimal control to maximum control.
- Candice Cho discusses various civic engagement initiatives in LA's Korean Town, including candidate forums and teach-ins.

### **Community engagement strategies for public hearings.**

- Candice Cho discusses strategies for engaging diverse communities in public hearings.
- Community-based organization seeks to make public hearings more accessible and engaging for marginalized communities.
- Candice Cho (she/her) emphasizes accessibility and inclusivity in community events.
- Organizers collect contact information, follow up after events, and prioritize language access.

### **Accessible public hearings for marginalized communities.**

- Candice Cho (she/her) emphasizes the importance of language access in policy work, using examples from her organization's experience.
- Cho and others discuss the use of professional translators and interpreters in public spaces, and the importance of community involvement in ensuring accessibility.
- Karen Chen and Candice Cho discussed their experiences working with Chinese progressive associations in Boston and New York.
- Shubhecchha Dhaurali appreciated the format of the listening session and found it helpful in considering key aspects for future events.

### **Challenges in getting government officials to attend community meetings.**

- Saatvik Ahluwalia (He/Him): Wants hearings to create accountability, parse possibilities.
- Candice Cho (she/her): Easy to get local/state govt agencies to come, answer questions.
- Candice Cho and team leverage personal relationships with elected



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- officials and bureaucrats to bring them to community spaces.
- Finding the right person to talk to on the government side, who can communicate effectively with non-experts, is crucial for community partnerships.

### **AAPI community engagement and public hearings.**

- Javan Santos highlights importance of relationship building with elected officials in AAPI advocacy.
- Candice Cho and Shubhechha Dhaurali discuss next steps for public hearings with Saatvik Ahluwalia and Karen Chen.
- Karen Chen and Shubhechha Dhaurali discuss follow-up actions after listening sessions to ensure community members receive resources they need.
- Commissioners debate approach to engaging community members, considering existing organizational structures and resource availability.

### **Public hearings, community input, and solving problems.**

- Saatvik Ahluwalia suggests using community members' experiences to inform public hearing on mental health access.
- Discussion on holding public hearings to gather community input on mental health access and potential barriers.

### **Community health equity survey results and potential hearing on policy issues.**

- Community members share personal stories and seek help from officials during listening sessions.
- Karen Chen and others discuss legislative aides' roles in policy-making, including community outreach and recommendation development.
- Saatvik and Shubhechha discuss the Women's Commission hearing and survey results.
- Shubhechha Dhaurali shares survey results on key issues for a community college.

### **Strategic Priorities & Programs and Research**

Current programs/research

Youth Council



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Survey  
Small Grants  
Listening sessions/potential of hearings  
Pacific Islander programming  
Western Mass programming

1. Strategic Plan Updates [AAPI Strategic Priorities 2024-2026 FINAL DRAFT.docx](#)
  - a. Health, Education
    - i. Past focus: mental health [2 Health & Human Services Subcommittee](#)
  - b. Youth Council [Drive](#)
    - i. Addresses **Strategic Priority 1:** Elevate the voices of AAPI individuals who call Massachusetts home by building clear accountability and the fair distribution of resources to achieve equitable outcomes.
      1. Elevating Youth Voice through the Youth Council - By **December 2024**, re-think how to meaningfully integrate Youth Council members into Commission activities, such as participating in annual in-person meetings with Asian Caucus members.
        - a. New program
          - i. [YC Manual](#)
          - ii. [AAPIC Youth Council Manual Fall 2024 - Spring 2025](#)
          - iii. [Ashley + Shubhechha YC Meeting Notes](#)
    - c. Addresses **Strategic Priority 3-** Build strategic partnerships and be a bridge to state-level agencies and institutions - Increase connections in all regions of the state - By **June 2025** and ongoing, develop a long-term plan to strengthen partnerships with Cape and Islands, Northshore, Southshore, and Central MA
      - i. Pacific Islanders
        1. [Brissa & Shubhechha Meetings](#)
    - d. Addresses **Strategic Priority 3-** Build strategic partnerships and be a bridge to state-level agencies and institutions - Increase connections in all regions of the state - By December 2024 and ongoing strengthen partnerships with communities in Western MA.
      - i. Western Mass [Drive](#)
        1. [Shubhechha & Evan Meetings](#)



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2. [AAPIC Western Mass Meetings Qualitative/Thematic Analysis](#)
- e. **Strategic Priority 2** - Increase visibility of AAPI Commission and its work by giving a public voice to issues the community cares about
  - i. Listening Sessions
    1. [AAPIC Listening Sessions Toolkit](#)
    2. [AAPIC Listening Session Qualitative Analysis 2024](#)
- f. Conducting Surveys
  - i. Addresses **Strategic Priority 3**- Build strategic partnerships and be a bridge to state-level agencies and institutions - Build partnerships with research institutions (e.g. University of Massachusetts Boston, state agencies) to gather annual data on the Massachusetts AAPI community
  - ii. UMass Boston x AAPI Survey
    1. [Survey AAPIC x UMB](#)
- g. Tracking impact of programs
  - i. Addresses **Strategic Priority 3**- Build strategic partnerships and be a bridge to state-level agencies and institutions - Strengthen partnerships with community organizations
    1. **Deadline:** By **June 2024**, complete an analysis of which groups have applied for small grants in the past and make an outreach plan.
      - a. Small Grants
        - i. [2023 AAPI Small Grant Outcomes.pptx](#)
        - ii. [2022 AAPI Small Grant Outcomes..pptx](#)
      - b. [Measuring Small Grants Outcomes](#)
      - c. EC Funding
        - i. [EC & Subcommittees Funding Log 2023-2024](#)



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