Montgomery County Housing Committee Minutes

Wednesday November 16, 2022 3:30 – 5:00 pm via Zoom

Present: Larry Bram, John Bogasky, Steeve Keener, Diane Dressler, Stephanie Jones, Carmela George, Tigest Alemu, Rosemary DiPietro, Rick Callahan, Sabria Still, Sharonda Huffman, Andy Krauss, Lauren Silverstone, Tim Wiens, Terri Bradford

1. Welcome and Introduction
   1. Tim gave an overview of the upcoming meeting and shared some background information.
2. Review of minutes from September 21st meeting
   1. There were no changes to the minutes from the last meeting.
3. MIH statewide legislative advocacy priorities
   1. Del. Kirill Reznik
      1. Tim has shared the MIH legislative priorities, he had planned to join our meeting today, but had an unexpected change in his schedule.
   2. DDA Rental Subsidy – Stephanie Jones
      1. They are waiting for signatures on the MOU. Once DHCD signs, it goes to the comptroller's office. They hope it will happen by the end of the month.
      2. Maryland is a technology first state. There are remote devices that are now available for people to use.
         1. There is an initiative with a company called MAPS. They are mapping out the DC Metro’s red line for people who are visually impaired. The app would walk people through all the steps to get through the metro to their destination (counts number of steps, steps to platforms, etc). They are looking for paid volunteers (visually impaired as well as non-visually impaired people) to help them complete the map. Send Stephanie Jones (stephanie.jones2@maryland.gov) names of people that might be interested in volunteering.
4. Additional recordation fees revenue for affordable housing?
   1. Amanda Harris, Chief of Services to End and Prevent Homelessness
      1. They have the HIP program which is like housing choice vouchers. Tim proposed to her to use some of those funds to allow recipients to choose where they live. MIH would like this to be used to help people who are moving out of group homes.
   2. Aseem Nigam, Director of DHCA – an email has been sent but Tim hasn’t heard back yet.
   3. A portion of the recordation fees goes into the housing initiative fund (HIF). These funds may increase so there may be an opportunity to get more funding.
5. Lincoln Avenue Capital, Stacy Kaplowitz
   1. Steve Keener, Diane Dressler and Tim Wiens met with Stacy.
   2. Affordable housing developer started in 2016. They are in many states. They are looking for local Maryland projects like Parkside Landing in Rockville. They would like to include people with IDD in their plans for additional projects. Stacy met with people from MIH and Jubilee to gain more of an understanding of the needs of people with IDD. We plan to invite her to future Montgomery County housing committee meetings.
6. Communications initiatives
   1. There have been meetings to try to improve communication of information on affordable housing for people with IDD to families.
      1. On the website, MIH is creating a listing of MPDU and tax credit apartments in Rockville. Descriptions like where it is, how accessible it is, description of housing, etc. It will include links to the projects.
         1. Directions on how to apply to get access to affordable units is the next step in the communication document.
         2. Lauren will ask the HSS networking attendees at the December meeting to share information that they have on various buildings and pass that info to Andy for the website.
         3. Diane can get a list of tax credit apartments in Montgomery County and send it to Andy.
   2. MIH plans to start with Rockville and then expand.
7. Opportunities with new Governor Wes Moore?
   1. Tim is working on drafting a paper explaining his idea to partner with a National Foundation to fund integrated housing. This is similar to work that The Kelsey is doing in the Bay area of CA.
   2. Tim wants to test the idea with the Maryland affordable housing coalition and others before taking it to the Governor’s transition team.
   3. The goal is to get their interest in a long-term project.
   4. Tim will be in touch with Jillian Copeland, about ideas for Foundations to work with.
8. Open discussion
   1. Community Options is expanding to Prince George’s County. They have purchased 2 units in PGC. They are starting with residential and taking applications for supported living. In about a year they plan to start day/employment services. Tigest would like to connect with others who are there.
   2. Easter Seals wants to open a community health program that takes Medicaid in Prince George’s County. They have also been approached by Enterprise Community Development to open a medical day program in a new building in D.C. that they want Easter Seals to run. Larry has offered to help make connections with Enterprise in terms of affordable housing developments.
   3. HUD has announced a comment period on the old HUD 811 PRAC program on proposed contract changes to the old HUD 811 program. See more here: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USHUDFHA/bulletins/335b09c>
   4. The Arc of Montgomery County has several 811 units. They are interested in converting them. Catholic charities also owns several units in Montgomery and Prince George’s counties. Community Options has one 811 unit on University Blvd.
9. Next meeting
   1. January 18, 2023 from 3:30-5:00 pm