Prince George’s MIH Housing Meeting Minutes

October 24, 2023, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM via Zoom

**Present:** Chaunita Clardy, Rob Malone, Lakwona Simmons, David Prater, Stephanie Jones, Vice Chair Wala Blegay, Chelsea Hayman, Noland Garrett, Tim Wiens, Charmeda McCready, Lauren Silverstone, Terri Bradford, Andy Krauss

1. Welcome – Chaunita Chalgray, MIH’s Prince George’s County Housing Committee Chair and Tim Wiens, MIH Executive Director.
   1. Chaunita welcomed the committee members and gave an overview of our guest speaker.
   2. Tim welcomed the committee members and introduced Charmeda McCready as the new Director of Housing for MIH.
2. Review of minutes from August 2023
   1. The minutes were reviewed.
3. Guest Speaker: The Honorable Wala Blegay, Vice Chair of Prince George’s County Council
   1. Represents District 6 in Prince Georges County. She can be reached at wblegay@co.pg.md.us
   2. She is an attorney who did labor work, specifically focused on health care workers and their rights.
   3. There is a limited number of affordable housing units in the county. There is a perceived perception that because the county is more affordable than surrounding jurisdictions, we are affordable housing.
   4. They are attempting to implement rent stabilization, but the perception is that it will turn everything upside down and it will be difficult to get builders to build any type of housing or support multiunit housing.
   5. She is interested in making some of the affordable housing stock able to be purchased.
   6. The housing in the county looks like with 60% AMI can touch market rate. It is rare to see any rentals at or below $1000 per month.
   7. Townhomes are the biggest housing stock in Prince George’s County which typically have 2 to 3 stories. This makes it hard for people with disabilities. She is appreciative of the efforts of those introducing universal design to builders.
   8. There was a shortfall with the last budget, so money came from the balance fund. The governor is sending a message that the purse will be tighter.
   9. They are exploring ways to subsidize for extremely low-income (at or below 30% AMI) people with disabilities. Vice Chair Blegay asked for input. Suggestions from some committee members:
      1. The state funded housing choice voucher program was recently created (it resembles the federal HCV program) but it’s only a 5-year term. The county could deliver affordable housing for the extremely low-income households by creating funding programs that are very targeted.
      2. Create a modification fund for voucher holders that could be used to modify houses so that they are accessible to all. Or create a community development block grant to support home modifications for extremely low-income households.
      3. To create coalitions with other housing authorities with reciprocity to help those who are homeless or facing homelessness. Montgomery County has the Housing Initiative Program.
      4. Establish a home-sharing program that is supervised and regulated, like what the Housing Initiative program does [Housing initiative program](https://hiphomes.org/counseling-and-education/home-sharing/) do in Montgomery County.
      5. Several jurisdictions in Maryland have an inclusionary zoning program where they must provide a certain percentage of their units at 4-60% AMI. Developers unable to do this may pay “a fee-in-lieu of" fee that gets deposited into a fund to provide new affordable housing. Howard County has a disability income housing unit alternative compliance strategy for developers to provide fewer units, but they will be at/below 30% AMI.
4. Legislative Priorities - Tim Wiens, MIH, and Diane DDA Rental Subsidy Program
   1. MIH recommends that DDA increase the FY25 Rental Subsidy Program with an increase of $950,000 to allow 100 additional Maryland residents access to the rental subsidy program over the course of the fiscal year 2025.
   2. Tim met with Stephanie Jones to go through the numbers as they are working on their budget. He has asked Rachel London to bring it to the DD Coalition to make it a priority for advocacy going into the FY25 DDA budget session.
   3. The Governor will submit the budget in January. The first step is asking for funding and the second step is asking for political support.
   4. The recommendation that created MIH and the DDA Rental Subsidy Program was that over time, this program would grow to serve 500 people. The current year is looking at 35 individuals. This would be the next step.
   5. We will be putting the proposal on our website and sharing it with the committee.
5. MD Department of Disabilities Updates – Chelsea Hayman, MDOD
   1. HUD (Housing and Urban Development) has released a NOFO for section 811 program including project rental assistance and the project rental assistance capital program for nonprofit developers to apply for. The maximum amount is $8 million. Application due in early February. They wanted to align this with some of their strategic goals as an agency that includes integration of health and housing. There are also some changes to advance racial equity and affirmative furthering fair housing marketing.
   2. Released today: Jurisdictions required to implement Small Area Fair Market Rents in the administration of the Housing Choice Voucher program: <https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PA/documents/List_Required_Metropolitan_Areas.pdf> Prince George’s County is one of the listed counties; Must be fully implemented by January 1, 2025. FAQs for residents about the policy change: <https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/PA/documents/FAQs_New_Voucher_Holders_2023.pdf>
   3. Housing opportunities through modernization act implementation guidance [webinar.](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_BYVoU7_wTNOeGGnYWHv3rQ) Will occur on 11/2/23 at 11:00 am.
   4. Homeownership for people with disabilities and the presentation with MD technology assistance program. [Register](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_D3C9vVZvQgmGYA1JMmg3kg#/registration) for this presentation.
6. Updates on DDA Rent Subsidy and Technology – Stephanie Jones, MDH
   1. No updates today. As she gets more information, she will send it to Andy to put on the MIH list.
   2. Three people are in the “looking for housing category” who are working on getting their applications completed with all the necessary documents.
   3. Be on the lookout for a new technology series in December to make housing more accessible and incorporate technology in peoples’ lives.
7. Topics to Explore
   1. A suggestion was made to research what other states models look like for people with disabilities to own a home with 30% AMI and try to replicate that in Maryland.
   2. PG County Pathways to Purchase - <https://mmp.maryland.gov/pages/princegeorges/default.aspx>
   3. Bowie First" Mortgage Assistance Program - <https://www.cityofbowie.org/948/Home-Buyer-Assistance-Program>
   4. Greenbelt Home Advantage - <https://mmp.maryland.gov/Pages/GreenbeltHomeAdvantage/default.aspx>
   5. Perhaps explore how a Habitat to Humanity type organization could be a vehicle for those with disabilities to own their own homes.
   6. Prince George’s County has some loan programs that can help individuals with maintenance of their home.
   7. Churches or businesses in communities might be involved in maintenance or students needing community service hours. Check out the [resource for repairs](https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Residents/Pages/WholeHome.aspx) from DHCD.
8. Next Meeting - ~~December 19, 2023 @ 3pm to 4:30 pm via Zoom~~  Postponed Until January 2023 – Date and time TBD