

**Howard County Housing Committee Meeting**

**Thursday, October 24th, 2024**

**3:00 PM – 43’**

**0PM**

**Via Zoom**

Agenda

**Attendees**:

1. Welcome/Introductions

Ahmna welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Review of August Minutes-

No objections were raised, and the minutes were approved without changes.

1. DHCD Updates-

* Chelsea Hayman provided updates on the new VAWA requirements. Updates included HUD-funded properties are required to include updated tenant selection plans (TSPs) and certification forms to ensure compliance with VAWA. Chelsea is working with property managers to make sure 811 properties are in alignment with the new guidelines
* The DDA Rent Subsidy Program currently has 11 participants housed, 11 searching for housing, and 2 pending authorization. Barriers such as credit history and criminal background checks that are hindering progress. It was encouraged for committee members to reach out to Chelsea or Crystal for assistance with navigating these issues and addressing landlord concerns.

1. Howard Housing Commission- Debrief

The group discussed their participation in the October 7th testimony on the Howard Housing Commission’s administrative plan. Sarah Hochbaum, Matthew, Katie, Tim, and Ahmna represented the group during the testimony.

* Although attendance was limited, the testimonies were impactful and focused on accessibility and inclusion.
* Topics discussed included the importance of a separate waitlist for individuals with disabilities and prioritization of vouchers for specific populations.
* Peter Engle, the executive director, was receptive to the concerns raised.
* Sarah Hochbaum shared that the intimate setting allowed for impactful discussions, emphasizing the importance of creating a separate waitlist.
* Tim Wiens noted that the hearing was primarily procedural, but the informal discussions afterward provided valuable insights into the commission's processes.

5. Communications Collaboration/Strategies- Andy, Director of Communications

* Tim Wiens discussed the ongoing collaboration between Maryland Inclusive Housing (MIH), ARI, and the ARC to advance affordable housing for people with disabilities through storytelling and advocacy. The initiative aims to amplify stories using communication channels across all organizations, creating political support for housing initiatives.
* Andy Krauss introduced Tia Bryant, an intern at MIH, who will assist with storytelling, including written and video formats. Andy also highlighted a potential partnership with Maryland Public Television to broaden the reach of these stories. Chris Kelter of ARI confirmed interest in sharing cross-disability success stories and will connect their communications intern with MIH.

6. Horizon Foundation Proposal- Tim, Executive Director

* Tim Wiens provided an update on MIH's application for the Horizon Foundation's Housing Justice Grant. The proposal focuses on strengthening systems to advance housing justice in Howard County, particularly for people with disabilities. The outcome of the application is expected by the end of December, with potential collaboration starting in January. The grant would enhance MIH's communication and advocacy efforts, especially with partners like ARI and the ARC.

7. Howard County Committee Member Updates

* **Patuxent Commons:** Mark Dunham shared updates on the Patuxent Commons project, which recently held a successful groundbreaking. The project emphasizes an age- and ability-diverse community, with expected completion by Thanksgiving of next year. Discussions are ongoing regarding staffing, service coordination, and application processes.
* **Artist Flats:** Patricia reported that the land closing for Artist Flats is now expected in mid-November. This development includes 811 units and will commence after the site is cleared and initial infrastructure is established.
* **Housing Support Services Training:** Diane Dressler announced the next Housing Support Services training will be held in January and February, with registration available through MIH.

8. Upcoming Events/Trainings

* **APFO Webinar (October 30):** Patricia Sylvester mentioned a webinar on the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO), hosted by the Housing Affordability Coalition. The session aims to educate participants on APFO's impact on housing development and affordable housing goals.
* **MACS Conference:** MACS conference will be attended by some of the housing committee members

**9. Next Meeting –** Thursday January 9th at 3pm