MIH Howard County Housing Committee Notes

March 18, 2021: 3 – 4:30 PM

1. Introduction to the MIH Howard County Housing Committee
   1. Tim shared the Agenda and spoke about the DDA Transformation Plan and its hopes to move from facility-based services to non-facility-based services. He said that group home will not go away but supported living will become the new residential model of choice.
   2. Tim hopes to have categories of people represented on the Housing Committee: nonprofit organizations, family members of people with IDD, self-advocates, Howard County government representatives and developers.
   3. The Committee will meet via videoconference at least every other month, or more if the specific group of people decides, and will hopefully move to in-person meetings in the future.
   4. Tim will chair the Committee until local leadership is chosen.
   5. Tim explained that MIH is funded entirely by a DDA grant, but that some money in the future may be Medicaid and Medicaid Waiver for housing support services.
   6. Mark Dunham asked what else MIH will do, and Tim explained the Housing Committees, Information Clearinghouse and Community Living Coordinators.
2. Introductions
   1. Tim: 40 years at Jubilee Association, did agency-level work. He has lived in the White Oak area of Silver Spring for 22 years, lived in Mt. Pleasant first and then moved to Takoma Park and moved to White Oak area.
   2. Melissa Rosenberg: Lives between I-95 and I-495 in a diverse neighborhood in Silver Spring.
   3. Katie Collins-Ihrke: CEO of ARI Inc. and has been doing transformation housing work. She lives with her family and has great neighbors.
   4. Mark Dunham: He works as a consultant at Howard County Autism Society and Patuxent Commons, Congressional staff member and transitioned into advocacy that led him to the work he’s doing, intentional intergenerational model, has lived in DC but has a house in Dickyeville in west Baltimore. He likes that he does not need a car in DC.
   5. Pat Sylvester: She is a newly retired grandma to 4, lives in Columbia with nice neighbors and bike path, moved from Baltimore to Columbia. She previously worked at Maryland Department of Disabilities, 20 years with state department of housing and community development.
   6. Diane Dressler: Consultant to the committee and MIH, lives in Williamsburg VA since 2014. She lives in a community that they chose for emphasis on people supporting each other, getting to know each other, 2000 homes, has 55+ clubs, son lives with them for now. Diane has been working in housing since 2001, retired from state of Maryland and had worked for DDA for 32 years, then Kennedy Krieger institute.
   7. Cindy Parr: The Arc Howard County, Heritage Housing board, splits her time between Burtonsville, MD and a home in Lewes, DE teleworking. The two places have unique communities. She is a journalist by trade, very interested in anything related to housing.
3. Brainstorming Possible Committee Goals
   1. Issues with affordable housing for anyone in Howard County
   2. NIMBY
   3. Most of the affordable housing is in the downtown area, very difficult to get zoning for affordable housing.
   4. CHHI properties, townhouse properties, recently sold to the enterprise foundation for redevelopment. MIH is not interested in stand alone special needs housing, making sure that people with IDD are included regular affordable housing. The redevelopment of these CHHI properties may be an opportunity to see how people with IDD could fit.
   5. Columbia Downtown Affordable Committee – every building needs to have a certain percentage of people that make 80% of the area income or less. Juniper – 12 middle income units, only 3 of them are leased, in downtown, make too much money or they can’t afford the rent at all.
   6. Communicating with and persuading developers to opt-in to be a disability income housing unit
   7. Going into existing affordable housing developments and figuring out what can be done to provide necessary social connections to make living in these communities better.
   8. Online registry to find a roommate.
   9. Education and connecting the existing systems to those resources.
   10. Rental Assistance Options
       1. Tim spoke about the history of the DDA Supported Living Advisory Committee and how the Rental Assistance Program (RAP) was one of the things that came out of the Advisory Committee. Infrastructure work is currently being done by MDOD to get this program started. Funding may come available in FY22 or 23.
       2. People would pay not more than 30% of their income for housing and utilities; the Committee imagined that there would be 450-500 units that would be subsidized and the numbers that was used in the planning was about $10,000 per person, including 10% to go toward the administration of the program. Tim thinks this will happen, but there is no money in the governor’s budget for FY22. The DD Coalition has suggested using the waiting list equity money, however regulatory language would need to be changed. MIH does not have an official role with the RAP, but Tim sees MIH playing an advocacy role.
       3. Pat said $12,000 per year per person is more feasible, that $10,000 would be difficult in Columbia, and asked what this Committee will do until RAP is accessible.
       4. Tim responded that MIH plans to hire community living coordinator to work with individuals and connect them to services and housing resources.
4. Potential Additional Committee Members
   1. Nannette Livadas – Deputy Director of the Howard County Housing Commission.
   2. Representative from Service Coordination.
   3. People Power – Arc Howard County: Cindy Parr will help identify some self-advocates.
   4. Parent, Dorothy Plants.
   5. Parent, Karisa Ballinger – has a son with IDD.
   6. Melissa said she would help identify other parents.
   7. Mark said he is happy to stay involved while the Patuxent Commons project is in development, and suggested parents from Autism Society.
   8. Beverly White-Seal does not have capacity to stay on the Committee but will attend the next meetings to help us think about other recommendations for Committee membership.
5. Action Items
   1. Pat said she would circulate the brochure for her units.
6. Next Meeting
   1. Thursday, May 20: 3 – 4:30 PM