MIH Montgomery County Housing Committee Meeting Notes

March 19, 2021, 3- 4:30 PM

1. Introduction to the Committee
   1. Tim explained the Committee purpose is to expand the availability of housing for people with IDD in Montgomery County. MIH is facilitating the move toward the supported living residential model. The Committee will have local leadership – Jillian Copeland and Tigest Alemu have agreed to co-chair, but Tim will stay active as a resource. MIH will support this Committee but will not lead it.
2. Introductions to Committee Members
   1. Chuck Short – worked for Montgomery County Government for a long time, Director of DHHS, Archdiocese of Washington, lives in Rockville, son who is visually impaired lives with him.
   2. Conor O’Shaughnessy – lives in Rockville at the Huntington at King Farm. Has been there for 9 years with a roommate, works at NIH and commutes by metro.
   3. Carolyn Chen – lives in Bethesda, legislative analyst for Montgomery County Council, sister has IDD.
   4. David Ervin – has worked for JFGH for 2 years.
   5. Diane Dressler – consultant to the Committee and MIH and Jubilee and Inter ACC/DD, working on trying to create affordable housing for people with IDD for the last 20 years, lives in Williamsburg VA, casual but intentional community works for her, hopes the Committee can continue to create opportunities for people with disabilities to have housing that they choose, independent of their services. She wants to take advantage of the many opportunities Montgomery County has and create new ones.
   6. John Bogasky – lives in Aspen Hill, parent of 28 year old son who lives in Main Street. He worked very early on with Jillian and Main Street, wife is area director at Special Olympics and coaches, John is a Board member at the Treatment and Learning Centers, a board member for Source America. John wants to help more people to get the same kind of resources his son has.
   7. Rolando Santiago – lives in Silver Spring, has another home in Lancaster County, PA, Former Board member of Jubilee, Chief of Behavioral health Services at Montgomery County DHHS.
   8. Larry Bram – lives in downtown Silver spring, works for Easter Seals, is on the Commission for People with Disabilities, and Co-chairs the DD advisory committee, 27 year old daughter with a housing choice voucher.
   9. Rosemary DiPietro – Montgomery County Health and Human Services coordination of community support service program, excited to grow the services of people with IDD, home is in Silver Spring.
   10. Sabria Still – lives in Main Street Apartments, grew up in Rockville, hopes to be a philanthropist and help people, expanding affordable housing, works for the Montgomery County Council.
   11. Sarah Basehart – ED at Independence Now, lives in Columbia, serves Montgomery and Price George’s counties.
   12. Stephanie Killian – Chief of the division of housing, Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs, has much experience with affordable housing programs, has a nephew with IDD, also serves on MIH Board of Directors.
   13. Steve Keener – Lives in the Woodside Park area of Silver Spring, is Executive Director at Jubilee.
   14. Susan Smith – Disability Coordinator at Housing Opportunities Commission for 25 years, lives in Frederick City.
   15. Tigest Alemu – lives in Montgomery County in Silver Spring, worked at Jubilee, wants to learn from people in the group, wants to give back to her community.
   16. Trevor Golden – lives with his parents in Rockville, works at NIH, Jillian was his teacher, and he participates in the Special Olympics, hopes to live on his own soon.
   17. Jillian Copeland – lives in Rockville and works at Main Street Apartments, is passionate about affordable, inclusive, and accessible housing.
3. Idea and Goal Generation
   1. Sabria suggested coalition building and finding other organizations that are already doing something similar or can provide or connect MIH to other organizations. She suggested tiny homes, knowing that it is not as accessible to everyone, and also suggested biophilic design.
   2. Chuck suggested getting more involved with faith communities in Montgomery County, citing the Rosario House in Gaithersburg as an example. He also suggested a realty trust fund that is dedicated to funding the construction or renovation of housing for people with IDD.
   3. John said it was hard to find affordable housing and to align housing availability and housing services, and help navigating these services He also asked how real estate developers will be involved in the Committee.
   4. Larry said the real estate developers should be informed of inclusive housing models and MIH should create relationships with developers.
   5. Rosemary suggested education of the younger generation and building the financial ability for people, so they do not have to depend on subsidized housing.
   6. Sarah suggested build housing support so that people can stay housed and have housing success.
4. Next Steps
   1. Tim said the notes will be emailed to the Committee and invited anyone who did not get to share to email Tim after the meeting.
   2. Tim, Tigest and Jillian will think about more Committee members, but solicited additional members.
      1. Rolando suggested Regina Morales, from DHHS she has a lot of knowledge and interest in housing for people with mental health concerns.
      2. Larry suggested Karen Lee.
      3. Susan said she could check with people at HOC who have real estate backgrounds.
   3. Carolyn asked how the Committee would function – as a large group, or subcommittees, this might drive who would be involved on the Committee.
5. Future Meeting
   1. Tim explained how the Committee would function – meeting every other month and said the next meeting would be May 21 at 3 PM.