Montgomery County Housing Committee

**NOTES**

Wednesday September 8th 3:00 – 4:30 on Zoom

**Present**: David Ervin, Wei-Han Zhou, John Bogasky, Tigest Alemu, Rolando Santiago, Steve Keener, Diane Dressler, Carolyn Chen, Sarah Basehart, Chuck Short, Rick Callahan, Trevor Golden, Jillian Copeland, Conor O’Shaughnessy, Tim Wiens, Lauren Silverstone, Terri Bradford.

1. Review of the Agenda

Tim reviewed the agenda for this week.

1. Review of minutes from July 14th

Tim recapped the meeting from July. There were no questions from committee members regarding the July 14th meeting.

1. Housing and Services; what they look like together?

**Steve Keener** – Fireside Park apartments are in Rockville and they are owned by Rockville Housing Enterprises and managed by another company. Jubilee is responsible for referring people with disabilities to those units. Units are interspersed in the community. They are about ½ way through a 2 year period in referring people. They created a tenant selection plan which they used to create a waiting list. Jubilee has staff helping people gather the documents they need to be able to apply when they become available. They have had 7 or 8 people move in, 2 bedroom apartments, which are the most popular, can be for live in help or a roommate. You don’t have to receive services from Jubilee or even after you move in. The voucher does not go with you if you leave. Fireside has not received any funding that Steve was aware of to add more apartments than the 14. Diane reminded everyone that it was a big deal to get this program going. The goal is to have only 2 months of vacancy when someone leaves. John pointed out the challenges of lining all the pieces necessary for getting services and moving in. John suggested letting families know about the flexibilities in moving in (aka sign the lease but not move in for a month or two to allow time to get services in place).

**David Ervin –** his affordable housing program is for people who may or may not want services. They have decoupled the housing and the services pieces. They are looking through the MPDU market in MoCo for walkable communities. They offer single occupancy or help with requests for roommates. They’ve got about 8 people in MyPad units right now. They are looking to expand this. Most of their people aren’t looking for supports. Those that have supports are looking more for learning to live on their own. Eligibility is someone with IDD (including mental health conditions). In some cases they actively look for properties for individuals. They are working on how to ask people **how** (not where) they want to live (single level, galley kitchen, etc). Parents often have different ideas of housing than their loved one. Properties are currently owned by JFGH LLC but they are looking to expand. MyPad isn’t subsidized but it doesn’t preclude the use of a voucher. They are examining a sliding scale. It is not the least expensive option for housing. They have lost people from MyPad to other more affordable places in the county. It is not a community housing development organization.

**Jillian Copeland** – Mainstreet’s philosophy is “bring your own independence.” Whether you live in Mainstreet or participate in the programs you bring your caregiver or your equipment with you so that you can participate. All programs have staffing for supports. They are seeing people don’t need as much support as previously needed. Supports are scaffolded and there just in case. They are seeing a rise in self advocacy and confidence with participants trying new things. If medical attention is needed during a program they provide it but if it is repeatedly needed then parents are contacted about needing more support for their child as Mainstreet staff can’t do it all the time. John added that in order for Mainstreet to happen the services had to be separated from the housing. People in the program start to support each other so they need less support. Having a larger program has helped people find their friends that are like them so they feel more of a sense of community. Parents of people at Mainstreet (and residents too if they wish but it is less common) are part of a list serve that is a “circle of support” which helps offer solutions and information. Residents **and** members of Mainstreet can participate in all of the activities. This helps create a human connection which is important. Mainstreet staff are paid through membership fees, rent revenue that is left after rent is paid, commercial kitchen space rent, Soulful café space rent, and fundraising. The goal is to have less fundraising and obtain money through the rent revenue streams. Chuck suggested creating a network of people in this Rockville area who are willing to come into the communities and provide friendship to IDD. MIH is cognizant that housing doesn’t create connections but provides opportunities for connections. Mainstreet offers 22 weekly programs with about 2200 engagements (many from the same people) per month. They are trying to attract more people by exploring other opportunities.

1. Montgomery County Thrive 2050
   1. Recommended additions or changes; Carolyn Chen

**Carolyn Chen** – legislative analyst working on the 30 year plan for MoCo. She polled the committee to see who gave input regarding IDD in the plan (only 1 member had given input). The plan is at the county council for final approval. She reviewed the 7 parts that pertained to people with IDD. Diane offered some written comments about the plan. See attached link. John summarized Diane’s comments as they seem to all say there is a segment of population with very low income tends to overlap with the number of people with IDD. People with IDD need to be in a walkable community. Many of them don’t drive and Metro use isn’t as feasible as just going downstairs to the coffee shop. Chuck hopes that the plan will recognize that individuals with IDD are the most disenfranchised and least equally treated people in MoCo and wants them to be featured when equity is being discussed. Sarah reminded people that the pedestrian master plans should include a renewed focus on rollable communities and removing floating bus stops that don’t allow the blind community to use the buses easily.

Top priorities as summarized by Carolyn:

* People with IDD must be included with racial equity and social justice movement (not an afterthought)
* Walkable communities with emphasis on pedestrian safety and access to public transportation.
* Employment opportunities for people with IDD integrated into the community. Align it with Federal employment policy. Not a Housing Committee recommendation.

1. Talk about next steps.

Next meeting will be on 11/10 at 3:00 pm.

Send ideas for additional agenda items to Tim. Suggestions to talk to City of Rockville about how they can support this work.