

**Minutes of the Affordable Housing Council (AHC) Meeting**  
**Tuesday, February 11, 2020**  
2:30 pm to 4:00 pm  
Citizens Services Division Building – Main Conference Room  
401 Sagner Avenue, Frederick, MD 21701

**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**Call to Order:** Kimberly Ashkenazi, Chair called the meeting to order at 2.36 P.M. and welcomed everyone.

**Members Present:** Kimberly Ashkenazi, Chair; Mark Long, Vice-Chair; Marva Younger, Secretary; Kandy Alexander; Diane Bill; Patricia Galloway; Hugh Gordon; Mary Ellen Mitchell; Malcolm Furgol; and Bruce Zavos.

**Absent:** Angie Liddiard and Linda Duckett.

**Public Officials/Staff Liaisons Present:** Jessica Fitzwater, County Council; Milton Bailey, Director, DHCD; Christine Kay, DHCD and Ryan Trout, DHCD on telephone.

**Visitors Present:** Roger Sobkowiak, Human Relations Commission; James Baker, Frederick Housing Authority; Theresa Wyatt, citizen; Alan Feinberg, FeinDesign Team; John Maneval, Oculus CAS, LLC.

**Minutes of January 14<sup>th</sup>:** Kimberly moved to approve the minutes; seconded by Bruce and unanimously approved.

**Agenda was approved:** Mark moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Kandy and unanimously approved.

**Public Comment:** Alan Feinberg of the FeinDesign Team gave an overview of the incentive tax initiative that will expand the supply of affordable housing. Alan will send the AHC information regarding this initiative.

**Presentation – Mr. John R. Maneval, Oculus CAS, LLC** – founder of the Oculus CAS, LLC supports the affordable housing and community development sector. He recently retired from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. In this position, he performed key roles in planning, design, financing and implementing numerous housing and community development programs that resulted in the creation of affordable housing. John assists non-profit organizations and governments to optimize their operations in making a sound decision on housing investments. John is willing to provide advice to the AHC and offered the following best practice tidbits:

- Advocate for opportunity zone – state affordable housing tax credit for rental and homeownership (Legislation passed -- Opportunity Zone Bill 581).
- Stay informed at the Federal level in case legislation (Affordable Housing Improvement

Act) is passed. This Act impacts affordable housing financial tools for rental and home-ownership. If this Act is passed, contact State to see how Frederick may be able to benefit.

- Research the New York University website about Local Housing Solutions as good resource materials, such as case studies that local governments used as best practices for affordable housing.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Education/Relationship Building – Convener is Hugh Gordon (Mary Ellen reported).**

The committee met with the Frederick County Association of Realtors (FCAR) and determined that there are some crossovers of the goals. The FCAR advocates and supports the goals of the committee. The committee is planning to get input from Roger Wilson, City Alderman, who had a relationship with Frederick County communities in a previous position. The committee wants to build a grass root partnership with the communities to seek their needs and interests. Malcolm and Bruce would like to work on the Education Committee.

#### **Systems – Convener is Kandy.**

The committee is focusing on developers and consumers to understand the mapping processes. Roger plans to meet with Bruce on the developers' process and Kandy has contacted Angie on the twinning process.

#### **Policy – Convener is Mark.**

The committee continues to review the Moderately Priced Dwelling Units Ordinance (MPDU's). The committee is planning to expand its efforts and create a workgroup including other stakeholders that may not be members of the AHC. Ryan will facilitate the workgroup sessions. Kimberly and Mark will represent the AHC; Malcolm, United Way; Jason, Frederick Builders Association; Mayor's Office's representative; County Planning representative; land use attorney; realtors; Jessica and Derek as elected officials/AHC liaisons. The workgroup plans to meet for approximately 9-10 months and will present proposed legislation to County Executive and County Council by the end of 2020. Meetings will be scheduled monthly.

Milton would like for the workgroup to assist him in determining what developers should charge for rental rates and sale prices for MPDU's sooner than a year or once consensus is reached. Milton also wants the workgroup to consider the trend of larger developments and advocate for giving a price break for starter homes with 1500-1600 square feet and 3 bedrooms. This would alleviate the burden on the starter homebuyers and with more of the burden on buyers for the larger homes.

### **County Rental Property Licenses**

Malcolm inquired about the licensing registration fee for the upkeep of rental properties. Ryan is proposing a rental property registration fee that goes into a rehabilitation program. Owners of rental properties would sign up for the program and agree to established inspections to ensure the property is up to code. The owners may acquire a loan from the rehabilitation program to bring the property up to code. The rental property must be affordable for a certain period to qualify for the loan. Property owners will be fined or forced to bring the property up to code.

**AHC Reserve Fund** – Mark recently talked to the Mayor and inquired about the reserve fund. The Mayor would like to get this request added to the City’s workshop session soon. Kimberly, Mark and Mary Ellen will meet with the Mayor on Friday to discuss how the grant will be awarded and define the scoring process.

**Maryland State Housing Needs Assessment Advisory Group** – Milton and Bruce attended the State Housing Needs Assessment Advisory Group meeting with other counties in Maryland on February 4<sup>th</sup> in Crownsville, MD. Milton noted that he would like the group to have a dialog of future demographical trends rather than discussing the current trend. With the shrinking senior population and families having fewer children, property ownership may no longer be in demand. The next meeting is on March 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Frederick Community Action Agency (FCAA) Vision** -- The two new divisions created under FCCA are Human Services and Housing. A search committee is seeking a director for the new agency.

**Public Liaison:** Jessica noted that she will be providing AHC with the calendar of the budget hearings. Jessica also reported that a work session on February 11<sup>th</sup>, the Council would be discussing proposed legislation to levy a one-time tax increase to fund the agricultural land preservation. The proposal is to increase the current rate by \$1 (currently, \$6 per every \$500 to \$7 per every \$500). The first \$500,000 from this tax increase would be set aside for agricultural land preservation and first-time homebuyer assistance.

**Announcement** –

Mary Ellen – Housing Day in Annapolis on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Mary Ellen – Contact Mary Ellen to participate in a focus group for Housing Study for Nonprofit on March 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Mount Saint Mary’s campus in Frederick.

Malcolm distributed Census flyers and requested the AHC to spread the message to respond to the census.

Malcolm also distributed flyers for free tax preparation offered by the United Way at the Bernard W. Brown Community Center. Appointments are recommended.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 P.M.

The next AHC meeting is on March 10<sup>th</sup>.

Minutes submitted by Marva Younger, Secretary