

Minutes of the Affordable Housing Council (AHC) Meeting

Tuesday, September 14th, 2021

Virtual via WebEx and

Facebook Live on Frederick County Boards and Commissions Facebook page

Minutes of Meeting:

Welcome and Call to Order: Mark Long call the meeting to order at 2:30.

Review of virtual meeting protocols: Mark stated: Public comments will be accepted on the AHC live portal located at www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/Commissions, or by calling toll-free 855-925-2801, entering meeting code 9813, and leaving a voicemail comment to be played back to the council or entering into a queue to give live public comment. Written comments and transcribed voice messages will be included in the AHC record and minutes. Please note that personnel matters are confidential and cannot be received through this kind of forum.

Attendance:

Members Present: Mark Long, Malcolm Furgol, Assan Sosseh, Kandy Alexander, Mary Ellen Mitchell, Hugh Gordon, Tiffany Fossett, Jason Wiley, Kimberly Ashkenazi

Members absent: Angie Liddiard, Patricia Galloway

Public Officials/Staff Liaisons: Derek Shackelford, Liaison, City of Frederick Board of Alderman; Jessica Fitzwater, Liaison, County Council.

Guests/Visitors: Christine Cambareri Kay, Division Director, Citizens Services of Frederick County; Roger Sobkowiak, Human Relations Commission; Ashli Morris, Family Services Coordinator, Habitat for Humanity; James Baker, Community Resource Impact Coordinator, Housing Choice Voucher Program; Jodie Ostoich, President and CEO, Interfaith Housing Alliance; Megan Shanholtz, Grants Manager for the Department of Housing and Human Services, City of Frederick

Approval of Agenda: Mark said Ryan Trout was on his way, but if he was not present in time, his presentation might get moved to later on the agenda. Mark added *Affordable Housing Resources for Afghan Immigrants* to **Business** after *Updates from ongoing committees*. With no other changes, Malcolm made a motion to approve the agenda. Bruce seconded the motion. The agenda was approved.

Approval of Minutes for July 13, 2021 meeting: Discrepancy of Kim being listed as both present and absent at the meeting was corrected by removing her name from being in attendance.

With no other corrections, Assan motioned to approve the minutes. Malcom seconded the motion. The minutes were approved.

Business

Future AHC meeting venue/format: Mark introduced the Executive Committee's proposal to meet at the Frederick County Association of Realtors (FCAR) office, office of Hugh Gordon, which has system in place to do hybrid format for people to opt to meet in person or virtually for AHC meetings. Monica Bearden will confirm the AHC decision aligns with County Executive expectations. With no opposition, pending County Executive approval, AHC will move forward with hybrid meetings at FCAR.

Discussion and approval of Legislation Proposals for 2022 General Assembly: Supposed to be submitted by September 15, 2021.

1. Landlord and tenant – residential tenants facing eviction- access to counsel
 - a. Request to accelerate funding/implementation
 - b. Goal of October 1, 2023, or sooner

No one opposed.

Item #1 will be included in the AHC legislation proposal.

2. Remove Land Trusts Prohibition from Maryland Condo Statute. Assan Explained:
 - a. Currently the land trust must belong to a government institution
 - b. Would include nonprofits another way to provide affordable housing

No one opposed.

Item #2 will be included in the AHC legislation proposal.

3. Amend Maryland's Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) to incentivize development of targeted low-income senior housing. Jodie Ostoich explained:
 - a. Without incentives for development of senior housing, developers are less likely to apply for the 9% tax incentive
 - b. Therefore, developers are more likely to apply for the 4% tax incentive
 - c. The 4% tax incentive does not provide enough housing at an affordable level for many seniors

The council discussed #3. Bruce and Ryan suggest commenting directly during the hearings of the QAP. Mark proposed the Policy Committee will put together a position letter for review from the AHC.

#3 will not be added to legislation proposal.

4. Change any regulations that might prevent or complicate the development of low-income senior housing in conjunction with mixed use development.

#4 will be included with #3 in written proposal.

5. Expand the tax credit program for renters to apply to a broader range of incomes.
Ryan and Jodie commented.

#5 will not be added to legislative proposal.

6. Ask the state to return tenant-landlord relations to county/jurisdiction.
 - a. Ryan explained: Currently, County/Mayor do not have authority to stay evictions.
 - b. Kim stated: Removing relations from the state level could be complicated by those relations differing between jurisdictions.
 - c. Kandy voiced this could provide more control for the city to be able to provide better oversight of property mismanagement.

#6 will not be added to legislation proposal.

7. Develop Statewide Housing Choice Vouchers.

#7 voted to remove from the legislative proposal.

Christine Kay informed group live stream would end in 20 minutes. Mark asked, if with the time constraint, anyone had anything of great importance to share. Ryan gave a quick overview of Business item 4: Update on Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) Ordinance Review/Revision, saying the workgroup is in the process of drafting a white paper to be circulated to the AHC for comment before going through county procedures and to the County Executive. Kandy also gave a quick update: Housing Authority's Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program waitlist is open.

Update on Frederick County COVID-19 Emergency Recovery Rental Assistance Program – Ryan Trout:

- a. Funding Streams and timelines
 - a. Started last summer
 - b. CBDG
 - c. CARES Act
 - d. Consolidated Appropriations act of 2020
 - e. ARPA
 - f. Currently spending Emergency Rental Assistance 1 funding from the Consolidated Appropriations act of 2020 – spent 60% of \$7.758 million received
 - g. \$1.426 million received from State of MD ERA 1 – to start spending October 1
 - h. Received ERA 2 funding of \$6.1 million – will be spent concurrently with ERA 1 and ERA1-MD

- i. Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) -\$2,217,813
- b. Current priority areas
 - a. Households most vulnerable to household instability due to pandemic
 - i. Social Vulnerability Index
 - ii. Urban Institute’s Emergency Rental Assistance Priority Index
- c. Distribution of funds
 - a. Prioritized funding to most vulnerable
 - i. Heavily concentrated in and around Frederick City
 - ii. \$4.24 million on rental assistance throughout county not including admin costs
- d. Anticipated need
 - a. Using National Equity Atlas and the Right to the City Alliance April 2021 debt dashboard
 - b. Between June and August, the number of households with rent debt in the County has increased while the estimated rent debt per household has decreased
- e. How getting the word out
 - a. Broad-based and targeted marketing strategies to renters and landlords
 - b. Billboard
 - c. Targeted digital ads, video ads
 - d. Targeted direct marketing
 - e. Posters, flyers, and banners
 - f. Sandwich board at events
- f. Next phase
 - a. More funds expected
 - b. Hiring full-time staff person to focus on these programs and help collect and submit data
- g. How people can help
 - a. Share content and promote ERA on social media
 - b. Link to the Religious Coalition
 - c. Share flyers

Updates from Staff Liaisons and Elected Official Liaisons:

Alderman Shackelford-

- a. ADU ordinance passed in the City of Frederick.
- b. City started discussions on rental registration and licensing

Business (continued with Mark's agenda addition)

Affordable Housing Resources for Afghan Immigrants: Mark asks if anyone has any information on resources to please share with him.

Updates from on-going Committees

- Messaging/Education – Hugh Gordon
 - Mary Ellen has been keeping the site current
 - Several new organizations have joined the page

Public comment: No public comment

Comments and sharing by Council Members:

- Mary Ellen
 - Mary Ellen and Kim have been recognized by the Frederick County Building Industry Association as women who advocate for affordable housing
 - FCBIA is opening a Women in Building Council and looking for women to join the council
- Jason Wiley
 - FCBIA has a new Executive Officer- Danielle Adams
- Malcolm Furgol
 - Reminder to register to vote in the City of Frederick
- Mary Ellen
 - Mary Ellen and Malcolm sit on the Housing Subcommittee of the Homeless Coalition
 - Looking at what hospital systems around the country do for housing
 - Looking to create housing report for the precariously housed
 - Malcolm requests to make this an update on the AHC agenda every month

The meeting was adjourned at 4:12.

The next meeting will be October 12, 2021.