

Minutes of the Affordable Housing Council

Tuesday, November 1, 2016

2:30 pm to 4:00 pm

Bernard W. Brown Community Center

629 N. Market Street, Frederick, Maryland

Meeting was called to order at 2:35 pm

Council members present: Bruce Zavos, Chair; Katie Nash, Vice-chair; Mark Long, Sec; Jason Wiley, Kandy Joseph- Alexander, Mary Ellen Mitchell, Jay Mason

Public Officials/Staff Liaisons Present: County Council member Jessica Fitzwater; Alderman Donna Kuzemchak; Milton Bailey, Director of DHCD; Karin Tome, Liaison for MML

Guests: Dr. Monica Grant, Director of FC Citizens Services Division; Angie Liddiard, Housing Authority of Frederick City; Ed Hinde of SHIP representing the FC Coalition for the Homeless

Council members/Liaisons absent: Kimberly Ashkenazi, Angela Brinkley Morris, Larry Johnson

CONSENT AGENDA:

The minutes of the October 4, 2016 meeting were approved.

NEW BUSINESS:

Guest Speaker: Ed Hinde presented an overview of the Strategic Plan of the Frederick County Coalition for the Homeless, "Ending Homelessness in Frederick County". Discussion was held regarding the Affordable Housing Council's role in helping to carry out the Plan. On the Continuum of Care Model outlined in the Strategic Plan, consensus was that the AHC's role mostly fell within the Permanent Housing section. Specific Action Items for the Affordable Housing Council to perform are spelled out in Strategy 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 of the Coalition's Strategic Plan.

Presentation: Bruce Zavos presented a brief overview of **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)** financing. The **LIHTC** is the federal government's primary program for encouraging the investment of private equity in the development of affordable rental housing for low-income households.

Bruce then presented a Position Paper that he had written on "**How to Incentivize Affordable Housing Development**". The purpose of the Paper was to "Create a standard process for affordable housing projects that reduces risk and provides as much certainty as possible for the developer", and contained the following recommendations that arose out of Bruce's many years of experience working on affordable housing projects as an architect;

1. Appoint an ombudsman or ambassador to be the point person for all communications with the county or city during the permit process.
2. Provide a separate accelerated permit review process for affordable housing projects funded by LIHTC's and local government funds. Affordable housing developers are out of pocket for soft and hard cost expenses until financing closes. To close financing, permits need to be in hand.

3. Standardize the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT).
4. Provide standardized reductions in permit fees for affordable housing using local funding.
5. County and City can identify 'surplus' property that could be developed as affordable housing and use the RFP process similar to 520 North Market St. to solicit development proposals.
6. County and city could provide funding to develop affordable housing with 4% LIHTC's in lieu of the more competitive and uncertain 9% LIHTC funding.
7. County and city can provide density bonus for affordable housing projects or allow higher densities if developers provide affordable housing in their market rate developments.
8. County and city can provide parking requirement reductions for affordable housing developments.

Discussion then ensued about the proposals in the Position Paper as well as general discussion regarding actions that the AHC can take to further the mission of the AHC. Consensus was to set a few priorities to focus and work on for council actions. There was also agreement to review the AHC Strategic Plan on a regular basis to help keep the council on task.

Housing Study Update: Dr. Grant shared that the consultants were still working on some details and it's hoped that it will be final iteration of the study will be completed in the near future.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Submitted By Mark Long, AHC Secretary