



Meeting Summary/Minutes

Date: 3/17/2020

Time: 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual Call

A Housing Policy Workgroup Meeting was held over the phone on March 17, 2020. The following were in attendance:

Name	Sector	Employer / Organization
Peter Engel - <i>Chair</i>	Housing	Howard County Housing Commission
Kelly Cimino	Housing/Community Development	DHCD
Bill McCormack - <i>Task Force Co-Chair</i>	Housing/Policy	
Paul Casey	Housing/Policy	
Anne Brinker	Health/Policy	The Horizon Foundation
Erica Byrne	Youth	Voices for Children
Joan Driessen	Community Services	Association of Community Services/ Housing Affordability Coalition
Dr. Caroline Harper - <i>Task Force Co-Chair</i>	Housing/Policy	
Mavis Ellis	Education	Howard County Board of Education
Linda Wengel	Affordability/Council Rep.	
Phyllis Zolotorow	Seniors/Council Rep.	
Rachel Waldman		RCLCO
Victoria Hathaway	Aging	Bob Lucido Team of Keller Williams
Cindy Parr	Disabilities	The Arc of Howard County
Michael Spotts		Neighborhood Fundamentals
Jacob Ross		RCLCO
Jennifer Broderick	Housing/Affordability/Non-profit	Bridges to Housing Stability
Allysha Lorber		JMT
Elisabeth McCollum		JMT
Sarah Diehl		JMT
Tracee Strum-Gilliam		PRR, Inc.
Laura Van Wert		PRR, Inc.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the engagement strategy of the Taskforce and preview to the Workgroup the ongoing research that has taken place regarding market analysis, existing programs, and upcoming legislation. Additionally, Workgroup goals were discussed with the objective of creating sub-goals and action items for the group.

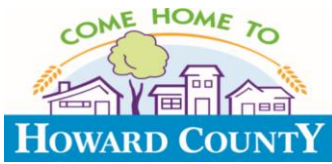


Traceé Strum-Gilliam called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m. She read through the agenda items 1-7 listed above, followed by the instructions for the virtual meeting on the following page.

The following items were discussed:

Overview of Taskforce and Workgroups

- The purpose of the three different workgroups is to split up the Task Force to be able to focus in detail on certain topics in a smaller group setting. Housing is a diverse and important issue with many different factors.
- Howard County Executive Calvin Ball selected the workgroup members, Strum-Gilliam said. These members are split into three workgroups:
 - Affordability Workgroup – facilitated by Tracee Strum-Gilliam
 - Housing Policy Workgroup – facilitated by Allysha Lorber
 - Housing Market Workgroup – facilitated by Elisabeth McCollum
- The Housing Affordability Workgroup is the first to meet, followed by Housing Policy on Wednesday, March 18, and Housing Market on Monday, March 23. All will be virtual meetings. Their agendas can be found at <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/housingtaskforce>. Elisabeth McCollum and Allysha Lorber invited all to attend each meeting.
- **The Housing Market Workgroup is focused on the following topics:**
 - Current housing types and needs
 - Future housing types and needs
 - Redevelopment of aging communities
 - Creation of affordable units
 - Preservation of affordable units
 - Supply vs. demand
 - Market analysis
 - The role of businesses, employers, schools, developers, transportation, non-profits, and others.
- **The Housing Affordability Workgroup is focused on the following topics:**
 - Cost of renting
 - Cost of homeownership
 - Current and future demographics
 - Who is and isn't being served?
 - Housing for all income levels
 - Howard County Housing Commission (PHA)
 - Workforce housing
 - The role of businesses, employers, schools, developers, transportation, non-profits, and others.
- **The Housing Policy Workgroup is focused on the following topics:**
 - Role of County, State, Federal government
 - County, State, Federal legislation
 - County, State, Federal funding
 - Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance
 - Residential vs. commercial zoning
 - Inclusionary zoning
 - County's Age-Friendly Initiative



- County's General Plan
- Best practices from other jurisdictions
- Regional partnership with other Counties
- Community development
- The role of businesses, employers, schools, developers, transportation, non-profits, and others.

The Taskforce's schedule started in February 2020 with its kickoff meeting. Each workgroup will meet individually, and then come together on April 27 to prepare for its first public meeting. As of March 17, the public meeting is still scheduled, but could change as a result of the coronavirus, Strum-Gilliam said. Pop-up events are postponed. The second public meeting is scheduled for October 5.

- Paul Casey had two questions:
 - Is April 27 a 3 p.m. meeting?
 - Have stakeholders been selected? If so, are there room for more? Can the list of stakeholders be circulated amongst the taskforce members?
- Strum-Gilliam said that the April 27 meeting will be virtual and at 3 p.m. Jacob Ross would speak about the stakeholders in a few minutes. (this was corrected by Jacob to note that Michael Spotts would address the questions during his presentation).

Preview – Market Understanding – Presented by Jacob Ross

- The first thing that Ross examined in his research was employment growth in the Baltimore-Washington region, of which Howard County is considered to be included. More than 500,000 jobs have been added since 2010.
- Howard County's accessibility to jobs in the Baltimore-Washington region, as well as high-quality schools and safe communities, make it appealing.
- Howard County has a higher demographic of high-income and middle-aged households, as compared to the region. Ross used American Community Survey statistics to assess the demographics.
- In addition, Howard County has more families and couples than singles and roommates, as compared to the region.
- However, Ross said that he looked at the commuting patterns and found that fewer people live and work in Howard County than in peer counties in the region. Therefore, other counties are benefitting from those who live elsewhere and commute into Howard County.
- By understanding Howard County's existing housing inventory, the taskforce will be able to identify challenges and eventually ways to help, Ross said. Howard County has more jobs than households, which likely contributes to the housing shortage.
- Seventy-four percent of Howard County's existing housing are for-sale properties, while 26 percent are rental properties. Of those for-sale properties, 38 percent are single-family detached homes. For rental properties, 14 percent are suburban garden.
- Ross then explained Area Media Income (AMI), which is a measure of the midpoint of a region's income distribution based on household size. They're used to establish housing policy and program thresholds. Ross referenced the AMI table for Howard County on Page 22 of the presentation.
- Rental properties and for-sale homes in Howard County both tend to be older for low-income households, while newer properties target higher incomes. Housing quality also plays a factor – households may be able to afford a property but it's not the kind of housing that people want. Finally homeownership tends to increase as AMI increases in Howard County, so 86 percent of homeowners have an AMI of more than 120 percent. Those low- and moderate-income households continue to rent.
- This baseline understanding of the research conducted will feed into the next steps of analysis.



Preview – Inventory of Existing Programs – Presented by Michael Spotts

- Michael Spotts presented information on the approach to policy evaluation, the process of which is almost complete:
 - Assessment of current conditions/needs
 - Inventory and assessment of existing programs
 - Comparison to conditions, needs and goals
 - Best practice benchmarking
 - Policy and programmatic recommendation development.
- The goal is to take proactive steps, but not be held to bad policy. Therefore, there are varying intervention types/categories including Land Use & Planning; Capital & Subsidy; Household Supports; and Policy Tools.

Workgroup Goal-Setting

The workgroup members then were instructed to go through 11 goals to look critically at the language and intent of each one.

- **Housing Opportunities Master Plan Development Process Goals**
 - Be inclusive, equitable, open, transparent, and accountable
 - Assess housing programs/policies in all departments/agencies of Howard County Government to improve efficiency and effectiveness
 - Provide metrics/timelines to measure progress toward achieving goals
 - Identify ways to create and preserve housing opportunities for residents of all income levels
- **Goal #1:** Complete a comprehensive inventory of housing programs and policies in all departments and agencies of local government, as well as those of community and human service organizations outside of local government.

Workgroup Feedback

- Paul Casey asked again about stakeholder outreach, and Michael Spotts said that he could share the stakeholder list for workgroup feedback. The stakeholder list will be used for outreach for housing needs/concerns, as well as how the programs are utilized.
 - Peter Engel cautioned the workgroup to focus on community and service organizations that actually provide housing services, not just services for low-income households. Strum-Gilliam said that they would make sure to reach out to those that have housing programs.
 - Joan Driessen asked that targeted populations be included the review to assure that underserved groups were accounted for to determine the degree of unmet need.
 - Kelly Cimino asked if that the group evaluate state program and policy to determine if the state is doing something similar that the workgroup could replicate.
 - Linda noted that an annual inventory of properties is conducted.
 - Erica sent a note in via the chat function expressing a desire to address foster youth who are aging out of programs.
- **Goal #2:** Identify potential long-term, sustainable and consistent public and/or private financial strategies and sources of revenue to help build and preserve affordable housing opportunities.

Workgroup Feedback

- Paul Casey and Kelly Cimino both said that the word “consistent” doesn’t feel quite accurate unless they’re comparing it to something else. The word “maintained” feels more accurate.



- Peter Engel suggested that short-term strategies also be identified as a sub-goal.
 - Paul Casey added that desire should be level funding in a variety of forms to leverage
- **Goal #3:** Identify opportunities to more effectively utilize the County's existing inclusionary zoning program, Moderate Income Housing Unit program (MIHU), to develop affordable rental and home ownership opportunities, especially in areas of the county where these opportunities are in critically low supply.

Workgroup Feedback

- Not all of the goals that were brainstormed earlier are on the workgroup's list and Kelly Cimino and Joan Driessen would like to see all of them for all of the workgroups.
- Phyllis Zolotorow said that the senior population will double and 2/3 will be women, so affordable housing is a women's issue that needs addressed. "It would be very embarrassing to have grandmas and grandpas living under a bridge," she said. Renters especially need to be addressed in the master plan because they don't have equity.
- Paul Casey said that he'd like to see the workgroup leverage two sources – public and private – to maximize opportunity.
- Michael Spotts said that the goals were developed upon best practice review after Kelly Cimino inquired about the process.

Goals #4-11 – The workgroup was able to review these items, but didn't have time to go into each one in detail. Strum-Gilliam suggested that the group finish the review virtually or in a follow up conference call. She added that the team would work together to determine the best path forward and would follow up with the group as soon as possible.

- **Goal #4:** Identify best practices used in jurisdictions economically and demographically like Howard County that could be implemented to help preserve existing affordable rental housing stock in the County.
- **Goal #5:** Considering tax abatement and incentives to foster affordable housing creation by the Howard County Housing Commission (HCHC), the County's housing authority, and private developers
- **Goal #6:** Recommend opportunities to strengthen the County's commitment to affordable housing such as use of public lands, reliance on LIHTC projects, increased use of subsidies such as the County's Housing Stability Support Program and expansion of the "Live Where You Work" program.
- **Goal #7:** Identify regulatory, legal, and other potential barriers that are restricting greater collaboration between HCHC and DHCD.
- **Goal #8:** Identifying how the County's zoning can be changed to ensure all areas of the County include affordable rental housing and ownership opportunities.
- **Goal #9:** Identify programs that can be implemented to incentivize private developers to partner with the County to create mechanisms that ensure the ongoing ability to develop affordable housing.
- **Goal #10:** Recommend potential changes to current policies and programs to address the shortage of affordable units for very low/low/moderate income households, including workforce housing.
- **Goal #11:** Provide guidance to the County as to how it can coordinate the delivery of affordable housing resources and services to efficiently achieve the goals of the Plan.

Action Items / Next Steps



- In wrapping up the meeting, Strum-Gilliam said that the presentation would be available online: <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/housingtaskforce>. Noting that the file is too large to email to the workgroup.

Upcoming Legislation

- Bill No. 13-2020
 - An act amending the Howard County Code to establish a Notice and a Requirement to provide an offer to the County and Housing Commission to purchase rental housing offered for sale in the County; and generally relating to the sale of Rental Housing.
 - Drafted to address a shortage of affordable rental housing and increase opportunities for the department and commission to expand the number of affordable dwelling units in the county.
 - This Bill was introduced at the beginning of Task Force meetings/formation
 - Concern that this is a piecemeal approach whereas the Task Force is undertaking a comprehensive approach to addressing the issue
 - Bill McCormack said he worried that the taskforce's work would be moot if CB 13-2020 and others like it get passed before they complete their work.
 - Joan Driessen said that she wondered the same thing and was told that County Council doesn't want to lose more opportunities for affordable housing, which is why the bill is being considered.
 - Kelly Cimino also said that the county government offices are closed to the public and they don't know when council will hear the bills.
 - Kelly Cimino will be sending out an email to everyone – those who are interested should read the Bill and respond to Kelly
 - Bill found here:
<https://www.howardcountymd.gov/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=MH8sbEw21oQ%3d&tabid=3032&portalid=0>

The meeting concluded at 5:16 p.m.