



**Howard County Housing Opportunities Master Plan
Task Force Led Discussion #2
September 17, 2020
3:00 – 5:00 PM**

Task Force Members:

Bill McCormack, Jr.
Brent Loveless
Dr. Caroline Harper
Cindy Parr
Joan Driessen
Kevin Kelehan
Leonardo McClarty
Linda Wengel
Mike Mitchell
Pat Sylvester
Paul Casey
Paula Seabright
Roger Barnes
Steve Breeden
Victoria Hathaway

Ex-Officio Members:

Jeff Bronow
Jenna Crawley
Kelly Cimino
Kimberly Eisenreich
Peter Engel
Jason Jannati for Larry Twele
Rose Burton

Guests:

Quanita Kareem
Tonya Tiffany
Tracy Deik

The meeting began at 3:05 PM.

Bill McCormack welcomed Task Force members and guests to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

1. Existing Legislation- CB45/ZRA191
 - Kelly Cimino gave an overview of Council Bill 45-2020 (ZRA 191), an act that revises the County's zoning regulations to allow the Department of Housing & Community Development/ Howard County Government to facilitate the creation of affordable housing & special needs housing on a maximum of 12 acres of non-residentially zoned land every three years. Howard County Government would own or be a general partner/managing member of the housing developments.



- CB45 was filed so that the County could partner in the development of the Patuxent Commons project, which will create affordable housing for seniors, families & adults with disabilities.
- The legislation also allows the County/ Housing Department to have similar rights as the Housing Commission.
- Pat Sylvester raised questions about DHCD's capacity in this role (property management/ long-term housing goals) and suggested that the Task Force discuss this legislation further to determine how to coordinate/use housing resources efficiently.
- Paul Casey raised a question regarding whether the legislation could require cooperation/consultation between the Housing Department & the Housing Commission in the exercise of authority.
- Brent Loveless noted the importance of being mindful of converting commercial properties to residential and the downstream impacts it will have.
- Kelly Cimino informed the Task Force that the Housing Department will be applying to the State of MD for \$2M in Cares Act funding to provide additional rental assistance to county residents. The application will be posted to the Department's website by September 21 for a 5-day public comment period.

2. APFO

What works well?

- There is a protection mechanism for schools & roads.
- It allows for long-term planning & financial planning.
- It is a fair system; everyone must adhere to the same rules.

What doesn't work?

- APFO is not predictable.
- It is used as a tool to stop growth & development.
- It competes with affordable housing interests.
- Housing units are allocated the same—regardless of size.
- APFO is an opportunistic device—limits are set very high/very low.
- The infrastructure was not funded to match growth.
- The County doesn't have enough resources.
- Development is limited in a large part of the county.
- APFO is unbalanced. It leans toward protecting schools over the other needs of the county.
- Housing needs to be deconcentrated and spread evenly throughout the county.
- The school board's focus is misplaced.



- Hot spots are being created because the system is not being mitigated at the correct rate to provide appropriate resources.
- Housing gets unfairly criticized. When schools advocate against affordable housing it becomes a political weapon, which distorts the value of having diverse affordable housing throughout the county.

Recommendations

- Appropriate goal mitigation would increase planning & predictability and decrease school redistricting.
- Roger Barnes requested a copy of the recommendations of the Howard County APFO Task Force. These recommendations can be viewed at: <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Planning-and-Zoning/Adequate-Public-Facilities-APFO>.
- School & housing interests need to be balanced.
- Jeff Bronow suggested reviewing Montgomery County's APFO reports as a reference- <https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/County-Growth-Policy-1.pdf>.
- Joan Driessen suggested looking into other ways of assigning students to schools to get a more equitable distribution (school choice?).
- Housing needs to be an infrastructure.
- The road components of APFO need to be discussed.
- The standards for capital items for growth need to be set/ measured correctly.

3. MIHU Fee-in-Lieu

What works?

- Fee-in-Lieu helps fund affordable housing activities/units and spread the obligation to create affordable units in the county.
- It is predictable—the rules are clear.
- Fee-in-Lieu and transfer taxes help fund the Housing Department.

What doesn't work?

- The fees that the Housing Department receives is disproportionate to the amount it costs to provide MIHUs and needs to be adjusted.
- Fee-in-Lieu helps create MIHU homeownership opportunities, but it doesn't create many rental opportunities.
- It doesn't create enough affordable housing.

Recommendations

- Fee-in-lieu can be used to achieve goals like providing affordable housing & lowering the concentration of poverty in the county.



- Tools like providing density bonuses & using developer/County land donations can increase additional housing.
 - Developers need to figure out a way to create units—not just pay a fee.
 - Pat Sylvester noted the need for more 40-50% AMI units. The MIHU program should increase the requirement of LIHU/DIHU units to meet the greater need.
 - Increase rental opportunities for low-income households.
 - Brent Loveless suggested extending the release period for MIHU resales so that units remain in the program.
 - Steve Breeden suggested encouraging homeowners to invest in/create accessory dwelling units by providing incentives.
 - Bill McCormack noted a link between housing policy and the effects on schools/test scores and asked the Task Force to consider this as the Plan is created.
4. Comments from HAC
- Bill McCormack informed the Task Force of the questions that were submitted by the Housing Affordability Coalition. The questions were forward to the consultants for review.
 - Other community questions/responses can be viewed at: www.howardcountymd.gov/housingtaskforce.
5. Name of the Plan
- Kelly Cimino asked the Task Force to consider a new name for the Housing Opportunities Master Plan, keeping in mind the importance of word choice.
 - Caroline Harper suggested a name that would address what the Task Force is trying to accomplish in the Plan.
 - Paul Casey suggested that the Plan's name be dynamic.
 - Bill McCormack suggested using action words in the title.
6. Open Floor Discussion
- Pat Sylvester requested more time for the Task Force to discuss APFO, Fee-in-Lieu & MIHU.
 - Tonya Tiffany agreed that more APFO discussions are necessary.
 - Quanita Kareem noted a need for zoning requirements to include more age-friendly housing.
 - Victoria Hathaway noted the importance of things that impact older adult citizens.
 - Paul Casey suggested that the Task Force further discuss the MIHU program before recommendations are made.



- There was a request to receive a hard copy of the Housing Policy Toolkit from Michael Spotts- DHCD will mail copies next week.
- An HAC event will be held on September 25 from 9-11 AM.
- A public workshop on the draft Complete Streets *Community Engagement Plan* will be held on September 23.
- The next full Task Force discussion will be held on September 29 at 3 PM.

The meeting ended at 4:55 PM

Next Task Force Led Discussion: October 8 (3:00-5:00 PM)