



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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County Executive

DIVISION OF PLANNING & PERMITTING
Livable Frederick Planning & Design Office

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Housing Element Advisory Group Meeting 6 January 23, 2025, Meeting Minutes

I. Meeting Details

Meeting date and time: Thursday, January 23, 2025, at 2:00 PM

Meeting location: 30 North Market Street, Frederick, Maryland 21701

II. Attendance

Advisory Group members present: Hillary Champman, Teresa Dowd, Hugh Gordon, Mike Hatfield, Barb Trader, Ruth Waxter, Bruce Zavos

Advisory Group members present virtually: Danielle Adams, Mayor Nathan Brown

Advisory Group members absent: Mary Ellen Mitchell, Ken Oldham, Jodie Ostoich, Vincent Rogers

County staff: Karin Flom, Kimberly Gaines, Andrew Stine, Denis Superczynski

III. Call to Order

Ms. Flom brought the meeting to order at 2:03 PM and welcomed the advisory group members.

IV. Fair Housing & Access to Opportunity

Ms. Flom led a discussion on fair housing and access to opportunity challenges in Frederick County. The questions are included below, with a summary of responses and discussion included for each.

Question 1: What fair housing challenges do people face when seeking housing in the County?

- A lack of supply of physically accessible housing (also a need for visibility and universal design). There is also work to be done to make neighborhoods and communities accessible in addition to the housing.
- The general lack of affordable housing is a fair housing issue, because it restricts housing choice. A lack of affordability also intersects with individuals with disabilities who may have fixed incomes (Social Security, SSI).
- Discrimination against potential tenants based on source of income continues to be a complaint in the larger D.C. region and likely in Frederick County.

Question 2: What factors significantly create, contribute to, perpetuate, or increase the severity of segregation?

- Mixing incomes and housing types was discussed as a way to challenge existing patterns of poverty concentration.
- The incorporated municipalities and the unincorporated areas of Frederick County are all unique and face different development pressures (or lack).
- Older homes can be comparatively affordable to new construction (though some older homes are still very expensive). In some neighborhoods, this is increasing racial and ethnic diversity of neighborhoods. However, if affordable housing is limited to certain places, it could lead to new patterns of racial or ethnic segregation.
- The legacy of land use policy with its focus on developing single family detached housing, as well as the effects of racial/ethnic exclusion (redlining).
- Public misconceptions about affordable housing, such as the belief it brings increased crime or decreased property values, even when research shows that isn't the case.

Question 3: What does “access to opportunity” mean within Frederick County?

- The opportunity to choose the community that best meets your needs such as access to jobs, transit, schools, healthcare.
 - The cost of housing is a primary limiting factor to housing choice. Policy options to increase the supply of affordable housing in places with these essentials and amenities were discussed, particularly the County's Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program.

Question 4: Are there disparities with access to opportunity?

- The socioeconomic disparities with regard to intergenerational wealth.
- Transportation access remains a barrier (getting around without a vehicle).
- “Zip code destiny” is still true and impacts children's outcomes in adulthood.

Question 5: How can the Housing Element address fair housing challenges? Many potential solutions were mentioned organically throughout Questions 1-4 and included:

- Changes to how affordable housing is funded and/or incentivized in Frederick County and ways to become involved with these decisions at higher levels of government.
- Changes to land use and zoning regulations to diversify the types and location of where housing can be built.
- Education and outreach for the general public and elected/appointed officials.
- Changes to building codes and other standards to promote more accessible, greener, and energy efficient housing.

V. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

At the previous meeting (Meeting #5), members requested some more information about Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) since they had come up in discussion a few times. Ms. Flom presented a brief overview of Frederick County's ADU ordinance, its changes over time, and recent trends in completed ADU projects. Advisory group members discussed barriers to ADU

construction such as County fees, well/septic capacity, construction costs, and knowing that it's an option.

VI. Final Thoughts from Advisory Group members

This was the final meeting of the advisory group members until late spring or early summer. Ms. Flom provided the general next steps in the process which is to move into more outreach with the general public. Members were each given an opportunity to provide any closing remarks or additional information staff should consider as the plan takes shape:

- County Planning staff were encouraged to coordinate with the Division of Housing's Affordable Housing Needs Assessment and their consulting team.
- The advisory group should continue to support staff throughout the rest of the planning process.
- Advisory group members should stay connected with each other since so much of their work overlaps.
- Affordable housing can be energy efficient and not cost more. If you have the will, you can provide high quality, safe, and affordable housing.

Adjournment

No next meeting date is scheduled. With no additional business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.