

Minutes of the Affordable Housing Council (AHC) Meeting
Tuesday, May 14, 2019
2:30 pm to 4:00 pm
Citizens Services Division Building – Main Conference Room
401 Sagner Avenue, Frederick, MD 21701

MINUTES OF MEETING

Call to Order: Mark Long, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 2.37 P.M. and welcomed everyone. Kimberly Ashkenazi, Chair arrived later and chaired the remaining of the meeting.

Members Present: Kimberly Ashkenazi, Chair; Mark Long, Vice Chair; Marva Younger, Secretary; Diane Bill; Malcolm Furgol; Hugh Gordon; Kandy Alexander; Mary Ellen Mitchell and Jason Wiley.

Members Absent: Angie Liddiard and Bruce Zavos.

Public Officials/Staff Liaisons Present: Derek Shackelford, Frederick Alderman; County Council; Milton Bailey, Director, DHCD; and Sarah Nelson, Manager, DHCD.

Visitors Present: Diana Fulchirm, Community Foundation; Roger Sobkowiak, HRC; Jodie Ostoich, IHA; Kara Norman Downtown Frederick Partnership; Veronica Henry, HACF; Patricia Galloway; and James Baker, United Way.

Minutes of the April 9th meeting were approved. (the approval of minutes was moved by Hugh Gordon; seconded by Diane Bill. All agreed unanimously.)

Agenda was approved deleting "closed meeting" for the nomination of officers. (the approval of revised agenda was moved by Kandy Alexander; seconded by Malcolm Furgol. All agreed unanimously.)

Public Comment: No public comments.

Business:

Elevator Speech -- Kimberly Ashkenazi:

Kimberly presented a list of talking points for the elevator speech. The goal is to create a wallet-size message for the AHC to spread accurate and impactful information about affordable housing. The AHC prioritized the listing of talking points to include #1 -- workforce housing; #6 -- adults age 60 and older; and #7 -- healthy and vibrant community. Jason and Jodie suggested printing the stories/talking points printed on the front of the card and the supporting data on the back.

Mary Ellen suggested to use more common wording rather than jargoning. Kimberly will present modified talking points and email to the AHC for review.

Messaging Committee – Hugh Gordon:

Hugh Gordon shared that one video featuring “The Places of Affordable Housing” will be ready for the June Bloom. This video includes an introduction by Kimberly and messages from Mary Ellen, Vince, and Dr. Lisa Sturtevant. Kimberly will segue between messages and bring everything into context for an impactful video. The video captures good talents, informative talking points, and shows great locations. Approximately 3 or 4 videos will be produced later.

June Bloom – Milton Bailey:

Approximately 60 exhibitors and sponsors have signed up for the June Bloom. The United Way volunteers have agreed to distribute June Bloom flyers in high traffic areas, such as grocery stores, Home Depot and Lowe’s. The FSK mall does not allow distribution of flyers. Additional cards are available for the AHC to distribute to merchants, various organizations, churches, employers and groups that we are associated with. The flyer has Spanish on one side and English on the other side. Sara has set up a Facebook page that is attracting potential attendees.

Community Development Block Grant Funds (CDBG) – Milton Bailey:

The AHC agreed to support the Frederick County DHD to apply for grant funding (\$400,000) through the MD Department of Housing and Community Development CDBG Program. The requested funds will support homebuyers with down payment and closing cost assistance for purchasing moderately priced homes, and capital improvement for repairs needed at Bell Court. This low-income senior complex is a 28-unit apartment serving low-income senior citizens with rent at 30% of their income. Funding this project would eliminate the need to dip into the reserve funds or increase rent. Milton’s office will draft a couple of letters requesting funds and email to the AHC members. The AHC may modify the draft and submit on letterhead to the DHD office. The County Council will hold a public hearing on funding the Community Block Grant application on Tuesday, May 21 at 5:00 PM.

Results of Envision Frederick County Speaker Event:

Attendees of the Envision Frederick County Speaker event expressed positive feedback and had great praise for Dr. Lisa Sturtevant, who was the featured speaker. The scenarios Dr. Sturtevant presented on how she was able to communicate with people in public venues and ways to dispel myths about affordable housing were very impressive. Several Frederick City and County officials were in attendance. Mark will ask Dr. Sturtevant for the PowerPoint presentation.

After a lively discussion with the County Executive at the event relative to the strict approval for APFO’s, the AHC decided to follow up with the County Executive to see if rules could be a little more flexible and with fewer roadblocks. Seemingly, the County Executive may not be aware that developers are not coming forward with affordable housing projects because of APFO challenges. Since this is a window of opportunity to potentially discuss this issue with the County Executive, the AHC will schedule a meeting with her. Roger Sobkowiak suggested having an off-site session with a facilitator to case study examples of challenges and along with suggested solutions prior to meeting with the County Executive. Kimberly will schedule a Policy Committee meeting to plan

for meeting with the County Executive. In the meantime, an arrangement will be made to get on the County Executive's calendar.

Building and Impact Fees – Malcolm Furgol (United Way)

On behalf of the United Way of Frederick County, Malcolm presented a revised letter addressed to the County Council to examine building and impact fees on affordable housing in addition to schools and libraries. The language in the original letter was in violation of the county charter stating that UWFC joins the "AHC to recommend an ad hoc workgroup". The revised letter states that UWFC recommends an ad hoc work group to be inclusive of all – "community members, a representative from the building community, housing consumers, affordable housing providers, and other stakeholders". Malcolm noted that the AHC would continue to have a significant role to meet the demands of affordable housing.

A few months ago, Mark testified before the County Council about impact fees. His testimony was limited to 3-minutes. Mark noted that when speaking on behalf of the AHC, one may only speak 3 minutes or less. In order to speak more than 3 minutes, the resolution and bylaws must be presented.

Liaison Reports

Milton Bailey -- Council Member Jessica Fitzwater will introduce a proposed bill to allocate 1.5 percent of the proceeds from the recordation tax to the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF). The HIF will be used to facilitate affordable housing in Frederick County.

Derek Shackelford – The City of Frederick will present the Fiscal Year 2020 budget on Thursday, May 16. The City's budget includes reserve funding for affordable housing in the amount of \$100,000 and funding for childcare for \$15,000. These funds have not been earmarked for any specific projects at this time but will be utilized as the City deems fitting. However, the AHC will have an opportunity to offer recommendations on how the housing funds may allocated.

Nomination Committee – Mary Ellen, Kandy and Diane

Mary Ellen, a member of the Nomination Committee, presented the following nominees who agreed to serve another term:

Kimberly, Chair

Mark, Vice Chair

Marva, Secretary

Kimberly asked for nominations from the floor. There were no nominations from the floor. Hugh moved to accept the slate of officers presented and it was seconded by Malcolm. All agreed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm. Next AHC meeting is July 9th.

Minutes submitted by

Marva Younger, Secretary