

Minutes: Housing / Community Development Subcommittee

March 12, 2018

C. Vernon Gray Conference Room

George Howard Building – Ellicott City, MD

The meeting began at 1:04 p.m.

In attendance: Paul Casey, Cindy Parr, Bruce Rothschild, and Coleen West. Also attending, Jeff Meyers, Council staff.

The subcommittee introduced the new members and reviewed the subcommittee's purposes.

Kelly Cimino, Director of the county's Department of Housing and Community Development, briefed the subcommittee on the Department's activities. The Department is largely funded by a portion of the transfer tax and federal funds, but no County general funds. The Department runs programs to help homebuyers and renters at all income levels. The Department is concerned that recent changes to APFO might reduce transfer tax revenues beginning in a few years and recent proposals might largely eliminate federal money. In Howard County, County median income and market rate rents have been rising faster than the Department's ability to provide aid. Also, there are several gaps in housing availability for certain populations: the working poor, those leaving foster care, and those ending incarceration. Ms. Cimino will be providing the subcommittee with additional data including information about turnover in MIHU rental units. Ms. Cimino's [presentation](#) is available on the Task Force web site.

Peter Engel, Executive Director of the Howard County Housing Commission, also briefed the subcommittee. Traditionally housing commissions have owned and operated public housing for very low income residents, however, there is no housing of this kind in the County. Rather the Commission operates some mixed income complexes and runs the housing choice voucher program (formerly called Section 8). Mr. Engel believes that the County is lagging behind its peers in providing funding for affordable housing development and rehabilitation. Recent changes to APFO will reduce the construction of new units including MIHU units, which is likely to raise housing costs county-wide. It seems unlikely that wages for the lower tiers of workers in the County will rise enough to cover reasonable housing in the County for those workers.

The subcommittee asked Ms. Cimino and Mr. Engel to provide additional information about approaches in other jurisdictions and homelessness in the County. Additionally, Ms. Cimino will ask Mr. Bronow from DPZ to include some housing information in his presentation to the Task Force next month.

The meeting ended at 2:50 p.m.

	Documents	Presenters	testimony
Environmental and public health impact of new development			
Creation of affordable housing			
Inclusivity: multiple cultures, persons with disabilities, older adults etc.			
Residential development for owners and renters			
Community development, inclusive of arts, open spaces, wellness, civic amenities			
growth of older adult population			
inclusion of immigrants			
English as second language populations			
persons with disability			