

Howard County Council

Racial Equity Task Force



Meeting: Land-Use and Housing Policy Subgroup Meeting

Start Time: January 12, 2021 4:03pm

End Time: January 12, 2021 6:05pm

Task Force Member Attendees:

Jessica Coates
Suzanne Haley
Phillips Engelke
Ian Kennedy
Jonathan Edelson
Peter Engel
Isabella Battish
Taneeka Richardson
Vonda Orders

Task Force Members Not Present:

Herbert Smith

Council and Facilitator Attendees:

Lauren Marra
Felix Facchine
Colette Gelwicks
Kelli Berg

Approved Minutes:

Jessica Coates, Subgroup Chairperson, opened the meeting with a roll call and confirmed that a quorum of subgroup members was present. Ms. Coates moved to approve the meeting minutes from the Land-Use and Housing Policy Subgroup meeting on December 8, 2020. Suzanne Haley, Task Force member, seconded the motion to approve minutes. The minutes were unanimously approved by the subgroup members.

Ms. Coates began the meeting by reviewing meeting objectives and a check-in with subgroup members and staff. After the check-in, Lauren Marra, Groundwork Facilitator, began the meeting with an overview of the meeting schedule/agenda.

Ms. Marra introduced the first presenter for the meeting, Laura Salganik. Ms. Salganik presented information on HoCo Population Analytics, an initiative by the Association of Community Services of Howard County to compile and evaluate demographic and housing data in Howard County. During her presentation, Ms. Salganik shared information on how Howard County's population by race and ethnicity has changed over time. Ms. Salganik also provided information on homeownership data,

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household income data, and population data in Howard County over time. These data points were further disaggregated by race/ethnicity, income, and regional planning area.

After the presentation, Task Force members asked Ms. Salganik questions about her presentation. Several task force members asked if the HoCo Population Analytics data captured demographic data of ethnic groups and immigrant populations in addition to racial groups. Ms. Salganik indicated that level of data was not available for her research. Jonathan Edelson, Task Force member, also asked if this data was available on a more granular geographic basis, such as by census tract or zip code. Ms. Salganik responded that the American Community Survey (ACS) sample size is too small to further disaggregate the data. Task Force members found the presentation informative and generally reflected that it was difficult to broadly categorize racial and ethnic groups based on the Census data available in the American Community Survey.

Following Ms. Salganik's presentation, Ms. Marra introduced the next presenter, Mary Kendall. Ms. Kendall is the Deputy Director of the Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning, and she presented information on Howard County's General Plan update, 'HoCo By Design.' During her presentation, Ms. Kendall shared information on the County's General Plan process, including an explanation on the purpose, role, and impacts of a general plan. Ms. Kendall also presented detailed information on population trends and changes in Howard County over time. Ms. Kendall then discussed the General Plan process in the context of housing equity and access, sharing that new housing in Howard County tends to be more expensive, single-family homes.

After the General Plan presentation, Ms. Marra opened the discussion to questions from Task Force members on the presentation. Peter Engel, Task Force member, asked about how Howard County's housing master plan would be incorporated into the General Plan. Ms. Kendall shared that some of the housing master plan recommendations would be weighed and included in General Plan scenarios in the future. Suzanne Haley, Task Force member, asked about the Planned Service Area (PSA) boundary line that separates western Howard County from eastern Howard County. Ms. Haley asked if it was possible to invest in public water and sewer to expand the PSA, and Ms. Kendall replied that it would be very costly to expand the PSA and would need local and state approval.

Following questions on the General Plan presentation, Ms. Marra led a general discussion on the themes and ideas presented during the meeting, guiding the conversation with several reflection questions. Task Force members shared general reflections and thoughts about the presentations. Suzanne Haley raised the issue of redlining, specifically out of concern that Howard County's Planned Service Area (PSA) Line has led to a concentration of affordable housing in eastern Howard County with few opportunities for affordable and equitable housing in western Howard County. Ian Kennedy and Vonda Orders, Task Force members, also discussed the patterns of public infrastructure investment and the relationship between new public amenities, housing affordability, and political influence. Phil Engelke, Task Force member, shared that he would like to learn more about how housing values are related to development patterns and public amenities in different parts of the county. Jessica Coates and Taneeka Richardson, Task Force members, expressed interest in learning more about the history of Cooksville and why demographics have shifted there over the last 50 years.

After the group discussion, Ms. Marra reviewed the plans for the next meeting of the Land-Use and Housing subgroup. Task Force members offered updates on their respective research items. Ms. Marra confirmed that Jonathan Edelson, Peter Engel, and Isabella Battish would be presenting together on Howard County GIS housing and zoning data, and Jessica Coates would be presenting on MLS and real

estate data in Howard County at the next meeting. Ms. Marra also confirmed the dates and times of the upcoming subgroup meetings:

- February 9, 2021: 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM
- March 9, 2021: 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Ms. Coates thanked members of the subgroup for participating and adjourned the meeting at 6:05 PM.