

Minutes: Housing / Community Development Subcommittee

April 23, 2018

C. Vernon Gray Conference Room

George Howard Building – Ellicott City, MD

The meeting began at 2:12 p.m.

In attendance: Anne Brinker, Paul Casey, Kim Flowers, Becca Niburg, Cindy Parr, Bruce Rothschild, and Coleen West. Also attending, Jeff Meyers, Council staff.

Don Pontious, Housing Policy Coordinator, Baltimore Metropolitan Council and Tim May, volunteer with the Columbia Housing Center, briefed the subcommittee on fair housing issues and the status and plans of the Columbia Housing Center. The Columbia Housing Center intends to be a referral and marketing center for rental housing for Columbia and beyond. The goal of the marketing will be to preserve and enhance residential integration for all socio-economic levels, so that all neighborhoods are attractive and welcoming to diverse ethnic, racial, social, and religious groups. The organizers are concerned that the Rouse vision of integrated neighborhoods may be slipping away. To be successful, the Columbia Housing Center seeks to incorporate best practices pioneered by Oak Park in Chicago. Currently, the Center is seeking financing and reaching out to village leaders and rental housing owners to encourage participation.

Mr. Pontious indicated that the degree of integration in Columbia is unusual in the region.

Subcommittee members sought additional data that Mr. Pontious will provide, He also recommended as a resource Jane Dembner, Director of Planning and Community Affairs for the Columbia Association. The Baltimore Metropolitan Council is working to ensure that affordable housing rules are not inconsistent across the region. The Baltimore Metropolitan Council is also addressing some related impediments that may lead to segregation, such as transportation issues. The subcommittee discussed some related endeavors by other organizations such as the Autism Society and Vehicles For Change.

The subcommittee discussed the key agenda items and presenters for the next several meetings.

Tentatively:

- May 7 – housing and the aging population
- May 21 – a speaker on environmental issues
- June 4 – immigration issues

The subcommittee asked staff to poll members to set additional meeting dates. Also, future meetings will be set for 90 minutes.

The meeting ended at 3:48 p.m.

