

Howard County Economic Opportunity and Prosperity Task Force

Minutes (Approved)

April 9, 2018

C. Vernon Gray Room
1st Floor, George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043

Members in attendance: Ali Abidi, Marianne Hyang Brackney, Anne Brinker, Paul Casey, Ana Cisneros, Kimberly Flowers, Maddy Halbach, Phyllis Madachy, Leonardo McClarty, Elizabeth Noble, Jaykant Parekh, and Lawrence Twele. Additionally, Peter O'Neil and Kathy Norton from subcommittees also attended.

Staff in attendance: Jim Meyd, County Auditor's Office, Jeff Meyers, County Council office, John Gwynn, Office of Law, and Jessie Keller, Council Member Weinstein's office.

The audio recording of the meeting is available on the Task Force website¹.

Chairperson McClarty called the meeting to order at 4:17 p.m.

Mr. McClarty reported on a recent meeting of the various subcommittee chairs with the Task Force chairs. Some common, overarching themes are emerging that touch each of the subcommittees, for example, transportation. There are also specific issues relevant to the individual subcommittees. Ms. Madachy encouraged subcommittees to seek out best practices.

The Economic Development subcommittee lacked a quorum at its last meeting when the subcommittee was briefed by Clive Graham of the County's Office of Transportation. The subcommittee also discussed the value of a local preference system as part of County purchasing and the lack of a compliance system for the use of minority contractors in the development of downtown Columbia.

The Education and Workforce Development subcommittee sees a recurring theme described as a lifelong educational journey from age 2 to age 100. The subcommittee is studying apprenticeships, early childhood education, and developing soft skills in future workers. Many of the pieces are here in the County but are not connected. Ms. Madachy noted that Association of Community Services has shared a report about the economic impact of the high cost of child care, which is posted to the Task Force website. Mr. McClarty noted that a recent Washington Post article about the suburbanization of poverty had also been distributed.

¹ <http://cc.howardcountymd.gov/EOPTaskForce>

The Housing and Community Development subcommittee has met several times and has been briefed by the ARC of Howard County, the Arts Council, and the Autism Society. The subcommittee sees common themes of housing affordability, transportation, and integration of special populations.

The minutes from February 12, 2018, and March 12, 2018, were approved.

Jeffrey P. Bronow, Chief, Division of Research, Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning, briefed the Task Force about demographic, housing, and land use. The Department considers Howard County to be approximately 80% built out, with about 26,000 more dwellings being developed at a rate of 1,500 to 1,700 a year until full build out. The majority of the to be built units will be apartments or attached units. The County has a diverse mix of housing types, largely due to the way Columbia has been and is being built. The County has done a good job at preserving open space and at accommodating diversity. There is significant in-migration and a good deal of mobility with many new residents coming from other countries, particularly when compared with other counties in the State. A growing proportion of County residents work in the County compared with the past. Mr. Bronow described the County's approach to requiring affordable housing and the special requirements for downtown. He noted that the Department is embarking on a study of the impact of the recent revisions to the County's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO), which could result on a moratorium on construction for 4 years beginning in July 2019. Mr. Bronow's presentation is posted on the Task Force web site.

The meeting adjourned at 5:22 p.m. and members were given a short break before the Task Force's public hearing, which has a separate minutes document.