



Howard County Council

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General Plan Work Session #6 Minutes – Approved

Hybrid Meeting (Virtual and In-Person Meeting)

Video Streamed on <https://cc.howardcountymd.gov/watch-us>

Wednesday, July 26, 2023

7:00 p.m.

Chair Rigby opened the meeting at 7:09.

Councilmembers present: Chair Christiana Rigby, Vice-chair Deb Jung; and David Yungmann

Staff Present:

Michelle Harrod, Council Administrator; Isaiah Anderson, Executive Assistant; Theo Wimberly, Administrative Manager; Lynne Blume Rosen, Legislative Analyst; Craig Glendenning, County Auditor; Owen Clark, Deputy County Auditor; Lori Buchman, Fiscal Manager II, Gary Kuc, County Solicitor; and Amanda Mihill, Assistant County Solicitor.

Agenda

1. Chapter 6: Dynamic Neighborhoods

The Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) HoCoByDesign (HCBD) Core Team presented an overview of the HoCo By Design General Plan Update Chapter 6: Dynamic Neighborhoods, that included the topics of diversifying housing typologies permitted in the County, expanding locations and opportunity areas for more diverse housing choices, housing for a growing older adult population, enhancing existing neighborhoods, and meeting the needs of the unhoused.

The HCBD Core Team reviewed the feedback it received from the community that included a growing need for a variety of housing types attainable to a diversity of incomes levels for both rental and homeownership; interest in redevelopment and missing middle housing choices; maintenance of rural character in the West with more affordable housing opportunities; design that is sensitive to neighborhood character, context, and natural environment; sustainable building practices and open space; housing connected to amenities, public facilities, and employment; new housing impact on County infrastructure; and housing choices for older adults.

The HCBD Core Team reviewed the data and findings of the Housing Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), the Housing Opportunity Master Plan (HOMP), and the RCLCO Market Overview & Background Research: Housing Opportunities Master Plan.

Additional subjects reviewed by the HCBD Core Team included: review of the policies and actions recommended in Chapter 6; the definition of missing middle housing; the definition of Accessory Dwelling Units; inclusionary zoning; the need to diversify the housing typologies permitted in the County; and the use of moderate-income housing units to increase the supply of affordable housing.

Council member Q&A

The HCBD Core Team responded to questions from the Council. Topics discussed included: ADUs; the methods used by the HCBD Core Team to receive community feedback; and the formation of the Strategic Housing Group for additional input.

Bruce Harvey, Jason VanKirk, and Joseph Rutter responded to questions from the Council. Topics discussed included: the types of housing that developers and builders are building in the County; the impediments to building affordable housing; the shortage of housing inventory; the cost of land and construction; compliance with environmental laws; opportunities in the County to build missing middle housing; the impact of forest conservation regulations, school surcharge fees, APFO regulations, and stormwater management fees on the supply of housing; and commuting patterns in and out of the County.

Mr. Ross responded to questions from the Council concerning the RCLCO Market Overview & Background Research: Housing Opportunities Master Plan. Topics discussed included: allowing for greater quantity and diversity of housing; co-locating housing on County land; the effect of shrinking household sizes due to declining marriage and birth rates and other factors; increasing demand for apartments, condominiums, and townhomes; the need for more housing across all housing types and income bands; the impact of the small size and geography of the County, the lack of developable land, and the amount of land without public water and sewer; and changes in housing affordability trends since the Pandemic.

The HCBD Core Team responded to additional questions from the Council regarding if the Design Team looked at socioeconomic data within census tracts when it identified redevelopment areas. The HCBD team responded it did not use social economic data when it identified areas for redevelopment. The team modeled growth looking at growth potential for all types of housing, not just low- and middle-income housing.

Ms. Cimino responded to questions from the Council. Topics discussed included the Housing Trust Fund and the Council's lack of oversight of the Fund; possible options for the Council to have more oversight of housing projects; sources of gap funding for housing projects, including the Housing Trust Fund and MIHUs; and regional approaches to affordable housing solutions.

The HCBD Core Team responded to additional questions from the Council. Topics discussed included ADUs as a right in the General Plan; use of incentives to encourage the building of housing for the missing middle, e.g., tax incentives, smaller lot sizes, streamlined site development approval process, and APFO exceptions; percentage of total housing for ADUs;

and the application of stormwater management fees to ADUs. Mr. Edmondson also responded to Council questions concerning stormwater management.

Chair Rigby adjourned the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

General Plan
Work Session 6 Agenda – Participants

HCBD Core Team

Lynda Eisenberg

Brian Shepter

Jessica Bellah

Mary Kendall

Kristin O'Connor

Kate Bolinger

Sarah Latimer

Matt Noonkester

DHCD – Kelly Cimino

Health – Mike Davis

RCLCO – Jake Ross

DPZ - Chad Edmondson

Bruce Harvey - BruceHarvey@williamsburgllc.com

Jason VanKirk - jvankirk@elmstreetdev.com

Joseph Rutter - jrutter_1@live.com