

FEBRUARY 2017 MINUTES

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

February 9, 2017

Gateway Building, Third Floor, Housing Conference Room

HCDB Members Present

Caroline Harper, *Chairperson*
Maurice Zeitler, *Vice Chairperson*
Nancy Smith
Linda Skelton

HCDB Members Absent

Mitra Basu
Ike Okoye
David Vane

Staff Present

Kelly Cimino, Director
Quanita Kareem, Compliance Officer
Debbie Gillen, Homeownership Specialist
Nkechi M. Animashaun, HOME Program Specialist

Staff Absent/Excused

Guests/Visitors

Devin Wood, Journalism Student, UMUC

Recording Secretary

Debbie Gillen

I. CALL TO ORDER - 6:10 P.M.

With a quorum present, the February 9, 2017 meeting of the Department of Housing and Community Development Board was called to order at 6:10 PM. by Chairperson Caroline Harper.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was approved as submitted.

III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS & COMMENTS

Devon Woods attended for a class assignment.

IV. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER MINUTES

The December 2016 Minutes were emailed and mailed to all Board Members for review and comments. Following a brief review of the Minutes, Chairperson Harper entertained a motion to approve the Minutes. Motion to approve passed 4-0.

V. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The November & December 2016 Director's Reports were mailed to Board Members prior to the meeting. The January 2017 Director's Report will be mailed after the meeting. Some Highlights: The SDLP Program has approved almost \$1 million in deferred loans since July 1, 2016. The MIHU fee in lieu funds were used to provide some of the SDLP loans during that time. SDLP loans are available to MIHU and non-MIHU first time homebuyers. The Community Planning and Grants Division are reviewing applications from non-profits for CDBG and HOME funds in the FFY17 action plan. Recommendations will be made to the director by Feb. 10, 2017. If approved, funding will be available for eligible activities in July 2017. The Leola Dorsey Building & Day Resource Center for the homeless should be finished in June, 2017 and able to start serving the homeless population. The Director attended an event (Renew, Rehab, Replace) sponsored by the Village of Oakland Mills Board on Jan, 10, 2017, at The Other Barn. Despite the snowy weather, the event was well attended.

VI. MIHU REPORT

Lisa Wiseman will be taking over the MIHU reporting. Lisa said the number of MIHU for sale units has increased dramatically this year. For the month of January, 70 new applications were received. Two MIHU workshops were held in January and more than 50 applicants were in attendance. Ryan Homes recently began construction on a new development in Laurel called Foxwood Manor. The homes will be a smaller Hepburn model with 2 bedrooms on the top level. This will allow us to offer homeownership opportunities to some of the 1 and 2-person families in our database.

VII. ACTION ITEM: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Caroline Harper, Chairperson and Maurice Zeitler, Vice Chairperson were nominated and agreed to continue in their positions for 2017.

VIII. ACTION ITEM: ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE FOR HOWARD SQUARE APARTMENTS

Pursuant to Section 13.402(e) of the Moderate Income Housing Unit Law, this is to request the Board's recommendation concerning a proposal from Atapco Howard Square I Business Trust for optional compliance for rental units in Phase VIII of the Howard Square development on Route 1 in Elkridge. The Developer is requesting that up to 26 MIHUs be transferred from the Howard Square development to a piece of land to be purchased and then donated to the Howard County Housing Commission for the future development of affordable rental housing units.

Staff recommends approval of the request. The transfer of up to 26 MIHUs from Phase VIII of the Development to a new land development site will allow the County to develop more affordable rental housing units in the near future, while still requiring the developer to provide a significant percentage of MIHUs on-site in compliance with MIHU regulations. Depending upon the land characteristics and zoning, the off-site MIHUs may be either apartments or townhomes, or a combination of both. The number of off-site MIHUs will therefore be determined when the site is selected and the unit types are determined. The Department's MIHU program staff will work closely with Commission development staff to select a suitable site that provides a greater geographic distribution of MIHUs.

Chairperson Harper stated that we have people that work for the county, but cannot afford to live in the county, and rentals can be an incentive for them to stay here in the county. Director Cimino said homeownership may not always be the way to start living in the county. Vice Chairperson Zeitzer raised the question about the percentage of on-site MIHUs in the last phase. Director Cimino stated that the percentage on-site will be at least 15%. A motion was made to allow the Director to move forward with discussions for Alternative Compliance Option. The motion passed 4-0.

IX. DISCUSSION: NEW COUNTY REHABILITATION LOAN PROGRAM

Director Cimino introduced Nkechi Animashaun from the Community Planning and Grants Division to explain about our new rehabilitation program that has yet to be named. This program will be a good complement to the RENEW Howard program which could attract new home buyers to the county. This rehabilitation program will serve existing homeowners in the county. It is available to county homeowners earning up to 80% Howard County Area Median Income. The eligible property owners must occupy the residence as their principal residence and be current on their mortgage. The homeowner is required to occupy the house for 5 years after completion of the work. If not then a penalty of 10 % of the rehabilitation cost will be added to the principal loan amount.

This loan will allow existing homeowners to bring their properties up to county code, correct major deficiencies, and make aging in place modifications. Loans are available up to \$45,000. Applicants will fill out a pre-application for any type of rehabilitation project and staff will find the best loan or grant to complete the homeowner's request.

X. UPDATE ON RENEW HOWARD PROGRAM

RENEW Howard is a program designed to support neighborhood revitalization. The program will encourage sellers and buyers to update older homes and revitalize neighborhoods at the same time. The County approved \$2 million in the FY17 budget as a loan guarantee fund for banks to provide mortgages to buyers to purchase and renovate homes that meet program guidelines. The notice of funding availability to find a non-profit

to hold the loan guarantee fund and manage the program was issued on December 8, 2016. The application deadline was January 19, 2017. There are about 7,000 homes in the County that meet the general criteria for the program. A handout was provided to Board members at the meeting, including a map on Exhibit A, that shows (A) single family detached or single family attached units, (B) built before 1980 and (C) have current assessed value of \$325,000 or less. The Board was asked to review the proposed program parameters and provide feedback at the next meeting.

XI. DISCUSSION- AFFORDABLE HOUSING ADVOCATES MEETINGS

The affordable housing advocates met monthly from 2007-2015. The meetings changed to quarterly in 2016. The advocates will be invited to future Housing and Community Development Board meetings to discuss issues related to self-sufficiency, homelessness, and affordable housing.

XII. MEMBER COMMENTS

There was a discussion regarding the lack of affordable housing for ex-offenders being released from the County's detention center. The County has funds in the FY17 budget for Special Population Housing. We recognize that they are a tough population to house. The County provided funds to the Housing Commission to purchase a townhouse on Guilford Road near Monarch Mills. Once the renovations are complete, the property can house 4-5 male ex-offenders. The unit is in an older community with good access to bus transportation. The Department will continue to pursue opportunities to house this special population. Last year, the County provided funds for the Commission to purchase a property in Jessup. It had 3 dilapidated buildings on it. The Commission plans to subdivide the property into 3 lots and construct 3 affordable housing units. One could be rented to the Department of Corrections and two could be rented as low income units. The Department will work with the Housing Commission to monitor the progress of this project.

X. ADJOURNMENT

The February 9, 2017 monthly meeting of the Housing and Community Development Board adjourned at 6:45P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie Gillen
Recording Secretary

Next Meeting:
Housing and Community Development Board
March 9, 2017