

# December 2015 MINUTES

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## HOWARD COUNTY HOUSING COMMISSION

December 15, 2015

Gateway Building, 6751 Columbia Gateway Dr., 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Board Room, Columbia, MD

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### HCHC Members Present

Carole R. MacPhee, *Chairperson*  
Regina Stone-Mitchell, *Vice Chair*  
Donzella Curtis  
Ian Kennedy  
Christopher W. Oxenham  
Maurice M. Simpkins

### HCHC Members Absent/Excused

Stacy L. Spann

### Staff Present

Thomas P. Carbo, *Executive Director*  
Ada D. Best, *Chief Financial Officer*  
Samuel P. Tucker, *Chief of Rental Assistance Programs*  
Quanita Tubman, *Chief, Contracts Mgmt. & Tech Svc*  
Famebridge Witherspoon, *Community Relations Specialist*  
Lisa O'Brien, *Sr. Assistant County Solicitor*  
Constance A. Tucker, *Sr. Assistant County Solicitor*

### Guest/Visitors Present

Trish Schupple

### Recording Secretary

Kukia Burroughs

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#### **I. CALL TO ORDER 6:00 P.M.**

The meeting of the Howard County Housing Commission was held on Tuesday, December 15, 2015, at the Gateway Office of the Housing Department. This meeting was called to order at 6:09 P.M, by Chairperson Carole R. MacPhee. A quorum was present to conduct business.

#### **II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was made by Commissioner Curtis and seconded by Commissioner Kennedy to approve the *December Agenda* as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **III. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 29 & OCTOBER 2015 MINUTES**

The minutes of the September 29 and October (Joint) meetings were previously mailed and electronically sent to Commissioners for their review and comment. A motion was made by Commissioner Curtis and seconded by Commissioner Kennedy to approve both the September 29 and October Minutes as submitted. The motion passed 6-0.

#### **IV. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Trish Schupple, from the Howard County Department of Corrections, was present to discuss a property acquisition matter.

#### **V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Director's Report and the MIHU Report were included in the packet previously mailed to Commissioners. The Executive Director was available to answer any questions on the reports. The Director's Report and more information can be found on the County's website located under the Housing and Community Development's banner at [www.howardcountymd.gov](http://www.howardcountymd.gov).

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**VI. HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM COORDINATOR'S REPORT**

Samuel P. Tucker, Chief of Rental Assistance Programs, was present to discuss the Housing Choice Voucher Coordinator's Report. The current utilization rate is at 99.13%, with Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) totaling \$832,288 for the month of December. Also, the Single Efficient Apartments (SEA) should be coming on board in 2016.

**VII. ACTION ITEM: ORCHARD CROSSING APARTEMENTS--GROUND LEASE EXTENSION**

Orchard Crossing Apartments, a 187-unit mixed-income community, was developed in 1994 as one of the first mixed-income projects in the Country. A portion of the property is covered by a ground lease with the Housing Commission. Orchard Development Corporation is looking to refinance with a HUD insured loan which requires that the ground lease must extend for at least 50 years from the closing of the new loan. The current ground lease which expires in 2039 would need to be extended to 2066. This would increase the Commission's annual payments.

A motion to approve the Orchard Crossing Apartments—Ground Lease Extension subject to the proposed refinancing with HUD was made by Commissioner Oxenham and seconded by Commissioner Stone-Mitchell. The motion passed.

**VIII. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM: LOCAL BUSINESS INITIATIVE**

The Howard County Local Business Initiative was created to promote the growth and success of local businesses and to increase the percentage of County procurement dollars flowing to local businesses. Under the Local Business Initiative, County Departments and agencies are encouraged to select local businesses when purchasing goods or services. The Office of Purchasing shall strongly encourage local businesses to participate in all procurement solicited by the County. The Office of Purchasing shall process a Certification Application submitted to the Office by a local business as part of the Local Business Initiative.

**IX. CLOSED SESSION: PROPERTY ACQUISITION MATTERS**

Each member voted individually to take the Howard County Housing Commission into a closed session at 6:15 P.M., to discuss a property acquisition matter for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto. A motion was made by Commissioner Stone-Mitchell and seconded by Commissioner Curtis. The motion passed.

The Howard County Housing Commission meeting reconvened at 6:50 P.M., following a roll call of each member. A motion was made by Commissioner Oxenham and seconded by Commissioner Kennedy to take the meeting out of closed session. The motion passed. It was the consensus of the Commissioners to authorize the Director to move forward with the proposed actions.

**X. UPDATE: PROPOSED CHANGES TO HUD FAIR MARKET RENTS**

The Executive Director updated Commissioners on the proposed changes to HUD's Fair Market Rents (FMR) that would potentially effect the Housing Choice Voucher program by reducing the monthly amount of subsidy available to voucher holders substantially. HUD believes their solution will allow Housing Choice Voucher users throughout the Baltimore metropolitan area to maintain the levels of housing assistance currently provided by removing the special FMR. For the Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD MSA, HUD has reviewed the criteria and will restore 50<sup>th</sup> percentile FMRs as prescribed in HUD's current regulations. However, given that Columbia City has essentially operated at a minimum of 120 percent of the Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD MSA's FMR for the last 10 years, HUD has determined that there is good cause to waive, and will waive 24 CFR if the Housing Commission chooses to request exception payment standards above 120 percent and up to 132 percent of Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD FMR for Columbia City, MD. This will ensure that voucher holders in Columbia City retain the elevated payment standards needed to afford rental housing in the community.

**XI. UPDATE: DOWNTOWN AFFORDABLE HOUSING LEGISLATION**

The Executive Director continues working with the Columbia Downtown Housing Corporation and the Howard Hughes Corporation to develop a proposal that ensures a full spectrum of affordable housing is included in the redevelopment of downtown Columbia. Changes have been made that will increase the amount of lower income units. There will be a meeting held on December 16, 2015, to finalize the draft of proposed legislative changes to the Joint Recommendations being considered as part of the legislative package. It is anticipated this package will be completed and filed as a petition to the Planning Board first, then presented to the County Council for approval.

**XII. UPDATE: REORGANIZATION**

County Executive Kittleman will be submitting his recommendations to the County Council on December 20, 2015. On November 4, 2015, the County Executive's Joint Task Force on the Reorganization of the Departments of Citizen Services and Housing and Community Development issued its final recommendations that the Housing Commission be separated from the Department of Housing by facilitating the Commission's hiring of its own staff. It is believed that these changes will provide improved services to the community through greater efficiency and effectiveness of County government. The County Executive suggested two recommendations (1) that there should be a name change for the Commission and (2) moving to a new location. The Commission is still recommending that current employees move to become Commission staff and remain in the County's pension system and health insurance programs.

**XIII. MEMBER COMMENTS**

Members inquired about a letter they received from the Oakland Mills Community Association addressed to the County Executive, referencing the house on Commitment Court. This property

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was purchased by the Commission and has been undergoing renovations. The letter included a working list of issues and that the project is taking too long to complete. Staff has been working diligently in completing the project by January and expects to have updates at the January meeting.

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Commissioner Oxenham and seconded by Commissioner Curtis to adjourn the December Meeting of the Howard County Housing Commission. The meeting adjourned at 7:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Kukia Burroughs  
Recording Secretary

**Upcoming Meetings:**  
**HCHC – Tuesday, January 19, 2016**