

# SEPTEMBER 2015 MINUTES

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## HOWARD COUNTY HOUSING COMMISSION

September 29, 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 D. Stone-Mitchell, *Vice Chair*  
Donzella Curtis  
Ian Kennedy  
Christopher W. Oxenham  
Maurice M. Simpkins  
Stacy L. Spann

### HCHC Members Absent/Excused

### Guests/Visitors Present

N/A

### Staff Present

Thomas P. Carbo, *Executive Director*  
Shirelle M. Bennett, *Deputy Director*  
Kukia Burroughs, *Administrative Support Tech*  
Linda Phillips, *SDLP Coordinator*  
Quanita K. Tubman, *Chief, Contracts Mgmt. & Tech Svc*  
Samuel P. Tucker, *Chief, Rental Assistance Programs*  
Famebridge Witherspoon, *Community Relations Specialist*  
Lisa O'Brien, *Sr. Assistant County Solicitor*  
Constance A. Tucker, *Sr. Assistant County Solicitor*

### Recording Secretary

Judith C. Davis

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## **I. CALL TO ORDER - 6:30 P.M.**

The special meeting of the Howard County Housing Commission was held on Tuesday, September 29, 2015, at the Gateway office of the Housing Department. This meeting was called to order at 6:39 P.M., by Chairperson Carole R. MacPhee. A quorum was present to conduct business.

## **II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A motion was entertained by Commissioner Curtis and seconded by Commissioner Kennedy to approve the September 29, 2015 Agenda as amended. Action Item VI., "New Colony Village Property" was moved up to Agenda Item IV. The motion passed 7-0.

## **III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

There were no visitors present at this meeting.

## **IV. DISCUSSION ITEM: PROPOSED CHANGES TO HUD FAIR MARKET RENTS**

HUD proposed new Fair Market Rents (FMRs) for FFY16 that would significantly reduce the maximum FMRs allowed to Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) recipients in the Baltimore metropolitan area. HUD retracted the MSAs 50<sup>th</sup> percentile designation and eliminated the Columbia FMR subarea. The impact of these changes would reduce the maximum monthly

subsidy available to HCV recipients in Columbia by approximately 25 percent. About 90 percent of families in Howard County currently using rental assistance based on HUD's FMRs would experience an increase in their tenant rent with about 60 percent experiencing a monthly tenant rent increase of more than \$300. Many HCV recipients would be priced out of, or forced to move into lower rent, less desirable or aging communities with fewer services and amenities. This result is contrary to Howard County's and HUD's goal of providing diverse, integrated communities and affirmatively furthering fair housing.

Staff is working with Dan Pontious of Baltimore Metropolitan Council who is collecting data and looking into the issue of why the Baltimore area went from 50 to 40 percent and any options such as convincing HUD to reinstate the Columbia subarea. There is a provision called exception payment standards that will ensure voucher holders in Columbia retain the elevated payment standards needed to afford rental housing. Another option to consider is small area FMRs which would set market rents at the zip code level. Staff plans to meet with HUD later this week. The Executive Director suggested Commissioner's draft comments reference FMRs and send to HUD.

**V. ACTION ITEM: RESOLUTION—RIVERWATCH GROUND LEASE**

The Executive Director updated members on the Riverwatch project, located on the river at 5673 Furnace Avenue, in Elkridge, Maryland, to be leased to KB Companies, Inc., for the purpose of developing the first mixed income rental townhouse community consisting of 84-units (42 transferred to MIHU) developed by a private developer. The Development will consist of a mix of two- and three-bedrooms to be known as "Riverwatch." The Commission acquired the property by deed on February 2015 and will ground lease its interest in the property to the Development's ownership entity. This project that was in the planning stage several years ago is near closing.

Resolution HCHC No. 09-04-15 "Approval of Ground Lease for Riverwatch Development," authorizes the Executive Director to execute and deliver the Ground Lease on behalf of the Commission, with such changes or additions as are approved by the Executive Director, acting singly to negotiate such terms and conditions for the ground lease of the Property and DHCD financing of the Development.

A motion was entertained by Commissioner Kennedy and seconded by Commissioner Simpkins to approve Resolution HCHC No. 09-04-15 "Approval of Ground Lease for Riverwatch Development." The motion passed 7-0.

**VI. ACTION ITEM: NEW COLONY VILLAGE PROPERTY—REDEMPTION OF LAND LEASE**

The Commission purchased 13 lots in the New Colony Village community in Elkridge that were sold as affordable housing to income-eligible households. Ownership of the land was retained by the Commission until homeowners were able to purchase the land from the

Commission. The owners of subject property began paying ground rent from 2005 to 2007. Accounting records show that the Commission paid \$20,529 in HOA dues, facility charges and taxes from July 2009 to July 2015. The homeowners would like to refinance their home which would allow them to purchase the land from the Commission and reimburse the Commission for all the expenses paid on their behalf. Staff recommends approval of the homeowner's request to pay \$44,209 from the refinance loan proceeds now and allow the homeowners to sign a note for the remaining balance to be paid when they sell or transfer the property at a later date. Linda Phillips was available to answer questions. If the land is sold to the homeowners, the Commission will no longer be responsible for payment of taxes or fees, in accordance to the land lease agreement. The Executive Director is seeking Commissioner's approval for the sale of the lot according to the agreement.

A motion was made by Commissioner Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Oxenham to approve the sale of the lot according to the agreement in the memo that the Commission forgives the balance of \$1,820 in order to complete the transaction. The motion passed.

#### **VII. MEMBER COMMENTS**

Commissioner Kennedy thanked everyone for their efforts and consideration to potentially bid on the Grand Pointe apartment complex located in Oakland Mills. It would have been the best thing for the residents and the community. He hopes whoever purchases it will have vision and commitment to the community. After meeting with several Oakland Mills Village Board members who stated they would not accept any more affordable housing in their community, Executive Director Carbo announced he would not recommend a Housing Commission bid for the Grand Pointe apartment complex in Columbia's Village of Oakland Mills.

The October Joint meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 8, 2015, at the Residences at Ellicott Gardens' apartment community at 6 P.M.

#### **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business presented to Commissioners at this time and upon motion duly made by Commissioner Simpkins and seconded by Commissioner Curtis, the *September 29, 2015*, meeting of the Howard County Housing Commission was adjourned at 7:31 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith C. Davis  
Recording Secretary

***Upcoming Meeting: HCD/HCHC Joint  
Tuesday, October 8, 2015***