

**City of Hyattsville
Race & Equity Task Force
August 23, 2022 7:00 PM
Zoom
Minutes**

PRESENT

Task Force Members:

- Co-Chair Alicia Freemyn (AF)
- Co-Chair Jennifer Gafford (JG)
- Record Keeper Vice Secretary Jocelyn Medallo (JM)
- Member Rodrigo Blanco (RB)
- Member Daniel Vallejos-Avila (DVA)
- Member Daniel Amador (DA)

Council:

- Mayor Robert Croslin
- Councilmember Rommel Sandino

Staff:

- Staff Liaison Jan Guszynski (JG)
- Race & Equity Officer Shakira Louimarre (SL)

Guests:

- Assistant City Administrator and Director of Community & Economic Development Jim Chandler

Meeting called to order at 7:05PM by Co-Chair Alicia Freemyn

- 1. 7:05pm - Welcome & Call to Order** – Co-Chair Freemyn
- 2. 7:05pm - 7:06pm – Roll Call** – Co-Chair Freemyn
- 3. 7:07pm – 7:08pm – Acknowledgement of Meeting Guests** – Liaison Guszynski
- 4. 7:08 pm – 7:09pm – Approve minutes from June 2022 meeting** – DVA moves to approve; RB second; all in favor
- 5. 7:10pm - 8:03pm – Affordable Housing Strategy Presentation** – Presented by Assistant City Administrator and Director of Community & Economic Development Jim Chandler

- Hyattsville Affordable Housing Strategy Presentation available at: [add link to presentation and materials]
- In 2018/2019, the City evaluated opportunities to enable affordable housing. One of the areas advocated by the City was inclusionary zoning – which is a requirement for affordable housing. County Housing Department made concerted efforts to update its housing plan. They engaged group Enterprise Community Partners to advise on opportunities and to leverage what County had articulated through its strategy.
- We are looking at a 10 year period. While one-off projects are important, need to take wider view of implementing affordable housing strategy.

Discussion/Question & Answer

- Member DA: How are we defining affordable housing? This is often the biggest challenge and does that definition work for our city’s demographic and socioeconomic makeup?
 - We kept the term “affordable housing” broad; it is not pegged to AMI. Affordable housing is needed on every part of the spectrum so if there are projects where the underwriting is trying to achieve 60 percent AMI, then how can we help? Is there a funding gap or regulatory issue?
 - Flexibility but monthly rent versus median salary may make it not affordable. What other targets are there to ensure that affordability is kept for the most vulnerable?
- Mayor Croslin: We are doing the best we can to provide affordable housing but there is always going to be a need and are we going to be able to keep up with that need? The price of everything will continue to rise.

- Member DVA: What is AMI?
 - Average median income – this is a term used to determine eligibility for housing units; changes by region and by city
- Member DA: Land trusts have been one tool used, for example in city of Pittsburg. Was that part of the conversation and what would that look like? Second, vacant lots and buildings – in the discussions has that been considered in terms of taking stock of inactive parcels of land? We need to be thinking 5-10 years down the road.
 - Land trust was discussed and it is in the mix of tools. But limited. There are few opportunities for vacancy. City has discussed many times a vacancy tax but it is a disincentive for reinvestment.
- Mayor Croslin: The prices of homes in Hyattsville are skyrocketing and pricing people out.
- Member DVA: Looking at the affordability tools, our discussion went to renters. Do those tools also include purchasing homes?
- Co-Chair Freemyn: How is the city holding developer accountability for ensuring there is affordability? What is the affordable housing need in numbers? What are next steps?
 - City does not have zoning power; that falls under purview of the County.
 - We don't have updated data. We tend to look at a region. Next step requires legislative action. The four points that were adopted will be put in motion.

6. 8:03pm -8:15 pm – Administrative Updates – Liaison Guszynski

- Saturday, October 1st – official dedication event and ribbon-cutting event for Driskell Community Park

- Race & Equity Officer SL: Age Friendly Working Group Liaison has asked if RETF would be interested in coordinating on emergency preparedness outreach in September. Age Friendly Working Group will meet this Friday. Another option is to invite for the September RETF meeting.

- There is a section of our plan that deals with aging and people with disabilities.

7. 8:15 pm – 8:31 pm – Community Engagement and Transportation Plan Section

Reassignment – Co-Chair Gafford

- Section was previously assigned to LaToya, who is no longer with the RETF.

Transportation was already presented by former Chair Clarke.

- Community Engagement in October
- Jobs in November

- Propose we do full cycle of topics with Shakira on board

8. 8:31pm – 8:32pm – Open Discussion/Community Comments – Co-Chair Freemyn

- None

9. 8:33pm -- Adjourn Meeting – Co-Chair Freemyn

- DVA Motion to Adjourn; RB second