

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH)

Housing Solutions Committee Meeting Summary

Date: Monday, April 19, 2021

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Conference Call

Meeting Participants:

Director Polly Donaldson, DHCD, Co-chair	Jillian Fox, CSH
Shellon Fraser, CSH, Co-chair	Julia Moran Morton, SOME
Kristy Greenwalt, CH	Kate Coventry DCFPI
Lindsay Curtin, ICH	Kimberly Waller, ICH
Aaron Ford, ICH	Lynn Amano, Miriam's Kitchen
Waldon Adams, Pathways to Housing	Mary Ann Floto, United Way
Adam Maier, Pathways to Housing	Melissa Millar, Community of Hope
Amber Harding, Legal Clinic	Nechama Masliansky, SOME
Baron Bell, Consultant	Raessa Singh, DHS
Bridgette Ashton, DHCD	Rebecca Kellett, HER Resiliency Center
Bruce Finland, MED Developers	Richard Livingstone, DHCD
Carmen Hernandez, DHS	Robert Warren, People for Fairness
Christian Howard, DHS	Rachel Reintelmann, Legal Aid
Christy Respress, Pathways to Housing	Sarah Malala, Jaydot
Clarence Steward, TCP	Scott Bruton, CNHED
Dallas Williams, DHS	Sara Cartmill, Community of Hope
Danilo Pelletiere, DHCD	Sarra Mohamed, WC Smith
Dexter Price, TCP	Reginald Black, People for Fairness
Emily Near, Legal Aid	Abby Sypek, Everyone Home DC
Erin Wilson, DHCD	Kris Sutton, DHS
Holly Dennison-Chase, LIIF	Tracy Cecil, Dantes Partners
Hammere Gebreyes, DCHA	Wes Heppler, Legal Clinic
June Crenshaw, Wanda Alston Foundation	Ishan Heru, Community Connections
	Chapman Todd, Jaydot

Agenda:

1. Development Process: Special Projects Team Report
2. Federal Fund Review: DHS/DHCD
 - a. STAY DC Guidelines and Website
 - b. HOME Funding
3. Lease-up Process

Meeting Summary:

- Development Process: Special Projects Team Report
 - Powerpoint Presentation is included as an attachment (the content is not repeated below)
 - Discussion –
 - i. Goal was to map Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) development process to identify potential ways to accelerate the timeline for development projects
 - ii. Held focus groups with for-profit and non-profit developers to identify issues and brainstorm possible solutions; participants noted that for the most part, the time pressures are the same for all affordable projects, whether including PSH or not
 - iii. DC's Comprehensive Plan has prompted conversations around revisiting zoning requirements
 - iv. DHCD, DHS, and other agencies feel optimistic about 5% PSH minimum for HPTF funds and possible future 20% incentives
 - v. Question of how the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA, one of main protections for affordable housing) will be strengthened; plan is to ensure there are enough tenant resources available, possibility of increased federal funding that will help prevent displacement
 - vi. Recommendations will be shared with DC agencies (including the Office on Racial Equity) to see how possible solutions can be streamlined further, as well as ensuring affordable housing conversations are geographically equitable and diverse
- Federal Fund Review: DHS/DHCD
 - District received \$350M to assist households unable to pay rent and utilities due to COVID-19 pandemic
 - STAY DC Guidelines and Website: visit <https://stay.dc.gov/> for comprehensive overview
 - Assistance can be provided for 12 months, though an additional 3 months can be provided to ensure housing stability
 - Payments made to landlords or utility companies on behalf of renters but can go to renters if landlords are unresponsive after certain time frame
 - Landlords can apply, but need tenants to sign
 - Eligibility: one individual of a household qualified for unemployment benefits or can attest in writing that they have experienced a reduction in household income, incurred significant costs, or other financial hardship due directly or indirectly to the pandemic; must demonstrate risk of experiencing homelessness or housing instability; no restriction on those who have housing subsidies or those who are undocumented
 - Documentation includes proof of identity, income, rent, need, and eligibility; can also use self-attestation in some cases
 - Federal prioritization of households below 50% AMI or more than 90 days unemployment

- New program administered by DHS and DHCD; contracted w/ Deloitte for application system / website
 - Outreach efforts led by DMPED and DHCD, and include website, media campaign, grassroots outreach
- HOME Funding
 - \$19M in budget for acquisition and development of properties, authorized acquisition of hotels to redevelop into PSH, services funding that can go into it as well
 - DHCD awaiting final guidance from relevant HUD office administering the funds, will then be preparing plan with guidance from DMPED, DHS, and Office of Planning for best use of these funds, will be followed by public comment opportunity
- Lease-up Process
 - Since March 2020, 225 clients have exited PEP-V with PSH / Targeted Affordable Housing (TAH) voucher
 - 167 PEP-V clients matched to PSH /TAH and are in lease up process: of these, 76 people searching for a unit
 - People are selecting units and leasing up each day; in last week, 8 people scheduled for lease up
 - DHS, DCHA, and DMHHS identified lessons learned and recommended changes that should speed up the lease up process for all PSH / TAH clients
 - Creation of a data dashboard to track voucher process provided broad visibility into the work for leadership and other partners to support through path clearing and resources
 - Voucher process can allow for several steps to occur simultaneously with reduces overall time to lease up
 - Weekly meetings with staff from DCHA and DHS allowed for real time trouble shooting; bi-weekly case conferencing with PSH providers allowed for real time trouble-shooting
 - Officially partnering with other agencies supported critical sections of voucher process
- Announcements
 - Shellon will be on maternity leave for next few months
 - Kristy stepping down as director effective June 4

Next scheduled meeting: TBD