BMC Housing Committee Notes – COVID-19 Info Sharing
April 2, 2020

People attending via GoToMeeting: Erin Karpewicz (ACDS), Amy Wilkinson, Angela Cameron, & Jan Goslee (HABC), Marsha Parham-Green & David Skinner (Baltimore County), Lanita Hillen (HCAAC), Peter Engel (HCHC), Barbara Richardson (Harford County), Steve Janes (Baltimore City), Adria Crutchfield & Pete Cimbolic (BRHP), Chelsea Hayman (MDOD), Tiwanda Moore (Md. DHCD), Jessie Keller (MMHA), Greg Countess & Gabriel Garcia (Legal Aid), Miranda Darden-Willems (MAHC), Barbara Samuels (ACLU), Kathy Ebner (Homes for America), Carolyn Johnson (HPRP), Lisa Cooper (JHU), David Prater & Randi Ames (Disability Rights Md.), Chuck Martin (M&T Bank), Dan Pontious, Mike Kelly, & Blake Fisher (BMC).

Info Sharing re: Property Management Policies/Practices

- Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition (MAHC)
  - COVID-19 page, including Property Management Committee notes at: https://www.mdahc.org/COVID-19
  - Property Management Committee meeting weekly
  - Urging visitors to sign in
  - Urging residents to only have essential visitors, but not restricting access.
  - Extra cleaning
  - Limited manager time in office/on site; rotating on-site staff.
  - Referring seniors to phone numbers (e.g. Maryland Access Point) for assistance.
  - Have generally been informing local health departments when they hear of positive tests, rather than being notified by local health departments.
  - Also notifying other residents of a positive test without identifying person.
  - Generally keeping laundry facilities open, but with additional cleaning and posts advocating social distancing.
  - Some managers using blue painter’s tape around offices and outdoor smoking areas (marking out six-foot squares) to encourage social distancing.
  - Some managers posting notices urging solo use of elevators.
- Baltimore County Health & Human Services has a hotline and is doing verbal screening of visitors.
- Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) does have 24/7 security, even if managers are not on-site, who can manage access.

COVID-19 Federal Stimulus Package (CARES Act)

- 15% public service cap on CDBG funds lifted for CARES Act
- Hopefully local governments can use in current Program Year (ending June 30) – will have to amend current Annual Plan.
• New Annual Plans (for fiscal year starting July 1) have an extension; now need to be submitted by August 16.
• Md. Multi-Housing Association (MMHA) is interested in discussing ideas for how Maryland can best deploy funding; has suggested it be administered with less red tape & verification than usual.
• MAHC advocating that Md. DHCD deploy a rental assistance program:
  o Easy/little paperwork
  o Allow landlords to apply on behalf of tenants.
• Discussions have begun about this at DHCD (Carol Gilbert).
• ACDS will manage part of the relief funding in-house, sub the rest to partners.
• Harford will likely work mostly through nonprofit partners; PPE for health workers and temporary hospital have been some suggested uses.
• Baltimore City will likely use for tenant assistance.
• Emergency State rental assistance: We discussed a potential request of Secretary Holt – potentially jurisdictions and private stakeholders – requesting an ambitious temporary rental assistance program so tenants can stay current on rent and owners can keep paying their mortgage obligations. Dan will coordinate.
• Nonprofits:
  o Qualify for small business loans to be forgiven if workforce maintained.
  o Reimbursement to be done through a Grants.gov-like portal.
• FEMA will be funding non-congregate shelter requests from local and state public health officials. Should locals make a request that the State act on this?
• CARES Act $150 billion relief fund
  o Aid to states and local governments with populations over 500,000 for COVID-19-related expenses in calendar year 2020.
  o Maryland likely to receive $2.3 billion, with potentially $1 billion of that going to five largest local governments.
• PHA waiver requests to HUD re: voucher program: Adria Crutchfield and Peter Engel have been discussing – how to operate voucher program & continue to issue vouchers under these restrictions?
• Cooperative purchasing of PPE for PHA housing inspectors? Dan will check at BMC.

Next Housing Committee Meeting

• Thursday, April 16, 1:00 pm at https://www.gotomeet.me/DanPontious