



**NEW CASTLE COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES &  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND USE**

**HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

March 17, 2021 @ 6:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

➤ Call to Order

*Meeting was called to order at 6:09 PM*

**Members in attendance:** *Meghann Karasic, Michelle LaMonica, William McCool, Kevin Smith and Renee Spruiel.* **New Castle County employees in attendance:** *Laura Hay, Stephanie Rizzo and James Smith.*

➤ Approval of Minutes

- February 17, 2021

*Renee suggested two changes to the minutes. Kevin made the motion to approve minutes with suggested changes. Monica seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

➤ Chairperson's Report

*Renee advised the Rachel Stucker has been interviewed by County Executive and is moving onto Council for final approval. Recommendations approved at February meeting were forwarded to the Department of Community Services for review and will be forwarded to County Executive. HOMES Campaign will be able to come to April meeting, however, date for meeting would have to be Tuesday or Thursday. Interested in setting up a Landlord Stakeholder meeting.*

➤ HAB Business

- Review/Finalize Subcommittee Recommendation Templates

**Regulatory Barriers Subcommittee**

*Discussed hiring an Affordable Housing Liaison to administer the Landlord Mitigation Fund; conduct outreach efforts to build relationships to create affordable housing; oversee affordable housing initiatives including assisting developers with fast tracking development projects for low- and very low-income residents. The position would be full-time with benefits, estimated cost of \$75,000. Meghann made a motion to recommend New Castle County hire an Affordable Housing Liaison. Kevin Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

*Recommends waiving all impact fees outlined in UDC Article 14 and Sewer Capital Recovery fees for New Castle County for developers of low- and very low-income housing in exchange for an agreement the developer will establish covenants that run with the land to continue affordability for 30 years and accept all sources of income for rental unit developments. Meghann made a motion to approve the recommendation. Kevin Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

*Expanding ST zoning areas to allow for easier process to affordable housing development or create an overlay zoning tract for all zonings where affordable housing developers are waived through the process of approval/steps necessary.*

*Long-term affordability that runs with the land and provides source of income protection. Discussion on affordability period for rentals (30 years) and homeownership (15 years) – agreed to just focus on rentals (30 years). Meghann made the motion to approve. Michelle seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

*Source of Income protection for entire New Castle County, ensuring the landlords cannot discriminate against tenants with vouchers or subsidies. There was much discussion on the issue. Meghann made the motion to table the Source of Income recommendation. Bill McCool seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

#### Tenant Services

*Discussed changes – the agency that would administer the tenant assistance (security deposit/utility deposit) would be determined through the RFP process. It was clarified how the money would be dispersed. Meghann made the motion to approve the recommendation to allocate \$235,000 for tenant services/assistance. Kevin Smith seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

#### Enhancing Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program

*Recommend increasing the program's rent payments from 92% to 100% Fair Market Rent and to designate \$290,000 to the educate landlords and establish a Landlord Mitigation Fund, assisting with tenant caused damages. Evidence of damage and repair before reimbursement. Verified any funds left over would roll back to the Housing Trust Fund. Outreach to landlords and educate them on the funds. Evaluation of the program annually, use monitoring and measuring initiatives with the landlords. Kevin Smith made the motion to approve the recommendation with changes. Meghann Karasic seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.*

#### ➤ Announcements

*No announcements.*

#### ➤ Next Meeting

*Tuesday, April 20<sup>th</sup> @ 6 PM  
HOMES Campaign will present.*

#### ➤ Adjournment

*Michelle LaMonica made the motion to adjourn. Meghann Karasic seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned 7:56 PM.*