



Get Up-to-date!

Lots is happening in Montgomery County, the State, and on Capitol Hill related to affordable housing. Check out our update for more information.

Montgomery County

County Budget. County Executive Ike Leggett released his recommended FY19 Operating Budget March 15th. The County Council will be holding public hearings April 10th through April 12th (sign-up information in the calendar below). Unfortunately, the County Executive is recommending a decline in funding for the Housing Initiative Fund over FY18 allocation of almost \$1.5 million. Given that the housing market is severely short of units affordable to households making below 60% of the area median income, any reduction in funding will continue to place us farther behind in our efforts to ensure all have a place to call home.

Bill 34-17 and 38-17. The Planning Housing and Economic Development (PHED) Committee of the Council continues to work through proposed legislation that would modify the County's Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit Program. Three work sessions were held in March, and more will be held in late April and May. The proposed changes include fees for small developments (in place of unit production), 15% minimums in high-income areas, and utilizing square feet instead of unit count to calculate MPDUs produced. You can view the staff packets (including MHP testimony) by selecting the bill numbers [here](#).

Sector Plans in Process - The Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan is holding its first public hearing on the draft plan April 26th, after multiple community meetings were hosted to gather resident input for the plan. The public is invited to testify about planning recommendations outlined in the plan. The planning recommendations focus on creating a complete streets concept for this section of Veirs Mill, which includes adding bike lanes expanding pedestrian walkways on Veirs Mill and adjacent residential streets, and updated landscaping and streetscaping down the corridor. Transportation improvements include

supporting a Bus Rapid Transit Line down the corridor, reducing speed and lane width where appropriate, and adding other traffic calming features. This Master Plan aligns with many goals from 'Vision Zero,' an international campaign adopted by Montgomery County, to create safer streets and eliminate traffic fatalities through intentional street design and traffic calming measures.

County Elections - Primaries for County elections are on June 26th. This is also the last day to register to vote. Seats up for election include the County Executive, and County Council seats. Seven candidates have registered to run for County Executive, while sixty candidates have registered to run for various at large and district seats for the County Council. Visit the State Board of Elections [page](#) for a full list of all candidates running.

State of Maryland

State Budget - On March 27th the Maryland General Assembly gave final approval for the State's \$44.5 billion budget. Two programs of note are Community Legacy and Rental Housing Works. Community Legacy is a statewide program which provides grants to implement projects aimed at a strengthening a community. While requests for the program typically reached over \$30 million, the program has historically been funded with only \$6 million. We are excited to share that this year Community Legacy received an increase of \$2 million, and is now funded at \$8 million! Additionally, the Rental Housing Works program provides critical gap financing for affordable housing projects throughout the State. Last year the Governor only allocated \$10 million (though the Legislature increased the allocation to \$20 million). This year the Governor proposed \$20 million, and the Legislature concurred. However, the funds have been moved into the operating budget, making it more challenging to increase this line item in the future.

Below is the Status of some of the legislation that we traced this session:

HB109 – PASSED. Community Development Program Act of 2018 - Establishes the Community Development Program and a Community Development Board in the Department of Housing and Community Development, and establishes the Community Development Fund which serves to provide financial assistance for community development projects and community development organizations around the State.

HB303 – NO MOVEMENT. This bill would have expanded the available tax credits in the Community Investment Tax Credit Program.

HB418 – PASSED THE HOUSE, GOT STUCK IN SENATE. Authorizes the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission to establish an Indirect Customer Assistance Program. An 'indirect customer' is an individual who receives water or sewer service from the commission, but is not billed by the commission for the service. This applies to many of MHP's tenants. The purpose of the program is to provide financial assistance to eligible indirect customers for water and sewer service.

HB575 - PASSED. Authorizes common ownership communities to suspend the use of common elements to owners who are delinquent.

There were many other bills related to common ownership communities that MHP worked on that will be sent to a summer study. The status of all bills can be viewed on the [General Assembly Webpage](#).

State Elections. All State offices are up for election this year, including the Governor's seat, State Senators, and House of Delegates. Refer to the State Board of Election's [page](#) for a full list of candidates. And most importantly, DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!

Federal

Fiscal Year 2018 Spending Bill Approved. On March 22nd, the FY18 Spending Bill was signed. The bill includes significant increases in funding for affordable housing and community development programs through HUD and USDA. It provided \$42.7 billion in funding for HUD, a 10% increase over FY17, and includes \$3.3 billion in funding for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), up from \$3 billion in FY2017.

Given that with the lower corporate tax rate that was enacted after the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, Tax Credit equity is expected to decline by an estimated 14%, increased funding for other affordable housing programs in this year's Federal Spending Bill is a significant victory.

In addition, the bill also increased the allocation of Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits by 12.5% for four years (2018-2021). It also made changes to the program to allow income averaging. This will allow an average income of 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI) for the whole building, rather than requiring each individual Housing Credit apartment unit be at 60% of AMI. Many feel that this will be an important tool to help serve families at a lower income through the tax credit program.

You can see a breakdown of housing related issues in the Federal Budget by visiting: <https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/blog/2018/03/fy-2018-omnibus-provides-significant-funding-increases-housing>

Upcoming Events

April

10 (Tuesday) 7 pm – FY19 – County Council – FY19 Montgomery County Operating Budget Public Hearing

11 (Wednesday) 1:30 and 7 pm - County Council – FY19 Montgomery County Operating Budget Public Hearing

12 (Thursday) 1:30 and 7 pm - County Council - FY19 Montgomery County Operating Budget Public Hearing

The County Council FY19 Montgomery County Operating Budget Public Hearing are all held at the Council Office Building, third floor hearing room, 100 Maryland Avenue, 5th Floor, Rockville. To sign up to testify, or for instructions on submitting written comments, visit this [website](#).

15 through May 19 – [Evicted, immersive exhibit](#) - National Building Museum, 401 F Street NW, Washington, DC: This exhibit will provide context to visitors into the world of low-income renter eviction, by exploring the causes and impacts of eviction and provide a call to action. It will feature an array of images and audio interviews. It is a collaboration with Matthew Desmond, professor of Sociology at Princeton University and best-selling author of *Evicted*.

26 (Thursday) Planning Board Public Hearing scheduled for the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan. The community is invited to testify about the Veirs Mill Corridor Master Plan. Consult the Planning Board web site to **sign up online** within 10 days before the public hearing on April 26. The public can also submit comments about the plan via email to **mcp-chair@mncppc-mc.org** by 9 a.m. on April 25. These comments will become part of the public testimony and public record for the plan. Planning Department in the auditorium, 8787 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring.

May

24 (Thursday) 6 -8:30 pm [Nonprofit Montgomery - County Executive Candidates Forum](#)

June

8 (Friday) – 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM - Montgomery Housing Partnership’s [Building Dreams Tour](#). MHP hosts a one-hour tour of our organization’s mission at our properties. All are welcome to join and learn more about what MHP does. The Bonifant at Silver Spring, 929 Bonifant Street, Silver Spring, MD. Register with Jaime at jaimie@mhpartners.org.

12 (Tuesday) 8 am – 3 pm - [HAND’s 27th Annual Meeting and Housing Expo](#) - Largest convening of real estate and community development professionals in the Washington region, bringing together over 1,400 practitioners. The theme of this year’s conference is ‘Deconstruct Our Past, Redesign Our Future.’ Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert St NW, Washington, DC

18 (Monday) – 10 AM – 6:30 PM – Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) is hosting its annual [Norman Christeller Golf Classic](#). This event raises critical funding for our Community Life programs, supporting preschool programs and homework clubs for low-income residents in our communities. The Hampshire Greens Golf Course - 616 Firestone Dr, Silver Spring, MD

Please visit our website at www.mhpartners.org
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