

**Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Task Force**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 6, 2016 – 3:00pm**  
**Piatt Place, 301 Fifth Avenue, Suite 390, Room 3023**  
**Network Deposition Services**

Attendance: Bob Damewood, Regional Housing Legal Services  
David Dean, REALTORS Association of Metropolitan Pittsburgh  
Sean DeYoung, Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force  
Helen Gerhardt, Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations  
Mary Gibson, Allegheny County Commission on Human Relations  
*Peter Harvey, Allegheny County Department of Human Services*  
Melinda Johnson, Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency  
Chuck Keenan, Allegheny County Department of Human Services  
Sarah Kinter, Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations  
*Breen Masciotra, Port Authority of Allegheny County*  
*Valarie McDonald-Roberts, Office of Mayor Peduto*  
♦ Molly Nichols, Pittsburghers for Public Transit  
Paul O’Hanlon, City-County Task Force on Disabilities  
Kevin Quisenberry, Community Justice Project  
Rachel Salem, Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations  
*Gale Schwartz, Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania*  
Rachael Surmick, NeighborWorks Western Pennsylvania  
♦ John Tague, JT Disability Consulting Services  
*Derrick Testa, Pennsylvania Commission on Human Relations*  
Carlos Torres, Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations  
Ernest Whitted, Pittsburgh Housing Development Association

♦ indicates call-in attendance

*Italics indicate that no membership form is on file for this person*

Ms. Helen Gerhardt opened the meeting and asked that present Task Force members introduce themselves. There was a brief discussion regarding whether realtors should be allowed to be voting members of the Task Force and it was decided that any and all persons who have an active interest in furthering fair housing should be encouraged to participate.

Mr. Carlos Torres explained the implementation of membership forms for the Task Force and thanked those who submitted forms in a timely manner. There was discussion of reaching out to other groups who should be at the table. It was determined that the Task Force did not have enough persons present at the meeting for a quorum based on the number of membership forms received by the PCHR. The PCHR received thirty-three (33) forms.

The minutes of the Steering Committee meeting of August 11, 2016 were reviewed, including the following:

➤ **Affordable Housing Trust Fund**

The city's Affordable Housing Task Force (AHTF) made a recommendation to create an affordable housing trust fund in the amount of \$10 million. However, there are questions as to how that funding will be obtained. Mr. Robert Damewood gave some additional background on the trust fund. The AHTF found that there is a 20,000 unit shortage of affordable housing units within the city, and 1/3 of households paying more than they can afford for housing. The recommended \$10 million is the minimum amount of funding necessary to close the gaps. The city only has two ways to legally obtain funds for this trust fund, including either an across the board real estate tax (millage) increase, or a 1% realty transfer tax. The current legislation relies on the 1% realty transfer tax. The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) would administer the funds. The structure of the Housing Trust Fund includes a main decision making board, as well as an advisory group, which will include a fair housing expert. **Members of the Task Force are encouraged to attend the hearing on September 21, 2016 (5:30pm city council chambers) to advocate for the inclusion of a robust fair housing agenda.**

➤ **Subcommittees**

Mr. Torres discussed the Analysis of Impediments (AI), and noted that he heard from the City of Pittsburgh Department of Planning that there was not good participation in the public hearings regarding the AI, and from community members that their comments or information was not properly incorporated into the AI. There was discussion regarding the need to better include community comments. The primary goal of the Task Force is to inform the AI (the next one is in 2019) and provide recommendations for new policies or laws. The committees brought forth by the Steering Committee were created with that goal in mind. **It was decided that the committees should have at least some kind of interaction prior to the December 6, 2016 quarterly meeting, whether that be an email, telephone conference, or meeting.** Staff at

the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations will reach out initially to connect the people in each committee, and they will follow up by the end of September to identify committee members and goals.

The four subject-oriented committees decided upon by the Steering Committee were presented as follows:

- Race/Ethnicity
- Disability
- Formerly Incarcerated/Homelessness
- Sexual Orientation/Gender/Gender Identity

Additionally, a fifth group will handle Outreach & Education functions across the board for all committees. There was discussion on the role of the outreach and education committee. **Task Force members were asked to sign up to participate in no more than one committee and were also permitted to sign up for the Outreach & Education group. One person in each committee must also be a part of the Outreach & Education group in order to facilitate communication between committees.**

There was some discussion about why familial status and home ownership were not committee subjects. It was determined that additional committees may be added and that certain subjects will extend across, or overlap with, other committees. There was also a question of why the formerly incarcerated/homelessness committee exists when those are not protected classes and how we could support those people. In reference to criminal backgrounds as a barrier to housing, members discussed the recent HUD guidance that pointed to reviewing localized data to determine whether there was a disparate impact case. It was mentioned that the committees could evaluate and identify additional protected classes to strengthen local laws.

### **Housing Authority Moving to Work Plan**

Mr. Damewood and Mr. O'Hanlon explained that the Moving to Work plan is submitted yearly by the Housing Authority to HUD for their approval. The plan for next year does not include fair housing issues, specifically a nearly 70% return rate of housing vouchers due to an inability to secure affordable housing with the vouchers. What is included in the 2017 plan are proposed changes to Section 8 vouchers, rent reasonableness standards being reduced, a reduction of Housing Authority units, and the creation of a fund to pay for property damage for landlords who participate in Section 8 voucher program. More affluent neighborhoods will become unavailable to voucher holders as the rent exceeds what the voucher will cover.

**There is a public hearing on September 8<sup>th</sup> and public comment is being accepted in writing until September 15<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.** Task Force members are encouraged to send their public comments to the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations for the staff to compile and share

with members of the Task Force. Agencies were encouraged to submit public comments to HACP and there was discussion about the required response to written public comments. Should the Commission receive the transcript from this meeting prior to the submission deadline, comments regarding this matter will be compiled for submission as well.

The next quarterly meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 6, 2016 at Piatt Place, 301 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15222. The room number and conference call information will be distributed to Task Force members prior to the day of the meeting.