Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Task Force
Meeting Summary

October 10, 2017
3 – 5pm

Type of Meeting: Quarterly AFFH Task Force Meeting
Location: Piatt Place, 301 Fifth Avenue, Room 3023, Pittsburgh, PA
Attendees:

Chuck Keenan, Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Beverly Harris-Walker, Center for Family Excellence
Paul O’Hanlon, City-County Task Force on Disabilities
Kevin Quisenberry, Community Justice Project (phone)
Carol Hardemen, Hill District Consensus Group (phone)
*Tricia Henning, The Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh
Gale Schwartz (Secretary), Housing Alliance of Pittsburgh
Leslie Aizenman, Jewish Family & Children Service (phone)
John Tague, Jr, JT Disability Consulting Services
Rachael Surmick, NeighborWorks Western Pa
Helen Gerhardt (Chair), Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations
*Carlos Torres, Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations (phone)
David Dean, REALTORS Association of Metropolitan Pittsburgh
Bob Damewood, Regional Housing Legal Services
Richard Morris, The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh (phone)
*Peter Kaplan (non-voting member)
*Lindsay Cashman, Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project
*Brian Magee, Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project
*Jeremy Carter, Community Human Services
*Ray Gastil, Department of City Planning
*Shawn Carter, Councilman Ricky Burgess’s Office
*Della Williams, Mayor’s Office
I. Welcome

The meeting came to order at approximately 3:00 p.m. Chair Helen Gerhardt welcomed participants and gave a short overview of the business on the agenda. Chair Gerhardt held a roll call and asked for a motion to adopt the minutes for the AFFH Quarterly Meeting held on July 11th, 2017. David Dean made the motion, seconded by Gale Schwartz. The motion carried.

II. Committee Reports

A. Alternative Protected Classes

Gale Schwartz discussed a potential new recommendation tentatively titled Non-Discriminatory Tenant Screening Criteria. This new recommendation would make HUD guidance on renting to persons with criminal records widely publicized to all landlords within the City. Seattle was recommended as a model for this policy, as Seattle law prohibits landlords from viewing any criminal history or eviction record other than those that would disqualify a tenant from Section 8 housing. Chair Gerhardt motioned that the subcommittee further research this proposal, seconded by Richard Morris. The motion carried.

B. Outreach and Education

David Dean asked for clarification on committee’s role from Rachel Salem. Mr. Dean updated the Task Force about the ongoing litigation relating to the residential rental permit program. In response to this update Mr. Dean suggested having a mandatory training for all landlords and property managers to insure proper adherence to all fair housing practices and policies. Chair Gerhardt offered a motion to recommend the subcommittee further research the proposal particularly looking into how to fund the proposal, who would run the training, and what type of material to include in the training, seconded by Ms. Schwartz The motion carried.

C. Disability

Nothing new to report.

D. Race & Ethnicity

Nothing new to report. Planning on researching the current recommendations further.

E. SOGGIFS

Nothing new to report.
IV. Old Business

Chair Gerhardt introduced a timeline for each subcommittee to complete their aforementioned recommendations. Chair Gerhardt asked that all research supporting the recommendations be submitted by January 3rd 2018. The recommendations would then be distributed to all members of the task force prior to the January 10th quarterly meeting where the recommendations would be discussed. The revised recommendations would then be due to the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations by the end of January 2018. The Commission would then issue a report by the end of April 2018 that would be widely publicized and open for public comment.

Chair Gerhardt offered each subcommittee the assistance of one intern to help further research their recommendations. Two interns will be provided by the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations and two will be provided by Bill Price.

Chair Gerhardt introduced a schedule where each subcommittee would meet once a month prior to the January 10th AFFH Quarterly Meeting.

V. New Business

A. Fair Housing Updates

Ray Gastil provided that he had no information regarding the Source of Income legislation, however he would share same once he receives it.

VI. New Members

Chair Gerhardt explained that there were two membership forms submitted for review by the Steering Committee in advance of this meeting, and that those members were invited to this Quarterly Meeting to present their case for why they should be accepted as Task Force members. Jeremy Carter presented on behalf of Community Human Services’ (CHS) activities in the field of fair and affordable housing. There was a motion to accept CHS as a voting member of the Task Force by Gale Schwartz, seconded by Richard Morris. Bob Damewood abstained. The motion carried.

Brian Magee and Lindsay Cashman presented on behalf of the Pittsburgh Urban Magnet Project (PUMP) and how their goals align with the AFFH Task Force. As an organizing group for young adults, PUMP felt they could offer a substantial connection to the young people of Pittsburgh. There was a motion to accept PUMP as a member of the AFFH Task Force by Gale Schwartz, seconded by John Tague. The motion carried.

Chair Gerhardt offered to meet with CHS and PUMP to discuss which subcommittee they would be willing to serve on.

VII. Public Comment

Shawn Carter from Councilmen Ricky Burgess’s Office discussed the ongoing litigation surrounding the residential rental permit program. He noted that Judge Jones stayed the order,
and it was bifurcated in Commonwealth Court. Fair and affordable housing are not the same thing. Mr. Carter offered his office’s continued support of the AFFH Task Force’s work.

Ray Gastil, Director of Pittsburgh’s City Planning Department, offered that the Assessment of Fair Housing is due from his office on May 15, 2019. He also mentioned that Pittsburgh’s fair housing laws went into effect ten years prior to the national Fair Housing Act.

VIII. Adjournment

Chair Gerhardt thanked everyone for their participation. The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:00 p.m.