



Upcoming Events

**Community Bond Workshop
Can it Help Your Affordable
Housing Mission?**

**Thursday, January 26
9:30 am - 11:45 am**

To register for the *free* workshop
BarnardB@dhmh.state.md.us

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2012 Housing Day

**Thursday, February 23
8:00 am – 12:00 pm**

**Miller Senate Office Bldg.
Annapolis**

To become a supporter,
register for this free event and/or
make a financial contribution
<http://www.mdahc.org/>

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2012 Membership Drive

**2011 Total = 118 members
2012 Goal = 130 members**

**Paid Members to Date: 70
Members Needed to
Reach our Goal: 60**

To check your 2012 status
<http://www.mdahc.org/members.html>

Please join or renew at
<http://www.mdahc.org/join.html>

Special Edition

Highlights of the 2012 Annual Meeting

MAHC's 13th Annual Meeting, held on Friday, January 6, 2012 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Baltimore, was attended by over 275 members and guests and was our largest gathering to date. Our Coalition is growing and we appreciate the support of our Board Members, Committees, Annual Sponsors and Members who have helped to make MAHC the premier advocacy group for affordable rental housing in Maryland.

The main topic was *The Jobs Housing Initiative* created by MAHC and supported by DHCD. The initiative seeks a one-time \$25 million appropriation in FY 2013 to leverage \$170 million in unused tax exempt bond authority which will create many jobs and housing. (On Thursday, January 12, Governor O'Malley announced "Rental Housing Works," which will provide \$15 million in critical gap funding for up to 20 affordable housing projects already in the pipeline and will create more than 1,100 jobs in Maryland.) Go to <http://www.governor.maryland.gov/blog/?p=3445>.

Highlights included Congressman Elijah E. Cummings who delivered the keynote address and received the Housing Leadership Award. Rep. Cummings talked about the ongoing need for affordable housing and urged our members to continue to do what we do and make our voices heard.



Trudy McFall, incoming MAHC President, thanked the outgoing President, Wally Scruggs and she and Lydia Clark expressed their appreciation with a plaque. Trudy McFall outlined her three goals for MAHC in 2012 including the following: 1) Continuing to focus on increasing and protecting the funds for affordable rental housing. She expressed the hope that the new Jobs Housing Initiative was on the brink of being announced and would greatly increase the funding for the FY 2013 session. She also wants to work more closely with DHCD to be involved in the front end of policy and program changes to make the programs more efficient and effective and that work for our industry; 2) Expanding the opportunity for leadership among the Board and participation among the membership by expanding the Committees. The Coalition has grown to a diverse array of specialty areas within the affordable housing industry and expanding the committees will better engage the diverse Board



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Housing Opportunities Com of Mont. Co.
Natl Fnd for Affordable Housing Solutions
Volunteers of America

and membership; and 3) MAHC is in its 13th year and is becoming a mature Coalition with the need to examine how it operates, including reviewing its by-laws and practices to reflect the current organizational needs. The main goal is to work even better together to continue to be a powerful force in shaping housing policies and defending housing budgets.

Nancy Rase, President of Homes for America, received the Houser of the Year Award which started three years ago to recognize Marylanders who have been outstanding in the field of affordable rental housing. She has helped to promote, produce and preserve affordable housing opportunities for low to moderate-income Marylanders by tackling tough issues and advocating for our industry. Over the span of her career in the public and private sectors, Nancy has produced about 100,000 units of affordable rental housing, gives generously of her time to craft ideas such as the recent the Jobs Housing Initiative, and is extremely helpful to her colleagues in sharing her time and expertise.

Jim Ginsburg and Neil Lemon (posthumously) of the Waterford Group, received the Lifetime Achievement Award. Dave Miller of Harkins Builders called Jim and Neil humble men with good business values who have touched so many lives. Jim accepted the award on behalf of The Waterford Group and his business partner Neil Lemon, who passed away in July 2011. Since their partnership began in 1975, they have developed numerous affordable multifamily and senior rental housing communities in Maryland.

Jeff Hettleman, Legislative Committee Co-chair delivered the Legislative Update. A summary of MAHC's 2011 Major Legislative Initiatives & Accomplishments is available at <http://www.mdahc.org/inits.html>. He outlined that the committee's goals for 2012 are to support level-funding of DHCD's budget, ensure passage of the Jobs Housing Initiative (JHI), advocate for the Source of Income bill, preserve the 9% tax credit, and other new initiatives. Go to <http://www.mdahc.org/pdfs/MAHCJobsBillInitiative.pdf>.

Kathy Koch, nominee for Legislative Committee Chair, outlined details of Housing Day which will be held on Thursday, February 23 in Annapolis. The theme is "Housing Create Jobs" and she urged everyone to attend Housing Day to show their support, have breakfast with elected officials and hear key legislators speak on housing issues and the budget. She added that attendees will visit their Legislators with talking points about MAHC's legislative initiatives including the Jobs Housing Initiative (now called Rental Housing Works) which will be part of the Governor's FY 2013 budget. Governor O'Malley, Sen. Ed DeGrange, Speaker Mike Busch and Del. Maggie McIntosh have been invited to speak. Kathy urged everyone to sign up as a Housing Day Supporter to show political support for the legislative package. To become a supporter click on <http://www.mdahc.org/>.

DHCD Secretary Ray Skinner gave an overview of the Department's latest achievements and noted that despite \$6 billion in budget cuts over the last five years, DHCD has been able to maintain level funding for its rental housing programs. DHCD added more than 10,000 units in 113 projects putting more than \$1.5 billion into the State's economy. He added that in 2011, 2,200 units of affordable rental housing in 24 projects were built with a total value of nearly \$400 million. To create a new funding source, MAHC and DHCD worked together to put forth the Jobs Housing Initiative that focuses on rental housing and job creation and will be included in the Governor's FY 2013 budget.



Summary of Program Committee Question and Answer Session with Secretary Raymond Skinner by Nancy Rase

As part of this year's Annual Meeting the Program Committee developed a list of questions to pose to Secretary Skinner. During the session a number of very pertinent issues for MAHC members were discussed. Some of the key points raised during the discussion included:

- A very important disclosure that the Department and its legal counsel are looking closely at the statutory and regulatory requirements for local resolutions for rental housing projects. He indicated the statute does not require local resolutions but over the years the practice has evolved to require resolutions. The Department is evaluating what level of local approval, short of a formal resolution of the local legislative body, will satisfy the statutes.
- The announcement that there will be no Spring 2012 round was premature and the Department is evaluating its ability to have a Spring round to give developers the opportunity to take advantage of the 9% Tax Credit rate before that federal authority expires at the end of 2013.
- The Department's HOME allocation will be decreased 48% in the next fiscal year. The reduction is a combination of the program cuts made by Congress and adjustments to the HOME formula allocation based on the 2010 census. The Secretary was encouraged to receive input



from non-participating local governments as to how they would like the reduced HOME funds to be allocated and used within DHCD.

- If funding is awarded under the Jobs Housing Proposal advocated by MAHC, the Department will consider changing regulations to award rental housing funds non-competitively with tax exempt bonds, but will ensure enough rental housing funds are retained in the competitive rounds to ensure Tax Credits can be fully utilized.
- The Secretary confirmed the Qualified Allocation Plan for Low Income Housing Tax Credits will be revised during the upcoming year and the new plan will likely be effective for a Spring 2013 competitive round. Over the years many criteria have been added to the current Plan and it does not necessarily reflect the State's priorities. The Secretary will consult with the Coalition at a policy level, but did not agree to working with the Coalition in lieu of hiring a consultant.
- The Secretary totally supported the idea of more transparency in program administration and will seek Coalition members' perspective on the desired level of disclosure and will develop a mutually acceptable disclosure policy.
- The Secretary agreed that in the future the Coalition would be used to provide input on proposed new program structures.
- The Secretary agreed that the Department needs a more formal structure to address program user concerns and have a structured process to appeal decisions.
- DHCD is open to discussing ways to support mixed income housing.
- Concerns were raised about BRAC requirements making it very difficult to obtain funding for projects in non-BRAC jurisdictions, particularly the Eastern Shore and Western Maryland. The Secretary acknowledged this concern, but stated the Department will be cautious and not change the BRAC priority too soon to ensure that the jobs/housing demand has been addressed. He did promise to look at this concern as part of revising the allocation plan.

Edited by: Lydia B. Clark, Executive Director with contributions from Trudy McFall, President and Nancy Rase, Program Committee Member