

Montgomery County Government
Office of Human Rights
21 Maryland Ave.
Suite 330
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Meeting Minutes
of the
Human Rights Commission
Of 2012

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**Human Rights Commission
Montgomery County Office of Human Rights
21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330, Rockville, Maryland 20850**

Draft HRC Meeting Minutes: Monday, September 24, 2012.

Meeting Place: 21 Maryland Avenue, Suite 330, Rockville, Maryland 20850.

Commissioners Attended: Judge William England (Vice Chair), Barron Oakcrum, Doug Ryan, Selena Singleton, Ruth Martin and Stephanie Mason Betsy Jett, Dr. Suresh Gupta, Dr. Sajjad Durrani and Matthew Murguia;

Commissioners Absent: Russell Campbell (chair), Dr. Jeremiah Floyd and Selena Singleton.

Staff attended: Director James Stowe, Loretta Garcia, Compliance Manager and Anis Ahmed, Staff Liaison;

Guest Speaker: Victoria Lanteigne, The Equal Rights Center, Washington DC;
Jackie Simon, Member, Inter Agency Fair Housing Coordination Group (IAFHCG).

1. Call to order:

- **Meeting:** Acting Chairman William England called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.
- **Agenda:** Committee approved meeting Agenda;
- **Minutes:** Commission approved minutes of August 24, 2012 meeting with minor amendments.

2. Chairman's Report: William England:

No report was made due to absence of Chairman Russell Campbell.

3. Introduction of Speakers:

Acting Chairman Judge William England introduced Speakers Ms. Jackie Simons and Ms. Victoria Lanteigne to the commissioners:

Jackie Simons: Addressed on the following issues:

- Concept of visitability;
- Difference between Single Home and Town Home on mobility access issue;
- Fair Housing Act included the single and town homes on mobility access;
- She urged Commission to write letter to the County Executive and County Council for enacting code for the mobility access of people in the county;

Victoria Lanteigne: Addressed on the following issues with distributing supporting materials:

- What is Equal Rights Center, and where it is located and its' jurisdiction;
- What is visitability and disability, current total population of these protected classes and what expected population will be in 2050;
- Disabled population has been declared a protected class; they are protected by the Federal Civil Rights laws and in Montgomery County by virtue of Chapter 27;

- The Federal Fair Housing Act requires every new housing with multi-family with 4 or more must have “modest level of accessibility to the disabled population;
- She defined “modest level of accessibility” as following:
 - A clear path from the street or parking lot to their apartments;
 - Doors wide enough to safely maneuver a wheelchair through,
 - Lights switches, outlets and thermostats that can be reached from a wheelchair;
 - A bathroom they can actually use in private
- She mentioned that the total cost of completion of all these works usually involves between \$100.00 to \$600.00 provided if they are done during initial construction and building.;
- She also supported Ms. Jackie Simon and urged Commission to move forward since the current disabled population count is 14000, i.e. 14% of the total population.

Discussions:

- County Executive staff has not released draft legislation on this agenda as yet although the IAFHCG has made a request officially a few months ago;
- So far 24 rental units have access for mobility impaired people;
- National Fire Protection Committee has supported the cause;
- Builders in Montgomery County said that they will do but still fall short of that expected;
- This is the single most unfinished business in the County either in making Executive Order or enacting code;
- About 15000 houses are yet to be built. Builders will comply if codes are enacted or Executive Order is made;
- Several multi-family unit builders complied the requirements. However, one builder was sued to comply with the requirement and to promote visitability access movements;
- No curriculum has put forward for the architectural students;
- Baby boomers are approaching to 40% of the total population;
- County Zoning and Land Use Board is required to provide reports on Builders’ compliances with this requirements;
- Builders are asking \$10k to \$15K for tax credits to comply with this requirement which according to the various reports is too much;

Decisions:

- A motion moved by Commissioner Barron Oakcrum and seconded by Commissioner Betsy Jett that meeting will not proceed to make Chairman’s report due to absence of the Chairman Russell Campbell at the meeting;

4. Director’s Report: James L. Stowe:

- Bill 19-12 was approved by the County Council and will come into effect after 90 days;
- Montgomery County SECIU backed this legislation;
- Shared that he participated in a very positive meeting with the Sikh Community at the Sikh Temple in Silver Spring;
- More than 10 Sikh community leaders attended the COHV’s last meeting and brought up their concerns;
- One of the important discussion issue was on how to deal with the situations if any incidence will happen in Montgomery County like what happened in Wisconsin;

5. Committee Updates: Immigration Forum: Selena Singleton:

- Committee decided not to have any meeting on Monday;
- Committee has selected speakers on 4 issues:
 - Commissioner Doug Ryan will be speaker on Housing issue;
 - Vincent Levy will be speaker on Domestic Violence;
 - Chief Manger will be speaker on Law Enforcement;
 - Either Gustavo Torres or Nancy Navarro will speak on Immigration/Dream Act issue;
- Asked for volunteers at the forum event;
- Finger food will be provided by Daphne Ado Ado caterer;
- Staff Liaison Anis Ahmed will coordinate with Commissioner Barron Oakcrum in hall set up;

COHV: Matthew Murguia

- Sikh community leaders were extremely happy for the meeting with COHV members;
- County Executive has appointed 6 persons as members of the COHV and sent appointment letters to the appointees;
- Sikh Temple in North Potomac will have an open house on September 23, 2012;

CAB: William England

- No report to make as the CAB meeting was scheduled to be held on the following day of the Commission' meeting;

CPD: Betsy Jett

- No report;

IAFGC: Dr. Jeremiah Floyd

- Mr. Michael Mitchell, Vice President for Lending National Community Reinvestment Coalition addressed IAFHCG's last monthly meeting;
- One Stop Shop Fair Housing Seminar will be held as scheduled (October 16, 2012) and preparations are underway;
- The IAFHCG had discussion on following issues:
 - Process of housing data collection and impact of data analysis;
 - Wells Fargo Settlement;
 - HUD's position on Unfair Housing practices by any national and local financial lending institutions;

6. CRB Report: Loretta Garcia, Compliance Manager:

- Current caseload: 159,
- New intake: 23,
- Case accepted from intake: 4,
- Mediation: 8,
- Cases with investigators: 86,
- Management review: 22,
- Awaiting Director's final review: 0,