

**Oakland Mills Task Force Housing Committee**

**Final Recommendations**

**FINAL 8-13-14**

**Task Force Approved 9-16-14**

**General Recommendation**

Amend the Housing Section of the 2007 Oakland Mills Village Center Master Plan as appropriate or entirely with recommendations noted below and adopt as the Housing Section of the new Oakland Mills Village Center Community Plan.

**Rental Housing Summary and Recommendation**

1. Based on December, 2013, actual count of Howard County property records for **Talbott Springs and Stevens Forest**, the neighborhoods near the village center, there are approximately:

Single Family Detached Homes	1,130 including 81 rentals
Town Homes and Condos	715 including 221 rentals
Apartment units	984 all rental

2. 45% of all housing in **Talbott Springs and Stevens Forest** is rental. 1,286 of 2,829 units are rented.

3. Decrease the amount of rental housing.

**Verona**

1. Ask the Housing Commission to post an improvement projects schedule with status updates.
2. Comply with all village covenants and county codes including occupancy limits.
3. Offer 1 year free rent to Ho Co teachers, firefighters, police officers.
4. Limit subsidized units to 20% of the total of current total units, i.e. 50 subsidized out of 251 total for any redevelopment. Therefore a maximum of 50 subsidized units on the total of 16.7 acres on two sites.
5. Redevelopment Alternatives (Consistent with Plan Howard 2030, page 129, policy 9.2)
  - Sooner than 10 years
  - Alternative Financing to Low Income Housing Tax Credits
  - Explore using Chatham Square in Arlington, Va. as a model with only 50 subsidized units.
  - Maximize upscale owner occupied units on the two site 16.7 acres to provide revenue to Housing Commission
  - Housing Commission to partner with developer to build all upscale housing on the two site 16.7 acres to recoup original investment and use the revenue to create new mixed income complexes in communities with no subsidized housing

## Howard County

1. De-concentrate subsidized housing so that no Census Tract Block Group (CTBG) has more than 5% poverty rate, and no county school has more than 20% Free and Reduced Meal (FARM) students. Accomplish this in 5 years.
2. Terminate the fee in lieu of and alternative compliance programs that allow subsidized housing to be moved off-site.
3. Approve MIHU's in areas of Howard County where little or no subsidized housing exists.
4. Ask Howard County to create a subsidized housing de-concentration policy and program and measure progress over time.
5. Ask County Executive candidates for their solutions for de-concentrating subsidized housing.
6. Create our own Oakland Mills housing policy and program for Howard County that creates a full spectrum of housing throughout the county and ask the county executive candidates and council candidates seeking to represent Oakland Mills for their support.
7. Publish housing statistics annually by local community throughout the county on housing type, price (including low-income), and population of each local community.
8. Change zoning regulations to require subsidized housing in all residential zoning categories except New Town (Columbia has ~ 80% of all subsidized housing in the county but only ~40% of the total population of the county).
9. New Town Zoning
  - Change New Town zoning to create incentives to reduce the number of rental apartment units
  - Maintain existing "no requirement" for subsidized housing (Since Columbia has ~80% of the county's subsidized housing without a requirement in place, no requirement for more is needed, nor is it beneficial)
10. Remodel all Housing Commission owned condos, town homes and single family homes in Oakland Mills after current tenant leaves and sell at market rate to an owner occupier with defined period of residency.
11. Direct HCDHCD and Housing Commission to
  - Cease all new subsidized housing proposed in CTBG's with 5% or more poverty
  - Focus all new subsidized housing in CTBG's with 0-5% poverty
  - Create a plan now to migrate half of subsidized units from CTBGs with 5% or more poverty to CTBGs with 0-5% poverty over the next five years (Columbia has ~80% of all subsidized housing and only ~ 40% of the county population. Migrating half the subsidized housing out of Columbia would get Columbia down to its fair share and the rest of the county up to its fair share.)
12. Create "public nuisance" legislation aimed at owners of unmaintained vacant properties to fine owners. As a last resort use public domain law to seize property for county to rehab and sell on open market.

## Re-Invention

1. Investigate advantages of having Ho Co declare OM a re-development zone with financial incentives for re-invention investment.
2. De-concentrate subsidized housing.
3. Replace half the apartment units in OM with owner occupied upscale (executive, luxury) housing to reduce the negative impact of apartments on the property values of all other housing in OM.

To achieve a thriving community in OM there is a need to change the housing mix in the village. The current housing mix **(Talbot Springs, Stevens Forest and Thunder Hill)** per CA document and county rental housing study is:

Single family detached homes	1,717
Town Homes	525
Condos	190
Apartment units (4 complexes)	984
Total	3,416

The apartments represent 29% of all units and are controlled by four owners. These 4 owners have more of an impact on the property values of the other 2,432 units than the owners of those units do. It is critical to reduce the number of apartments and replace them with owner occupied upscale housing in order to achieve a Full Spectrum of Housing within five years.

4. Contact Enterprise Housing and HUD to discuss possibility of phasing in some market rate units at Forest Ridge apartments including senior housing (no students).
5. Create new upscale (executive, luxury) housing including senior housing.
6. Provide reduced cost financing for first time home buyers of neglected homes in OM with the following requirements:
  - Owner occupied only
  - Reside for a defined period of time
7. Provide incentives for existing home owners to renovate their homes with the following requirements:
  - Owner occupied only
  - Reside for a defined period of time
8. Form an alliance with the four other older villages, North Laurel and Elkridge to press for the county wide subsidized housing de-concentration policy and program. Form alliance with non-profits that have similar interests.
9. Secure new and/or upgraded CA recreational facility to make village center and surrounding area more attractive to home buyers.

## **Public Spaces**

### 1. Ask Ho Co

- To be diligent in ongoing maintenance of streets, road markings, trees, signs, street lights.
- To upgrade SF Rd and TH Rd with curbed and painted medians to calm traffic.

2. Ask CA and Ho Co to keep landscaping on their property up to standards seen throughout Columbia and Ho Co.

## **Village Wide**

1. Promote Transit Oriented Development for OM with its links to Downtown Columbia.

2. Encourage links to Town Center for positive spill-over effect and location efficiency (PH 2030, page 125).

3. Create list of volunteer architects to aid in design of home renovations (PH 2030, page 133).

4. Educate homeowners on how to deal with contractors and deal with general home maintenance.

5. Seek creation of low cost financing for property improvements on distressed and neglected properties.

6. Investigate group discounts with home improvement contractors and retailers.

7. Emphasize positives in OM through all media including OM typical smaller sized housing that is growing in demand (PH 2030, Page 126).

8. Ask the county Department of Inspections, Licenses and Permits (DILP) to conduct semi-annual inspection of all apartment complexes.

### 9. Improve Covenant Compliance

- Perform periodic Property Standards Evaluation inspections of all homes for covenant compliance
- Have condo and town home HOAs research ability to limit # of rentals and enforce HOA covenants
- Educate residents on covenant requirements, Encourage residents to comply with covenants, and Enforce covenants

10. Encourage upscale home and landscaping improvement through contests with before and after pictures (PH 2030, page 133).

11. Establish OM as a Targeted Growth and Revitalization area by amending the 2007 OM Village Center Master Plan (PH 2030, page 136).

12. Encourage the use of the Maryland State Program "Accessible Homes for Seniors" that provides zero-interest loans to those 55+.