

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT
COUNTYWIDE PRIORITY SETTING COMMITTEE**

SUBCOMMITTEE FOR ANALYSIS OF IMPEDIMENTS TO FAIR HOUSING CHOICE

PUBLIC HEARING

ANALYSIS OF IMPEDIMENTS TO FAIR HOUSING CHOICE
(INCLUDING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN)

Monday, July 25, 2011
7:00 p.m.
Multipurpose Room
Marguerita C. Johnson Senior Center
640 Drake Avenue, Marin City

Attending:

Subcommittee Members

Supervisor Judy Arnold, Marin County Board of Supervisors
Councilmember Denise Athas, City of Novato
Vice Mayor Greg Brockbank, City of San Rafael

County Staff

Tanya Albert, Office of Supervisor Judy Arnold
Leslie Alden, Office of Supervisor Kathrin Sears
Brian Crawford, Director, Marin County Community Development Agency
Roy Bateman, Marin County Community Development Agency

Members of the Public

Ray Baaba, National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals
Dave Coury
Corinna Hensley, Fair Housing of Marin
Nancy Johnson, Marin City Community Services District
David Levin, Bay Area Legal Aid
Johnathan Logan, Marin City Community Services District
Dan Nackerman, Marin Housing Authority
Caroline Peattie, Fair Housing of Marin
Kerry Peirson
Darren Pomponio, National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals
Supervisor Kathrin Sears, Marin County Board of Supervisors
Debra Speer, National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals
Armando Tam, National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals
Alexis Wise, Hanna Project Parent Coalition

Supervisor Judy Arnold opened the meeting at 7 p.m., and asked those attending to introduce themselves.

Supervisor Judy Arnold:

In 2009, HUD monitored Marin County's compliance with its fair housing and equal opportunity regulations. The HUD monitoring resulted in a Voluntary Compliance Agreement between HUD and the County. Among the items in the compliance agreement was the preparation of an assessment of the barriers to fair housing choice in Marin County.

The County contracted with Fair Housing of Marin to draft an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice is a comprehensive planning document commissioned by the County as part of its mandate to affirmatively further fair housing. The draft AI identifies barriers to fair housing choice in Marin County. We should be clear that "fair housing" means the ability to buy or rent housing without being subject to discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, disability, gender, or other categories protected under the law. As the Analysis of Impediments points out, lack of affordable housing can be a barrier to fair housing, so there is much overlap between affordable housing and fair housing issues. But sometimes they are separate issues. The County is soliciting public comment on the completeness of the list of barriers in the AI, which barriers identified in the AI are greatest, and ways to address those barriers.

The County is obtaining public comment through the creation of a subcommittee of the Community Development Block Grant Priority Setting Committee and through meetings with members of protected groups. Supervisor Kinsey held two meetings and I participated in one of those meetings with community leaders. In response to requests from the community, when our subcommittee met in the afternoon on May 11, we agreed to hold two more evening meetings, one on May 23 in Marin City, and one on May 24 in the Canal. At that point, we were working under a July 20 deadline from HUD to file a completed Analysis of Impediments, and that limited the time available for community consultation. We requested a 3-month extension from HUD, which they granted, so our deadline is now October 30. That gave us an opportunity to expand our outreach efforts and hold additional meetings with a full 30 days notice. So we're having this meeting tonight and another one on Wednesday in the Canal neighborhood, with Spanish translation. The Subcommittee met again on May 31, and is scheduled to meet again on August 24. The full Priority Setting Committee will meet on September 12. We expect to bring the Analysis of Impediments and the Implementation Plan to the Board of Supervisors on October 11.

I also want to mention that Supervisor Susan Adams and I have directed county staff to make procedural changes to allow for the Board of Supervisors to select a representative from the protected classes to serve on the Countywide Priority Setting Committee for Community Development Block Grants, and also on our local area committees, except for Novato and San Rafael, where the city councils have the option of setting their own procedures. This change has been approved by all the cities and by the County. We want to make this meeting a dialogue and an interaction with those here, so I am going to ask staff to give you a brief outline of what we want to discuss tonight and then open it up to everyone.

Nancy Johnson: The turnout tonight is small.

Dan Nackerman: We sent notices to public housing residents.

Roy Bateman: Asked the group to address these questions: What could be done to make Marin a more welcoming community for members of protected classes? How can barriers to fair housing be addressed?

Kerry Peirson: Outreach needs to be more than sending out notices, must engage the populations least likely to participate. The subject matter is complex; you almost need a forum to just explain the topic.

Supervisor Judy Arnold: We contacted community leaders, including the Grassroots Leadership Network, to do outreach.

Dave Coury: County is used to organized homeowner groups who come out to meetings, but need outreach beyond e-mails and bulletins to encourage disempowered people to come out to a meeting. County should contract out outreach or put more staff time into it. Yesterday, HUD turned down Westchester County's third Analysis of Impediments.

Vice Mayor Greg Brockbank: Could mail postcards to a few thousand people about these meetings.

Armando Tam: Lenders might fund publicity for a meeting in Marin City, an outreach event with food and family activities.

Dan Nackerman: There are over 10,000 households on Marin Housing Authority waiting list; we could do direct mail to them.

Nancy Johnson: Must consider the habits and traditions of a community. In Marin City, that means going door to door to publicize an issue or a meeting.

Open Time for matters not on the agenda. There were no speakers.

Roy Bateman asked for comments on the Analysis of Impediments before we get into the more general questions. Caroline Peattie gave a summary of the Analysis of Impediments. There were no comments.

Comments on the questions: What could be done to make Marin a more welcoming community for members of protected classes? How can barriers to fair housing be addressed?

- ◆ Entice minority professionals from other counties to move to Marin. Don't just focus on affordable housing. Market Marin--our schools are good; rents aren't as high as people think.
- ◆ Diminish income disparity.
- ◆ Schools could do better to serve minorities. Compile data on faculty diversity and minority outcomes.
- ◆ Offer higher Section 8 payment standard in higher-cost neighborhoods.
- ◆ Keep better data on minority participation.
- ◆ More use of other languages in agency publicity.
- ◆ Housing Authority wants to document subtle discrimination among landlords.
- ◆ Landlords like Section 8 because they get slightly above-market rents and excellent tenants; this needs to be publicized.
- ◆ Landlords are coming to Section 8.
- ◆ Recruit landlords to accept Section 8.
- ◆ Map data on where minority Section 8 tenants live.
- ◆ Sensitivity training for landlords to educate them about fair housing laws.
- ◆ State law could classify "No Section 8" as illegal discrimination based on source of income.
- ◆ Look beyond Section 8--discrimination affects all income groups; businesses as well as rental housing.

- ◆ 40-year history of discrimination won't turn around quickly.
- ◆ Local government should spend more on affordable housing than on roads and open space. Need a long-term program to do this.
- ◆ Policies to encourage affordable housing and changes in zoning. Understand economics of affordable housing; make it happen.
- ◆ Recruit minority youth for employment in the trades.
- ◆ Minority contractors--link with government-funded projects.
- ◆ Put more than just a few minorities on CDBG Priority Setting Committee.
- ◆ Stop foreclosures of victims of predatory loans.
- ◆ What's County's goal? Is there a serious commitment to action to correct the impediments?
- ◆ West Marin lacks services (child care, transportation, etc.), which discourages people from moving there.
- ◆ No school bus in Marin City.
- ◆ Section 8 landlords who get the higher rents might still discriminate and still get those higher rents.
- ◆ County could contract with someone to do outreach, someone with expertise and connections with protected groups.
- ◆ Survey minorities to determine their needs.
- ◆ Education: School board trustees are insensitive to the need for buses, school libraries, and healthy food for young kids.
- ◆ Who protects the protected groups? Where do I go for help when I face unfair treatment as a minority if it's not a housing issue? Who will follow up on my behalf?
- ◆ San Rafael City Council has an annual meeting with the School Board.
- ◆ Why doesn't Barry Bonds live in Marin? Marin isn't welcoming to people of color. Elected officials are trying to recruit young people and minorities for Commission positions.

- ◆ Affirmative outreach for paid jobs, not just token volunteer positions on Commissions.
- ◆ High rents are the big impediment in Marin.
- ◆ Encourage more involvement of protected groups on Commissions.
- ◆ Explore why wealthy people of color aren't interested in moving to Marin.
- ◆ Don't expect even a costly door-to-door campaign to bring out a large group.
- ◆ Need jobs and transit so people can live where they work.
- ◆ What's missing in Marin? Diverse population! How can we change this?
- ◆ Only 16% of those who work in Corte Madera live there.
- ◆ Some white people are disturbed that Marin is way too white.
- ◆ People of color don't come to Marin just because rents/prices are high; it's also because of lack of diversity.

Supervisor Judy Arnold: We don't want this to be an empty action. Here are some suggestions:

- ◆ A monitoring committee, formed as a subcommittee of the Priority Setting Committee, could also be expanded to add members of protected classes.
- ◆ Participate in Marin Community Foundation study of the precariously housed.
- ◆ County could be more proactive in nominating minorities to Boards and Commissions. HLIP (Hispanic Latino Indigenous People) has offered to do outreach.
- ◆ Sensitivity training, partnering with Marin Office of Education for recruitment of minority teachers, community policing.
- ◆ Improve availability of transit for lower income people, a social equity emphasis.

- ◆ A forum, as suggested by the National Association of Hispanic Real Estate Professionals. Many Hispanic homebuyers got stuck with inappropriate loans.

Brian Crawford: The Marin County Community Development Agency will consider the comments we've received from the community. Our draft Implementation Plan reflects the long-term nature of what must occur. We'll need to partner with other organizations and consider the tight budget situation in local government.

Armando Tan: The majority of new home loans are now FHA, which means fewer predatory loans. Need to give Marin City kids opportunities to be involved in the trades.

Supervisor Judy Arnold: Thanked everyone for attending, and announced the upcoming meetings (as listed on the back of tonight's agenda).

The meeting was closed at 8:50 p.m.