

**City of Hyattsville  
Race & Equity Task Force  
May 24, 2022 7:00 PM  
Zoom  
Minutes**

Present

Task Force Members:

- Malcolm Clarke
- Jennifer Gafford
- Alicia (ah-lee-syah) Freemyn
- Daniel Amador
- Rodrigo Blanco
- Jocelyn Medallo

Council:

- Council Person Rommel Sandino
- Council Person Joanne Waszczak

Staff:

- Staff Liaison, Jan Guszynski
- City Clerk, Laura Reams
- City Administrator, Tracey Douglas
- Shakira Hall Louimarre, Equity Officer

Guests:

- Steve Woods

**Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM by Chair Clarke**

**1. Welcome and Call to Order**

Roll Call – Chair Clarke

Acknowledgement of Meeting Guests – Staff Liaison Jan Guszynski

**2. Introduction of Equity Officer, Shakira Hall Louimarre**

- City Administrator Tracey Douglas provides background on Equity Officer position
- **Shakira Hall Louimarre (She/her/hers):** I am in my 3<sup>rd</sup> career. The center of all of my work is equity. One of the values and mindsets that I come to work with is relationality and truly being good neighbors and good people to one another. I was a community organizer for budget advocacy in DC which dealt with how community members can advocate for themselves when it comes to students. I am a University of Buffalo African and African American Studies graduate, with a focus on equity and access to higher education for Black and Latinx students. I am focused on how to get people greatest access to things in life. I hope my varied background will help move this work forward.

### 3. Redistricting Task Force

- **MC:** Introduction of City Clerk, Laura Reams
- **Laura Reams:**
  - o Is the City Clerk and Director of legislative services for Hyattsville.
  - o Talked about redistricting after the 2020 census. The boundaries are reviewed to make sure there is equity based on demographic.
  - o Shared a PPT presentation that was presented to Council a month ago
  - o Every 10 years after the census is when redistricting occurs
  - o 2023 mayoral election is when the redistricting will likely finalize
  - o Alicia Freemyn appointed as committee member for the Redistricting Committee from RETF.
- **MC:** Motion to appoint Alicia Freemyn to the Redistricting Committee. RB Move to appoint. Jennifer G. second.

### 4. New Member Introduction

- **Jocelyn Medallo:** Inspired by the energy of the group having sat in a couple meetings. Family just moved from Malaysia. Mother of 2 daughters. Professionally, a lawyer by trade but has been working in human rights work and access to justice in non-profits.
- Approval of September Minutes - Motion to approve minutes. RB move to approve. AF second.
- Approval of March and April Minutes – Motion to table. AF move to table. RB second. Tabled until June 28, 2022.

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### 5. Administration Announcements/Debriefs (Jan)

- Driskell Park Update:
    - o **Jan G:** There were two plaques installed at the entryway. It was the first physical change on the renaming. Driskell's artwork (pine tree) was used. Neighborhood Design Group is hosting a series of roundtables to help inform our planning:
      - One was a gathering consisted of David Driskell's mentees and curators of his work. There was a 90-minute presentation. Round tables help with physical reimagining of the park.
      - Second round table was about nature because he was a naturalist.
      - Third round table was a city stakeholders roundtable.
      - Fourth round table is tomorrow from 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm at Driskell park. The topic is devoted to youth programs and placemaking. People from artworks now and younger residents/parents attend.
- The original park covenant stated that Magruder Park was originally for whites only. City Council took this very seriously. They passed a motion to rename the Park. RETF and the Health and Wellness Advisory Committee teamed up to vet

the more than 700 name submissions generated by a City call-for-entries. A list of roughly six were chosen for presentation to Council. David C. Driskell Community Park was passed by Council as the new name for the Park.

- Administration Announcements:
  - o **Jan G:** There is another new staff member, Suzie Ludlow, was hired on a contract basis as the Deputy City Administrator.

## **6. Aging and People w/ Disabilities Presentation – Rodrigo Blanco**

- Abstract was presented.
- **MC:** Are there any questions?
- **Jennifer G:** How are we currently engaging that group?
- **Jan G:** RETF are invited to join the call for the Aging in Place Committee to inform this portion of the plan.
- **RB** to send an email to the Aging in Place
- **AF:** How is mental illness counted in this conversation?
- **RB:** In my research did not consider yet.
- **AF:** I wonder particularly about folks with severe schizophrenia and/or people in institutionalized facilities. People with bipolar may not be counted as a person with a disability. I am curious about the layers and barriers between the city making decisions versus the county and state. Do you have more information about where the city's power runs out for affordable/accessible housing?
- **JW:** Probably a good idea for the city to provide a briefing about the city's jurisdiction vs. the county. There is an affordable housing study from 2 years which may have a section that describes the jurisdictions.
- **Jan G:** I will reach out to the owner of the Affordable Housing Report to see if someone from this group can present to the committee.
- **RS:** One of the systemic issues for people of color, is that it can be difficult to be diagnosed as a person with a disability. Was there information in the research about people of color and mental health?
- **RB:** In Hyattsville, health access for Hispanic and Black populations were disproportionately affected. This was not in the presentation. It is a major issue. Not sure why, but interesting to dig into.

- **Jan G:** Hyattsville is working on developing a database for vulnerable residents in need of special services. A case management system will interface with the database so that a Community Services and HPD can stay apprised of resources available; referrals, etc. on cases where residents call for assistance.
- **SHL:** Is there data about aging, disability and caretaking and family living situations? For example, in an immigrant community, there may be multigenerational homes. Is there data on this?
- Jan G. to ask Marcie about what data may be available.

## **7. Open Discussion/ Community Comments**

- Delegate Alonzo Washington is hosting a walk and listening session on East West Highway on May 31, 2022 at 5:30 PM. RETF members encouraged to attend and bring an equity lens to the walk. The purpose is to assess road safety, equitable transportation and pedestrian safety.
- Moment of Silence to think of families impacted by shooting in Uvalde, TX.

## **8. Adjourn Meeting**

MC Motion to adjourn meeting. RB move to adjourn. JM second. All in favor.

**Adjourned 8:42 PM**