

Arlington County Tenant Landlord Commission

Virtual Meeting 7 p.m.

Meeting Notes, October 13, 2021

Commissioners present: David Timm (Chair), Kirit Mookerjee, Kristen Clegg, Nicole Merlene, Bismah Ahmed, Matthew Whitefield, Chris Wimbush.

Excused Absent: Commissioner Emily Camardo

Staff: Rolda Nedd, Hector Mercado

Call to order and Roll Call at 7:03 p.m.

Chair Timm provided information on two items for which volunteers were requested - Neighborhood College Panel- November 18 and RFP Review Committee. Also reminded Commissioners of the upcoming Fair Housing Stakeholder meeting and public meeting.

Public Comment: No one for public comment

October's meeting notes were unanimously approved. Motioned and seconded by Commissioners Merlene and Wimbush.

Marbella Relocation Plan – Kim Painter, APAH and Jarey Wilson, Housing Opportunities addressed questions from the Commission, regarding APS confirming that students will continue to attend their current schools during relocation. It was confirmed that transportation arrangements for school attendance would be considered in order to address this issue. Ms Wilson was not able to provide additional information on alternate properties for relocation. The Relocation Plan was approved by a vote of 6 Commissioners and one abstention.

FY2022 Legislative Priorities

Ilana Creinin, County Legislative Liaison summarized five priority areas that the County Board would present at the Board meeting on October 16. She also described the timeline for the General Assembly actions for the new term and advised how best to develop priorities for consideration by the Board. Commissioner Whitefield explained that the suggestions which he provided were a compilation of ideas from several organizations and housing advocates and that he is unable to advocate for any specific bills as a representative of LSNV. Chair, David Timm invited each Commissioner to propose two recommended priorities as a point from which to build consensus. All Commissioners provided suggestions. Apart from common themes, Commissioner Bismah suggested support for extending the state emergency rental assistance program; a statewide Housing Choice Voucher program and expansion of the Eviction Diversion Pilot program. After some discussion, it was determined that the following three areas were most common:

1. Ensure Right to Counsel for tenants in eviction cases

2. Require Mutuality of Attorney's fees
3. Warranty of Habitability and minimum living standards

Chair, David Timm moved a motion that Commissioners allow him to craft language that included these priorities which he would send for their review prior to sending to the County Board. Commission Wimbush moved and Commissioner Klegg seconded. Vote was 6 Commissioners in favor, one abstention.

Bu-Gata's Annual Report – Saul Reyes, Executive Director, Bug-gata provided a report of the organization's activities for the past fiscal year. The report summarized the most commonly occurring problems/complaints from tenants; outreach to tenants, workshops, meetings and areas of collaboration. Greenbriar and Park Shirlington are being monitored as "at risk" properties. A copy of the report was requested by Commissioner Wimbish. A question about knowledge of any landlords refusing to participate, received a response that if any Bugata becomes aware of any difficulties they do follow up with the landlords.

Staff Report- Rolda Nedd provided reminders of the upcoming Fair Housing public meetings and other Affordable Housing Month events.

The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.