

**Citizens Advisory Commission on Housing  
Virtual Meeting Notes**

The Housing Commission convened its meeting at **7:05pm** on **January 12, 2023**.

<b>PRESENT (IN-PERSON)</b>	Chair Kellen MacBeth Commissioner Eric Berkey Commissioner Anika Montgomery Commissioner Haley Norris Commissioner Michael Hemminger Commissioner Karen Serfis Commissioner Rubalcava
<b>PRESENT (VIRTUALLY)</b>	Commissioner Margaret McGilvray Commissioner Nikki Blake Disability Advisory Commission Liaison Doris Ray
<b>ABSENT</b>	Commissioner Paul Browne Commissioner Laura Saul Edwards Commissioner Eric Lee
<b>STAFF</b>	Alex McMillen, Chris Dimotsis, Sarah Pizzo

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[View the Meeting Recording Here](#)

**Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda**

Nora Molina commented as a current tenant of the Serrano Apartments. She raised issues with the living conditions in the Serrano that need to be fixed immediately. Some of the issues she raised were: water shut-offs without proper planning or communication with vulnerable residents about alternative water supplies during the shut-off, heat shut-offs for sometimes more than a day without proper planning and communication with vulnerable residents about alternative heat sources or arrangements during the heat outages, extended elevator outages impacting one or both elevators in a building, water coming out of the faucets a yellowish color, and packages being stolen with inaction from property management to prevent further theft. She urged the Serrano to fix the issues and the County to take the necessary actions to see the fixes are made.

Kellen MacBeth said that he was in contact with the County and advocates about the issues in both Nora Molina's comments as well as a letter that advocates sent to the County. He said that there would be two meetings on this topic in the coming months. One will cover the current property issues and long-term development challenges at the site, where both AHC and tenants will be invited to speak. The second meeting would be a staff update on implementation of the CAF Strategies document.

Eric Berkey said that having two meetings on this topic is a good idea but that some of the issues are urgent and that the Commission request these issues be fixed immediately.

Anika Montgomery asked if it was time for the County to step in and determine if the building was still habitable. She also asked what the renovation plan would be at the property.

Sara Rubalcava said the current situation is shameful. She said AHC should be proactive in helping the residents instead of making them come to them with the issues. Eric Berkey said he agreed and AHC should have never been in that situation in the first place, but that AHC and the new management company have made many improvements since the situation first arose in 2021.

Michael Hemminger said there needs to be a short-term fix to these issues. Eric Berkey agreed and made a motion to send a letter to AHC on behalf of the Commission to fix the issues discussed and invite them to attend the March meeting to discuss the topic in more detail. Sara Rubalcava seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously 9-0.

### **Approval of Notes – Action**

Karen Serfis made a motion to accept the notes and Eric Berkey seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 8-0 with one abstention by Commissioner Rubalcava.

- [View the December 2022 Housing Commission notes here](#)

### **Crystal Houses – Information**

Staff introduced the selected Development team, consisting of the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH) and EYA Development. Staff also gave background on the unique project, shared how the selection process played out, the affordable housing program at the site, the anticipated funding requests, and some important project milestones. The Development team also spent some time introducing themselves to the Commission, especially the EYA team, which doesn't have as much experience working in Arlington and with the Commission as APAH does.

Kellen MacBeth asked what the long-term plan is for Crystal House 1 and 2 (CH1&2). Chris Dimotsis answered those buildings would stay in Washington Housing Conservancy (WHC) control and that about 65% of them have already undergone renovations. Kellen MacBeth also asked if the rents at CH1&2 are committed affordable rents or are market rate rents. Chris Dimotsis answered that WHC has self-imposed affordability requirements at the site at around 80% Area Median Income (AMI), although some units do go down to 50% AMI.

Karen Serfis asked if the homeownership opportunities would be market rate or affordable. Jack Lester answered that has yet to be decided but that they will be substantially market rate in order to leverage funds to help off-set other costs to the development.

Eric Berkey asked how the affordable housing program was chosen and who has discretion on the program going forward. Chris Dimotsis answered that there are a set of affordability minimums that are laid out in the Disposition and Development Agreement (DDA). He also answered that the county picked the group with the most competitive housing program using the county adopted policies such as the Affordable Housing Master Plan (AHMP).

Eric Berkey also asked how we can focus on getting more 30% and 40% AMI units. Chris Dimotsis answered that was a focus of the County during selection. He also answered the County asked the development team to increase the amount of 30% AMI units at the site despite a bit higher funding request. Additionally, the 48 proposed units at 30% AMI would more than double the 30% AMI CAF stock for the county.

Michael Hemminger asked about the design for the homeownership units at Crystal House 7&8. Haley Norris answered that was approved in the 2019 site plan and they are working within that plan currently. Michael Hemminger also asked if there will be free Wi-Fi at the property. Mitch Krispell

answered that every unit will have free Wi-Fi at the property and that is the standard for all new construction properties they bring online.

Doris Ray asked how they were going to maximize both affordable and market-rate Type-A accessible units at the site. Carmen Romero answered that they will exceed state minimum requirements and that they strive to get up to 10% Type-A accessible at new properties. Mitch Krispell added that at the very least 5% of CAFs will be Type-A accessible and at least 18% will be Universal Design.

### **Housing Commission 2023 Workplan – Action**

The Housing Commission workplan was an informational item in December 2022. This month Commissioners reviewed the document and offered final edits before voting on it.

- [View the Housing Commission 2023 Workplan here](#)

Michael Hemminger asked that an equity analysis be added to whatever project comes before the Commission. Eric Berkey asked that a review of the Affordable Housing Ordinance be added. The Commission also discussed meeting preferences going forward and the upcoming schedule of items.

The Commission voted to approve the 2023 Workplan unanimously 9-0.

### **Development Updates – Information**

Staff shared an update on Queens Court. Shortly before the new year, the County received \$1,445,614 in construction cost savings for the Queens Court development. As a reminder, Queens Court contains 249 affordable units in the Roslyn area, and was approved for a total \$16.7M AHIF loan – or about \$67k per unit. The \$1.4M in cost savings will be applied towards the Queens Court AHIF loans.

That was the only staff update. Additionally, the following handout was sent to the Commission.

- [View the January development updates handout here](#)

### **Subcommittee Reports – Information**

Karen Serfis reported there will be a Homeownership Subcommittee meeting on February 17<sup>th</sup> from 8:30-10:00am.

Meeting adjourned at **9:05pm**.