

**Arlington County Housing Commission
Meeting Notes**

The Housing Commission convened its meeting at 7:03pm on November 7, 2024.

PRESENT Chair Kellen MacBeth
Commissioner Karen Serfis
Commissioner Katie Wenger
Commissioner Zack Linick
Commissioner Margaret McGilvray
Commissioner Anika Montgomery
Commissioner Joseph Ventrone
Commissioner Nikki Blake
Commissioner Bryan Coleman
Commissioner Elizabeth Escovar

PRESENT (Virtually) Commissioner Danny Ross
Commissioner Jason Schwartz

ABSENT

STAFF Alex McMillen, Richard Tucker, Akeria Brown, Caitlin Jones, Russell Danao-Schroder, Joel Franklin, Jennifer Daniels

[View the Meeting Recording Here](#)

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

Alice Hogan introduced herself and her organization, Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance. They have branches for each northern Virginia jurisdiction. They track policy, provide feedback and advocacy, have newsletters and monthly meetings.

Approval of Notes – Action

There were no edits to the notes. Karen Serfis made a motion to approve the notes, Joe Ventrone seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- [View the October 10, 2024, Housing Commission notes here.](#)

Homeownership Study – Information

Staff presented the item.

- [View the homeownership study here.](#)

Joe Ventrone asked who provides homeownership education. Akeria Brown answered the county currently works with the Latino Economic Development Center to provide financial and homeownership purchase counseling. Virginia Housing also has a homebuyer education course. Joe Ventrone asked if they are HUD approved counseling agencies. Staff confirmed they are.

Doris Ray asked if the programs provide adequate accommodation for those particularly with sensory disabilities. Karen Serfis answered they provide appropriate accommodation for people who have disabilities.

Alice Hogan asked if there was a difference in the level of repair between the three tiers in the Home Improvement Loan Program. Caitlin Jones answered that the level of repair may not necessarily be different, but it is a smaller loan amount.

Alice Hogan asked if the Real Estate Tax Relief (RETR) program would defer or exempt taxes. Akeria Brown answered the Department of Human Services (DHS) would lead that process and determine that as they go forward. Kellen MacBeth asked why RETR program is in DHS and not CPHD. Russell Danao Schroder said the program used to be with the tax assessor but was moved to DHS to better serve clients.

Joe Ventrone said the Homeownership Production Fund Pilot will help address the supply issue, which is Arlington's biggest homeownership issue. Joe Ventrone asked if modular housing was being considered. Caitlin Jones said they are open to what ideas come out of the program. Richard Tucker said there will likely not be additional zoning studies and that developers should work within zoning as it currently exists.

Kellen MacBeth asked if the funding for this pilot is directly tied to the HUD PRO grant funding the county applied for. Richard Tucker said they are hopeful they will get funding from HUD but that all of these recommendations can be considered as part of the Board's regular budget process.

Kellen MacBeth asked if the county is looking into having a Right of First Refusal in a program like this to buy affordable units from the developer. Staff said that is something that is being discussed.

Kellen MacBeth asked if there is information on how many more people will be able to purchase a home with these programs than are able to currently. Akeria Brown answered they do have that information but that it is tied to the amount of allocation and can provide that information offline. Joe Ventrone said that information should be provided to the County Board and the public, so they know what programs will best use of funds.

Kellen MacBeth asked if the items that don't have a fiscal impact will be implemented. Caitlin Jones confirmed that is the plan.

Margaret McGilvray asked if policies will be changed for the programs that don't need fiscal allocations. Akeria Brown said that all policies, such as the MIPAP guidelines, will have to be approved by the County Board.

Doris Ray asked if there is any data on the impact of rising condo fees and how that presents a barrier to purchasing and maintaining. Akeria Brown said that those are issues and were identified in the Barriers to Homeownership Analysis.

Alice Hogan asked what the impact of the Missing Middle lawsuit would be. Richard Tucker said it is hard to quantify the impact of the lawsuit. He said the county will rely on developers' proposals to develop homeownership opportunities as Missing Middle isn't an option at least in the short term.

Annual Reports – Information

Staff presented the item.

Kellen MacBeth asked staff to confirm that the number of CAFs is counted when they are approved, not constructed. Russell Danao Schroder confirmed that was how they were counted. The dashboard shows how many are approved, under construction and currently online.

Joe Ventrone said he was very impressed with how much data the county makes available. He said it should be publicized more than it is. Karen Serfis said she wished other jurisdictions had this amount of information available.

Katie Wenger asked how to find the webpage. Russell Danao Schroder answered you can find it from the affordable housing dashboard webpage. Katie Wenger asked if anything found during inspections can be used against residents (i.e. overcrowding in units). Jennifer Daniels said she doesn't believe they track that type of thing but that they can follow up with the commission.

Elizabeth Escovar asked how many languages the education materials were translated in. Jennifer Daniels answered they were in English and Spanish with a QR code that allows people to use google translate into any language. Elizabeth Escovar recommended making it easier to access and said that google isn't always a perfect translation.

Kellen MacBeth asked if there is data on how many fair housing complaints had been submitted to Arlington County this year. Russell Danao Schroder showed the data from the indicators report broken down by where the complaint was made. Jennifer Daniels added the county will be able to report on the fair housing testing that was recently done soon as well. Kellen MacBeth said it would be great to know the types of fair housing complaints by violation type.

Kellen MacBeth asked for more information on the fair housing materials that were distributed to CAF residents. Jennifer Daniels said the county worked with BUGATA and they helped deliver packets to 9,000 CAF units. Jennifer Daniels posed the packet for the group in the chat.

Kellen MacBeth asked if the county knows how many fair housing complaints have come from CAF properties versus non-CAF properties. Jennifer Daniels answered that CPHD does not have that information. Kellen MacBeth said that information would be helpful to have.

Kellen MacBeth asked if the dashboard tracks fair housing violations by status or by how many were found to not have merit. Russell Danao Schroder said that is not data that CPHD has.

Katie Wenger said it would be beneficial to distribute fair housing information to the MARK properties as well.

Kellen MacBeth asked if the county plans to start resident councils at other properties besides Barcroft. Jennifer Daniels answered BUGATA has technical services to help with resident councils in their contract. Kellen MacBeth asked if it was possible to provide payment to attend those types of meetings. Jennifer Daniels said the county is not exploring that at this time.

Kellen MacBeth asked where things stand with the Serrano Apartments and how inspections went. Jennifer Daniels said they can check with the asset management team.

Kellen MacBeth asked if there are any changes to the schedule for some implementation items. Joel Franklin said they are mostly on track with the schedule.

Kellen MacBeth asked if Arlington is looking into becoming part of the Fair Housing Assistance Program for HUD. Joel Franklin answered the housing division is looking into it and meeting with local jurisdictions with experience to evaluate.

Doris Ray asked if the county is tracking how many Type A units are being added to the affordable housing stock. Russell Danao Schroder said the county does track the amount of Type A units, in 2024 it was about 10% of the stock added. Doris Ray asked how far away the county was from having 10% Type A across all CAFs. Russell Danao Schroder said he could work with asset management on getting that number.

Rent Stabilization Study Resolution – Action

Kellen MacBeth presented the item.

- [View the resolution here.](#)

Joe Ventrone asked where the supporting information that was sent to the commission in advance came from. Kellen MacBeth answered that both he and Jason Schwartz had sent out supporting information.

Kellen MacBeth asked the Commission if they think it is a good use of county time to do the study. Bryan Coleman said the whereas's in the resolution make a good case as to why it would be good for the county to conduct the study.

Kellen MacBeth said rent gouging and rent stabilization terminologies were both used because they have a slightly different focus. Rent gouging is usually a higher end cap, whereas rent stabilization is usually increases tied to an index such as Area Median Income.

Katie Wenger said in her conversations with BUGATA she has heard a strong desire for rent stabilization. She asked what it would look like to pass politically. Kellen MacBeth said that would ultimately be up to the County Board but acknowledged a rent stabilization policy would likely not pass with the current political landscape.

Karen Serfis asked what the potential cost of the study may be. Kellen MacBeth said it is difficult to say but that it would likely be no more than \$100,000.

Joe Ventrone said he thinks the county should do the study. He said it is important to be as transparent as possible. He asked the tenth "whereas" in the resolution be amended to include language acknowledging property owners, in addition to the language acknowledging renters and workers.

Jason Schwartz said the resolution is fair in presenting a neutral case. He said that given the current political makeup this resolution would not pass. He asked that the resolution language include the potential impacts to the three Affordable Housing Master Plan (AHMP) goals.

Karen Serfis made a motion to approve the resolution. Margaret McGilvray seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Development Updates – Information

Staff presented the development updates.

- [View the Development Updates here.](#)

Subcommittee Reports – Information

Karen Serfis said comments on the homeownership study can be sent to staff until December 6.

Margaret McGilvray said CDCAC was going to hear a Section 108 loan application but that it got tabled and will be considered at a later date.

Kellen MacBeth said it would be valuable to have a representative to the Historic Affairs Landmark Review Board. Joe Ventrone offered to be the representative.

Katie Wenger said the Green Building Incentive Policy is still open for comment and that staff will be attending the December meeting to present the updates.

Elizabeth Escovar informed the commission that the County Board approved the recovery residences amendment that was heard the previous months.

Meeting adjourned at **9:50pm**.