

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

The Housing Commission convened its meeting at **7:05pm** on **June 1, 2023**.

PRESENT (IN-PERSON)	Chair Kellen MacBeth Commissioner Anika Montgomery Commissioner Karen Serfis Commissioner Nikki Blake Commissioner Margaret McGilvray Commissioner Sara Rubalcava Commissioner Paul Browne Commissioner Laura Saul Edwards Commissioner Elizabeth Escovar Disability Advisory Commission Liaison Doris Ray
PRESENT (VIRTUALLY)	Commissioner Michael Hemminger
ABSENT	Commissioner Haley Norris
STAFF	Alex McMillen, Anne Venezia, Sarah Pizzo

[View the Meeting Recording Here](#)

Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

There was no public comment on items not on the agenda.

Approval of Notes – Action

Karen Serfis made a motion to approve the notes, Laura Saul Edwards seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- [View the April 13, 2023, Housing Commission notes here.](#)

Crystal Towers 3 – Action

Staff presented the action item before handing it over to the Applicant team to present as well.

- [View the handout here](#)

Kellen MacBeth noted that, similarly to the Americana Hotel site plan, this housing program proposes a cash contribution in-lieu of on-site committed affordable units (CAFs). He said the County Board should not rely on developer contributions to fund the Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF).

Paul Browne asked if the base contribution was always on-site units optional. Staff answered that in the past developers have typically contributed cash to meet the base affordable housing requirement. However, it is completely up to the developer whether they decide to meet the base ordinance through cash or units. Paul Browne said he was going to vote against the site plan because it does not include on-site CAFs. He stated we should be adding the Crystal House infill units in addition to on-site units through CAFs, not have a tradeoff for one to fund the other. The Applicant did add that the Crystal Houses Infill development will be right across the street from this site.

Elizabeth Escovar asked how the cash contribution will be used. Staff answered that it will go into the AHIF and be used for pipeline projects, including the Crystal Houses Infill development. Elizabeth Escovar also asked to explain the base affordable housing ordinance. Staff answered that the base is a standard calculation from the Zoning Ordinance that developers must meet. Most developers meet the base contribution through the cash payment instead of on-site units. Elizabeth Escovar asked if there would be any displacement. Staff answered the site is a current parking lot.

Kellen MacBeth asked how many accessible units there will be on-site. Staff answered there will be zero on-site Type A CAFs and five market rate Type A units. Kellen MacBeth also asked for staff to include equity analyses to the best of their ability to the Commission for projects in the future.

Laura Saul Edwards asked what the unit composition would be for the development. The Applicant answer there would be 30 studios, 24 junior 1BRs, 99 1BRs, 21 junior 2BRs, and 35 2BRs. Laura Saul Edwards also asked how environmentally sustainable the building would be. The Applicant answered it would be a LEED Gold building, have on-site solar, bird friendly windows and other sustainable aspects.

Elizabeth Escovar asked what amenities the project will have and how it will integrate with the community. The Applicant answered there will be a handful of parks delivered in the near future. The design will also make the space more easily navigable. However, they did note there is no public easement for the site although it will not be gated off.

Kellen MacBeth asked if the County has negotiating power regarding the market rate unit composition mix and sizes. Staff answered the County does not have that negotiating power for market rate units.

Doris Ray asked if the County could make developers build more Type A market rate units. Staff answered that the county can only require the 2% of total units to be Type A units as is law in the Americans with Disabilities Act. Doris Ray asked how stringent inspections were to ensure Type A units were being delivered. Staff answered that is a question for the Inspections Division but that inspectors do ensure all Type A units are delivered. Doris Ray also asked if reasonable accommodations could be made in the future to non-Type A units to accommodate potential renters who need a Type A unit. Staff said they were unaware of any information on this and that they could follow up.

Kellen MacBeth asked if the county has the authority in a site plan negotiation to ask the Applicant to have a set aside reserve to fund reasonable accommodations for future residents in need of accommodation. Staff said they do not have an answer but can follow up with the Commission.

Elizabeth Escovar asked what the rents will be at the new Crystal Towers 3. The Applicant answered they will be market rents, but they haven't been determined yet as the building is a few years away from being delivered.

Laura Saul Edwards made a motion to approve the project with the staff recommendation but to make note of the concerns discussed by the Commission in their letter to the County Board. The motion was seconded by Margaret McGilvray. The motion passed 5-4 with Commissioners Blake, Edwards, MacBeth, Rubalcava and Serfis in favor. Commissioners Browne, Escovar, Hemminger and McGilvray voted against the motion. Commissioner Montgomery abstained.

The Arva – Action

Staff presented the action item before handing it over to the Applicant team to present as well.

- [View the handout here](#)

Kellen MacBeth urged the developer to consider meeting the base affordable housing ordinance through on-site units. The Applicant answered that is not a decision that is made at this point in the process. They did note they are very likely to make the cash contribution.

Margaret McGilvray asked if there is market demand for the proposed commercial space. The Applicant answered they did market studies and met the Special GLUP study requirements, but that they also are flexible to provide retail equivalent uses if there isn't standard retail demand.

Paul Browne asked if the muse was public access. The Applicant answered it will be. Paul Browne asked if the unit sizes were gross square footage or net rentable square footage. The Applicant answered it is net rentable square footage. Paul Browne asked if there are market rate 3BR units at the site. The Applicant answered there are no 3BR market rate units at the site.

Michael Hemminger asked the Applicant if he has ever read the book The Color of Law. Michael Hemminger said we end up concentrating poverty and it leads to unlivable conditions. This also leads to worse life outcomes and service available, creating a cycle of poverty. Michael Hemminger encouraged the Applicant to look at what outcomes they are causing. The Applicant did note that this proposal is recommending on-site affordable units.

Michael Hemminger asked what the parking ratio is. The Applicant answered it is about 0.8 spaces per unit. Michael Hemminger asked what barrier there would be between the proposed bike path and Route 50. The Applicant answered it is a large tree stand in between the path and road.

Anika Montgomery asked if the 3BR units had dens. The Applicant answered they do not have dens.

Laura Saul Edwards asked how many Type A units there will be. The Applicant answered that there will be 6 market rate Type A units. They do not have an exact number of Type A CAFs yet but will have at least one.

Kellen MacBeth made a motion to approve the project with the staff recommendation but to ask the Applicant to meet the base affordable housing ordinance through on-site CAFs. The motion was seconded by Margaret McGilvray. The motion passed unanimously.

Housing Commission Charter – Action

Kellen MacBeth detailed the proposed changes made to the Charter since it was last updated.

- [View the proposed Charter here](#)

Margaret McGilvray asked who oversees HOME funds, the Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee (CDCAC), or the Housing Commission. Staff answered it is largely managed by CDCAC but that occasionally the Housing Commission will hear projects that include federal funds.

Karen Serfis asked what happens when a commissioner's appointment is up. Kellen MacBeth answered that the staff liaison and Chair work together to ask current members if they would like to stay on the Commission when their term is nearing its end. If not, they roll off the Commission and a new member is appointed.

Laura Saul Edwards made a motion to approve the Charter. It was seconded by Paul Browne. The motion passed unanimously.

Housing Commission Equity Framework – Action

Kellen MacBeth went over the Equity Framework with the Commission.

- [View the Equity Framework here](#)

Margaret McGilvray asked if the five questions concerning racial equity can be included on site plan projects. Kellen MacBeth answered he is working with staff to get that to be part of each projects' analysis.

Laura Saul Edwards said she likes the framework and noted that the decisions the Commission makes needs to be based on data points. She also said the Commission should be asking the Applicant these types of questions when they come in front of the Commission. Laura Saul Edwards asked if there is a list of questions the Commission can prepare and provide to the Applicant in advance to answer.

Laura Saul Edwards made a motion to approve the Equity Framework. Karen Serfis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Housing Commission 2022 Annual Report – Action

Kellen MacBeth introduced the Annual Report to the Commission.

- [View the Annual Report here](#)

Laura Saul Edwards made a motion to approve the Annual Report. The motion seconded by Margaret McGilvray. The motion passed unanimously.

Development Updates – Information

Staff announced the Park Shirlington officially closed on financing. The remainder of Development Updates was spent getting representatives for upcoming community meetings and reviewing previous community meetings that representatives attended.

- [View the Development Updates here](#)

Subcommittee Reports – Information

Karen Serfis gave an update on the Homeownership Subcommittee. She noted multiple upcoming engagement opportunities for Commissioners to attend.

Meeting adjourned at **9:28pm**.