

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

The Housing Commission convened its meeting at **7:03pm** on **July 6, 2023**.

PRESENT (IN-PERSON)

PRESENT (VIRTUALLY)

Chair Kellen MacBeth
Commissioner Anika Montgomery
Commissioner Karen Serfis
Commissioner Nikki Blake
Commissioner Margaret McGilvray
Commissioner Sara Rubalcava
Commissioner Laura Saul Edwards
Commissioner Elizabeth Escovar
Commissioner Michael Hemminger
Commissioner Haley Norris
Commissioner Katie Wengner

ABSENT

Commissioner Paul Brown

STAFF

Alex McMillen, Melissa Danowski, Marc McCauley, Tynan Stevenson,
Vanessa Street, Sarah Pizzo, Richard Tucker, Caitlin Jones, Akeria Brown

[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

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

- [View the June 1, 2023, Housing Commission notes here.](#)

Barcroft Initial Renovation Phase Use Permit – Action

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

- [View the draft Board Report here](#)

Mary Hynes provided public comment on the item on behalf of the Arlington Community Foundation. She spoke in support of 10% of all units at Barcroft being affordable for those up to 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI). She also pushed for larger family size units.

Kellen MacBeth asked if residents have been consulted on canopy decisions at the site. The Jair Lynch team said that has not been part of their outreach, noting there are some historical considerations that may limit them.

Kellen MacBeth asked for an update on the AMI levels that will be provided at the site. Staff answered they hope to have a firmer answer on that at a meeting later this fall.

Elizabeth Escovar asked how big the courtyards are and if they have any amenities or organized activities. The Jair Lynch team shared renderings of the courtyards with picnic tables, grills, playgrounds and other amenities.

Elizabeth Escovar asked for more information on air conditioning and heating. The Jair Lynch team confirmed each unit will have control over their own system.

Elizabeth Escovar asked for more information on parking at the site. The Jair Lynch team confirmed the existing parking will stay. There will be no reductions or additions at this time.

Kellen MacBeth asked for the square footage of each bedroom type. The existing 1-bedroom units average 650 square feet. The existing 2-bedroom units average 770 square feet. The 3-bedroom units average 985 square feet. The 4-bedroom units are a little over 1,100 square feet.

Kellen MacBeth asked if existing residents whose units will be converted to larger units will move back into their same unit. The Jair Lynch team confirmed that they will work to best fit families into homes that fit their size needs.

Kellen MacBeth asked the Jair Lynch team to talk more about the tree canopy on the site. The Jair Lynch team went over their tree preservation plan. They confirmed they are adding more trees on the site than they are required to.

Karen Serfis made a motion to approve the project with the staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Haley Norris. The motion passed unanimously 10-0.

Homeownership Study – Information

Staff and the Homeownership Subcommittee Chair Karen Serfis presented the item.

- [View the presentation here](#)

Kellen MacBeth asked if staff talked to Washington DC about their homeownership programs. Staff confirmed they are looking at many localities in their study and are trying to identify best practices. Staff did note that as a locality the county may not be able to finance all recommendations that come out of the study right away. There will be implementation work that has to occur after the recommendations are made.

Kellen MacBeth asked if there is a Missing Middle pilot program that is happening in conjunction with this study. Staff answered there will be a separate Missing Middle pilot study that will occur. More information is coming on that pilot program in the near future.

Katie Wenger asked if the engagement included populations of typically underrepresented groups. Staff answered they did reach out to those populations. This included reaching out specifically to those trying to attain homeownership in the future.

Housing Choice Voucher Waitlist Opening – Information

Staff from the Department of Human Services gave a presentation on the Housing Choice Voucher waitlist opening.

- [View the presentation here](#)

Kellen MacBeth asked if DHS is sending flyers home with Arlington Public School (APS) students. Staff answered they are not exactly sure how APS runs outreach but that is a strategy they will be sure to include in the future.

Kellen MacBeth asked for more information on the engagement plan to reach all populations. Staff answered they are partnering with organizations specializing in immigrant issues, elderly households, racial and ethnic minority groups, and others, to make sure high need populations are aware of the opportunity.

Elizabeth Escovar asked for more information on how applications will be processed and ensuring it is an equitable process. Staff answered they will have training sessions for non-profits providers to reach those without internet access. Groups that work with homeless persons will have hard copies of the forms that will be manually entered into the system by staff. Staff is also working to include information on how to best access computers/internet for those that don't have access to the internet.

Kellen MacBeth asked if those who have previously applied for rental assistance will be notified. Staff noted there may be a capacity issue with this, but it is something they will consider and look into. Staff did note that their interdepartmental team strives to make sure every DHS client is aware of the opportunity.

Kellen MacBeth asked if those that do not get placed on the waitlist through the lottery will receive information with other resources. Staff confirmed that letters notifying those that were not selected would have that information.

Katie Wenger asked that staff let the Commission know when the date is chosen so they can push information out as well.

Legislative Priorities – Action

Kellen MacBeth went over the Legislative Priorities document sent to the Commission ahead of time.

Karen Serfis asked how broad the legislative priorities should be. Kellen MacBeth answered he doesn't want to be over prescriptive but would like to be a little more descriptive than the current version of the document. He said some of these topics could use more information gathering.

Michael Hemminger asked if the priorities were listed in order of importance. Kellen MacBeth answered they were in no particular order.

Michael Hemminger also asked if the Affordable Housing Ordinance (AHO) would be a legislative priority. Kellen MacBeth answered the AHO would not be a legislative priority due to the political feasibility in Richmond, but that it was something they could possibly pursue after November. He also said that the Commission and staff should have a more formal recommendation of what should be proposed in place of the current AHO. Michael Hemminger said the Commission should put forward the AHO legislative priority anyway to show the community where the Commission stands on the issue.

Nikki Blake asked if the Commission reviewed best practices around mold remediation. Kellen MacBeth answered that that happened as part of the Serrano report, and that the mold related priorities came from that report.

Kellen MacBeth noted that in the past the County Board usually only takes 1-2 of the Commission's legislative priorities.

The Commission agreed to defer the item and hold a Subcommittee meeting on the topic before making a motion to approve the document.

Development Updates – Information

Staff announced the Ballston Holiday Inn site plan would be going to the July County Board meeting for approval. It was only a base AHO contribution.

Staff also announced the Marbella Site A would be going to the County Board in July for loan document approval.

- [View the Development Updates here](#)

Meeting adjourned at **9:15pm**.