

ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
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ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22201
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January 14, 2021
VIRTUAL MEETING VIA TEAMS
7 PM

Meeting Minutes

- I. Chair Roland Watkins called the meeting to order. Members present included Walter Sargeant, Jose Quinones, Susie Lee, Paul Lewis, Sukari Pinnock-Fitts, Kiley Tibbetts, Carole Lieber, Whytni Kernodle, and Helenanne Connolly. County Staff, Rolda Nedd, and Jennifer Daniels were present as guests to present before the Commission. Executive Director Gurjit Chima and Anna Maynard were present on behalf of the Office of Human Rights.
- II. Outgoing Chair Roland Watkins announced Helenanne Connolly's appointment by the County Board as the incoming-Chair. The Chair removed New Business from the agenda to defer these items to the purview of the incoming Chair.
- III. Approval of November minutes: Carole Lieber moved to approve the minutes, Sukari Pinnock-Fitts seconded, approved without corrections
- IV. There was no public comment.
- V. There were no questions on the statistical report.
- VI. There were no extensions.
- VII. Presentation on Housing Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice and Fair Housing Plan-Rolda Nedd and Jennifer Daniels from Community Planning and Housing Development (CPHD) presented the findings of the analysis, which is the first step in creating a housing plan and is developed as a part of Arlington's Consolidated Plan, which is submitted to HUD every 5 years. Mr. Tibbetts asked how the County was responding to income inequality and what data was being used. Staff responded that HUD and American Community Survey data were used. Ms. Connolly asked how housing discrimination testing was to be conducted and if any data was gathered on how the LGBTQ community fared in the analysis. Staff stated that this was not an issue that had come out in their analysis and they had not heard that it was an issue but that they were interested in hearing of concerns in this area. Roland Watkins asked for a definition of "middle housing." Ms. Daniels reported that the County has kicked off a "missing middle" study and that this is focused on types of housing that do not exist in great numbers, i.e. garden-style apartments and duplexes, which by nature are more affordable and more accessible to more people and that much of Arlington is not currently zoned for this type of housing. Mr. Watkins asked if the County Board had increased the income definition of what income qualifies for affordable housing. Ms. Daniels responded that this is tied to the Metropolitan Area Median Income set by HUD. Mr. Watkins commented on a proposed affordable housing development in Pentagon

City that is partially funded by Amazon. Ms. Pinnock-Fitts commented regarding data gaps, and that the report did not indicate that age was considered or that intersectionality between race and other protected class identities was included and asked if these factors are being considered. Ms. Pinnock-Fitts asked if the “tiny house” movement is a consideration as a way to solve the “missing middle” housing problem in Arlington. Ms. Daniels commented that the County Board had broadened the Accessory Dwelling Ordinance which allows people more flexibility in how they build housing options. Ms. Pinnock-Fitts commented that the \$1,200.00 monthly housing grants seemed to be “a drop in the bucket” to the need for housing assistance. Mr. Quinones asked if Minneapolis 2040 had been invited to discuss their housing strategies. Staff commented that the missing middle study is an attempt to look at this issue in an Arlington specific way. Rolda Nedd shared that the ongoing COG study will be looking at LGBTQ impacts and that Arlington will be able to access that data.

- VIII. Executive Directors Report: Gurjit Chima shared that the Barrier Analysis draft is currently in development and the County is waiting on a response from the vendor to comments and questions. The plan is to share the draft with HRC in February. The AAP is with the Deputy County Manager and this is planned to be shared with the HRC in the immediate term.

Ms. Chima shared that in response to Mr. Watkins's question about the permissibility of holding a closed meeting to address concerns raised by the Executive Director, that the County Attorney advised that this was not an appropriate content topic matter to justify a closed meeting per regulations. Ms. Connolly asked Ms. Chima how she would like to have her concerns addressed. Ms. Chima stated that she would defer to the Chair on how to address these concerns but requested at minimum that comments regarding her private life not be made in the future.

- IX. Member Reports:

Ms. Pinnock Fitts commented on the Black real estate photographer on whom a neighbor had called police and expressed concerns of how Black persons in Arlington sitting in their cars trying to access a “hot spot” for internet access may be treated. Ms. Connolly asked if there was an opportunity for the HRC to send a statement of concern about this issue. Ms. Pinnock-Fitts and Ms. Kernodle supported this idea. Ms. Connolly asked if the Police are required to undergo implicit bias training. Ms. Pinnock-Fitts questioned the value of that training in the way it is usually delivered. Ms. Lieber supported Ms. Pinnock-Fitts comments.

- X. Mr. Watkins requested a motion to adjourn; Motion to adjourn by Ms. Lieber, seconded by Ms. Connolly. Mr. Watkins adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM.

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