

DRAFT

Affordable Housing Study Working Group  
July 25, 2013 Meeting Notes

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Members Present: John S. Grant, Michael Spotts, Joan Lawrence, Dave Peterson, Richard Donohoe, Ori Weisz, Dave Leibson, Juan Carlos Velasquez, Candice Rose, Saul Reyes, Linda Kelleher, Kathryn Scruggs, Joe Onyebuchi, Dr. Leonard Hamlin,

Staff: Jennifer Daniels, Russell Danao-Schroeder, Rolda Nedd, Joel Franklin, Marsha Allgeier, Cynthia Stevens

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### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Dr. Hamlin began the meeting at 6:38 by welcoming members and acknowledging new member Saul Reyes ( Non- profit organization) representative and Juan Carlos Velasquez ( Human rights Commission ) representative.

### **2. Icebreaker – led by Linda Kelleher**

Each member was requested to give their impression, identify any “eye openers” from the information presented so far about the goals and targets -

- Linda Kelleher – Became aware of Legal requirements that the County abides by; didn't take for granted code enforcement and property maintenance
- Michael Spotts – impressed by the amount of County support for affordable housing, but recognizes that there is so much need.
- Dr. Hamlin – commented on the makeup and passion of the working group; individual perspectives brought to bear on issues. He also had a better understanding of the amount of effort by the county and still how much needs to be done. He recognized that the Working Group had a large task.
- Richard Donohoe – spoke from a lenders' perspective; commented on market changes since 2005 and prior, when there were many more homeownership programs ; since then costs have increased. He is impressed that Arlington is still making the effort to help buyers.
- Dave Peterson – commented on the large scope of the affordable housing problem. Has more appreciation for the for -profit sector/developers and the difficulty to provide affordable housing.
- Ori Weisz – The large number of stakeholders who are involved. Sees Arlington as a leader in addressing the many challenges and the group needs to help the County to maintain this role.
- Marsha Allgeier – Recognizes that the cost of housing is very high compared to the very low incomes of the persons who are most in need . This poses a challenge to the County in terms of meeting the demand for affordable housing.

- John S. Grant- The breadth and depth of the problem and what Arlington is doing to address it. Looking forward to exploring new solutions.
- Joan Lawrence– attending with the perspective to preserve historic affordable housing districts/buildings eg. Barcroft and Buckingham. These are valuable to the affordable housing stock when well maintained. Was not aware of the decline in home ownership rate. Hope that home ownership programs, can be maintained.
- Joe Onyebuchi- Impressed by Arlington’s commitment to maintaining affordable units and ending homelessness. Would like more information on the Fair housing picture.
- Juan Carlos Velasquez – Advised that the group be aware of disparities that exist.
- Saul Reyes – Knowledgeable about the Buckingham community and hopes to contribute from experience and knowledge.
- Umair Ahsan – Impressed by amount of materials available and work done by County staff and encouraged by the fact that staff intention is to distribute affordable housing throughout the county and not only in certain areas.
- Candice Rose – There are resources for extremely low –income, but not people who are in the middle. Not much for people who are indigent ; decline in home ownership rate was surprising; young people unable to afford to buy, not able to stay in the area because of the cost.
- Kathryn Scruggs – See the benefit of limited number of programs for 60% AMI and below; however concerned for not addressing the needs of 60% and above. Sees the need for a much bigger bucket of subsidies to serve wider group eg. teachers, firefighters,
- Dave Leibson- Sees a problem when one household needsthree minimum wage jobs and incomes in order to afford a one bedroom apartment in Arlington. The housing Grant program prevents many people from becoming homeless.
- Bob Bushkoff - Arlington has a lot of resources to contribute to developing affordable units. could make full use of resources through leveraging and higher densities.
- Having a broad range of housing choices to enable everyone to live and supports the economy.

### **3. Approval of May25th and June 27<sup>th</sup> meeting notes**

Motion to approve the meeting notes was moved by John Grant and seconded by Bob Bushkoff, and passed by acclamation.

### **4. Subcommittee Reports**

- a. Needs Analysis subcommittee Chair reported that the RFP was closed and that a few proposals had been received, which staff is currently reviewing. It is anticipated that a consultant would be under contract by the end of September

- b. Civic Engagement subcommittee Chair, Linda Kelleher indicated that the subcommittee had no report, at this time.

The working group broke into three smaller groups to discuss Arlington's housing principles. Small group discussions ensued for approximately 40 minutes. The working group reassembled and continued their discussion on housing principles based on their small group discussions.

Principle #1 – suggest that principle be reworded as “Housing Affordability” should be a priority to promote a ‘diverse’ community

Principle #2 – suggest that the statements be separated.

- add language on stemming decline of MARKS and decreasing development barriers
- second part might be more of a principle than the first;
- suggest that we find a way to stimulate the market to produce more MARKS that way less of a subsidy would be required for the affordable units.
- MARKS continue to be an important source of housing; there is a need to preserve MARKS

Principle #3 - overall agreement with this principle; add “all ages”

- there was a comment that “needs” is too broad

Point: Members commented that as a principle the language should be broad to carry forward into the future

Principle #4 -

- This principle should be more inclusive of a range of incomes. Principle should address focusing resources among many groups. Other groups than those identified in the principle, also have needs.
- How do we deal with priorities? there should be more focus on prioritizing limited resources
- Members envisioned that this would be a continuing focus for the Working Group

Principles #5 and 7 -should be merged together and “diverse community” moved to principle #1

Dave Leibson offered to craft a statement that includes, “children, families and individuals” for consideration by the group

Any other principles to be added?

John Grant pointed out that “transportation and access to services” should be a principle or included within the principles.

He offered to formulate a statement to bring back to the group.

Suggestion that the definition of affordability be expanded to include- transportation, and perhaps vibrant neighborhoods,  
One member suggested that by broadening the definition, this may be a way to bring the private sector into the conversation.

Dr. Hamlin asked members to provide 'take away' points.

1. The language in the principles should be looked at for revisions
2. Housing affordability instead of affordable housing.
3. How to develop affordable housing not just maintaining and preserving but developing.
4. Importance of definition and word choices to clarify and shape the work of the group

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm