

Affordable Housing Working Group

July 24, 2014 Meeting Notes

Members present: Dr. Leonard L. Hamlin, Michael Spotts, Richard Donohoe, Shelynda Brown, Joan Lawrence, Steve Sockwell, John Grant, Kathryn Scruggs, Linda Kelleher, Ori Weisz, Saul Reyes, Candice Rose

Staff: Russell Danao-Schroeder, Joel Franklin, Rolda Nedd, Cynthia Stevens

1. **Welcome and Introductions**

Dr. Hamlin called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm

2. **Public Comment** – Fifteen minutes has been allocated for public comment; Anyone having comments is advised to sign-up to speak for 3 minutes. There was no request.
3. **Approval of June meeting notes** - June meeting notes were approved. Russell Danao-Schroeder informed the working group that the sub-contractor that previously handled the Communication section of the study was no longer a part of the consulting team and that the Center for Housing Policy and George Mason are working to replace and or provide these services along with County staff.
4. **Civic Engagement and Planning Toolkit** - Linda Kelleher, Civic Engagement Committee chair explained the contents of the toolkit and asked each member to commit to two meetings, their Civic Association and another group where they will make presentations on the study as a way of keeping the community informed about the study. Members were also requested to participate in the County Fair by signing up to help out at the Housing booth to engage the public and get opinions.

Discussion: Dr. Hamlin asked about the length of the presentation/how long is it likely to take? Linda Kelleher responded that maybe 25 minutes, maybe longer if there are questions. She suggested that if there were other questions, people can be referred to the website and staff. Shelynda Brown volunteered to talk with HAND. L. Kelleher advised group to think about other organizations that might be important. Any other groups that you think are important? Kathryn will do Civic Federation, if you think org is important but u don't feel comfortable as Russell. Joan Lawrence mentioned article in the Washington Post

Maureen Markham – September is Affordable Housing Month good to get on agendas. Many organizations such as Alliance for Housing Solutions and others are having meetings.

5. Overview of process through December – Lisa Sturtevant, Russell D-Schroeder
 - Aug – Focus Group Report, Draft Needs Analysis,
 - Geography group will be continuing its work on specific topics
 - September – working group will have meeting to continue work in addition to public forum

Kathryn Scruggs mentioned that Police department is being surveyed now; when will school employees be surveyed? Russell D-Schroeder responded that they will be surveyed.

6. Consultants reports and update

a. Housing Programs Assessment presented by David Versel, George Mason University

Discussion: Kathryn Scruggs: commented on the limited range of incomes covered by CAF units? This can be counterproductive to achieving economic integration if CAF units are not extended to incomes above 60%AMI. Response highlighted the already high subsidy necessary for CAF units and increasing the income range would have an effect on this.

There was a comment on the Real Estate Tax relief program for seniors and the extent to which the County is able to give exemptions to one group. Response: State law provides some flexibility and enables a jurisdiction to elect to have program or not. There was concern about the County's intention to fund this program which foregoes revenue.

Real Estate Tax Relief Q : Understanding of law is that County can't give exemptions to group by law how much flexibility does the county have to do this? A: State law gives some flexibility. State law enables jurisdictions to choose whether to have the program or not. Kathryn Scruggs asked whether there is a cap on home owners' assets for the program? A: Yes CAP of \$340,000

The Assessment included a chart which summarized Affordable Housing provision in surrounding jurisdictions. All other jurisdictions had Public Housing Authorities and it was pointed out that current activity in Montgomery county involves phasing out of Public Housing. Michael Spotts provided information on the program which is being revised to allow PHAs to recapitalize projects and convert projects to rental contracts. Public housing Authorities are eligible to apply for tax credit.

Maureen commented that for homeownership Arlington goes up to 80%AMI

Comment from Dr. Hamlin to add Arlington to the chart in order to see the comparison of programs/policies.

b. Focus groups - A draft report on the focus groups discussions is being completed.

Finishing focus groups and targeted interviews, including commuters

c. Lisa Sturtevant gave an update on In process of putting together **housing forecasts**, household income, size, for seniors and other groups using assumptions based on national and local trends. Survey monkey on assumptions, some people responded. Looking to get from the public agreement on assumptions, what are best assumptions? Do you think the senior growth rate in Arlington is higher or lower than other regions? What about homeownership, would rate increase or decrease? Preliminary forecast being sent to Needs analysis subcommittee to develop policy based on common set of forecasts.

Consultant is working on a Needs Analysis draft for next month's meeting.

7. Goals, objectives and policies follow up – Russell D- Schroeder

- Incorporated comments and revised goals, objectives
- Objective 3 is new under goal #2
- Transportation policy should include walkability, bike-ability

Lisa Sturtevant : Consultant would look at goals and objectives to see where data can be incorporated for refinement

8. Task force meetings:

Geographic group will meet at later point in August; meeting set for August 15

Financing strategies – group had previously discussed strategies to preserve existing housing and other housing policies that have impact on affordable housing. Met since early July, covered many policies, accessory and occupancy standards financial and otherwise will come up with tool box. Lisa Sturtevant suggested that the consultants should join this meeting as several aspects of the study are coalescing and it would make sense to discuss together.

9. Subcommittee reports

- a. Michael Spotts reported - Needs analysis to meet on July 30, time and location to be determined. Report by mid-August. Should have more data to inform discussion.

Public comment: Doris Ray, commended work of Working group.

- 24th Anniversary of ADA law and Olmstead ruling making it law to provide services for persons with disabilities. Appeal to Working Group to focus on providing some priority preference in rental assistance programs, for people with disabilities. People who age and young people as a result of disability need housing. Low income individuals with disabilities should be made a priority in the next five years, for affordable accessible housing. Not in CHAS data, nor in census data, but there is data available.

Dr. Hamlin, thanked her for comments.

He reminded members of Sign- up sheets for meetings that they will attend to inform groups about the study and results so far.

10. Take- away , wrap up–

Kathryn Scruggs – Asked whether the goals and objectives had been updated, if there were new ones and whether members had received them electronically. Russell D-Schroeder will send revised version.

Linda Kelleher reminded the group to send any updated dates for meetings with groups to Russell.

Dr. Hamlin – members were encouraged to inform of availability or absence if unable to attend meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm