

Affordable Housing Working Group

September 25, 2014 Meeting Notes

Member present: Dr. Leonard Hamlin, Shelynda Brown, Matthew de Ferranti, Linda Kelleher, Joan Lawrence, Dave Leibson, Kathryn Scruggs, Dave Peterson, Candice Rose, Michael Spotts, Ori Weisz

Staff: Russell Danao-Schroeder, Joel Franklin, David Cristeal, Marsha Allgeier, Rolda Nedd

Consultants: Jeanette Chapman, Amy Clark

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Michael Spotts called the meeting to order at 6:35 and welcomed everyone. Mathew de Ferranti was introduced as a new member representing the Housing Commission as a replacement for Umair Ashan. Dr. Hamlin sent his regrets.

2. **Public Comment:** Ben Arthur addressed the Working Group and expressed concern about the impact of affordable housing on education. Schools in Arlington are too segregated, he used Kenmore Middle School as an example of poor quality education impacted by its location in the Columbia Heights West neighborhood with a concentration of affordable housing units. Relationship between location of affordable housing and school boundaries, particularly elementary schools must factor into discussion.

3. **Approval of August meeting notes:** August meeting notes were approved. Moved by Dave Leibson seconded by Joan Lawrence.

4. Forum follow-up

Amy Clark of the consulting team invited working group members to give feedback on the 9/22 forum.

- Kathryn Scruggs commented on the large turnout. More enriched discussion occurred with rotation among the tables compared to tables with interest groups. At certain tables there was good opportunity for participants to express their views. Could have used more tables.
- Mathew de Ferranti commented that the “beans” exercise was an excellent way of forcing people to think about competing priorities. Looking forward to this conversation going forward
- Kathryn Scruggs commented on the fact that she withheld her “beans” because there was no jar that represented housing for County employees. Also thought that single parents were not represented.
- Shelynda Brown commented that fewer categories forced participants to select and identify with the group that best fits you. Single parents may see themselves as families with children.
- Joan Lawrence commented on the discussion on matching groups with types of housing which implied that we were attempting to restrict people to certain types of housing, and perhaps this discussion should have been framed differently.
- Marsha Allgeier commented that the discussion should really focus on the types of housing that best suits people’s needs. Current housing stock is of a certain type and given the demographics how should we plan for the future.
- D. Leibson added that he thinks that the County should have a role in affecting housing types as y the market creates primarily one bedroom apartments which are not suitable for families.
- Kathryn Scruggs offered example of senior who downsized and felt guilty that he had too much space and opined about what he could do. Candice Rose questioned what incentive could be given to someone like that, who is “over-housed”. She suggested that accessory dwelling units is one solution to this issue.

- Michael Spotts commented that accessory dwelling units must be part of the affordable housing mix in the future.
- Kathryn Scruggs commented on the Leckey Forum and the information presented on “vertical Villages” with regard to delivering shared and supportive services efficiently.
- Mathew de Ferranti suggested that the presentation should provide some background and contextual information. What has been done so far, the number of units that have been produced which will give a full picture and set the stage for the future. The presentations focused a lot on changes but more context would be useful.
- Linda Kelleher commented that some basic information such as Housing 101 and background information should be available so that people have a common set of facts, eg. Affordable Housing Ordinance.
- Dave Leibson reiterated his request for including absolute numbers in the presentations, not just percentages, which will give a better idea of the issue/needs.
- Mathew de Ferranti commented on Group Four - Future of Arlington, which he found interesting. He surmised that going forward there will still be a “north/south Arlington” divide. More discussion needed
- Linda commented that more time needed for discussion particularly in the group that discussed what “stable housing” meant. This was a robust discussion that allowed for broader thinking about linkages to housing. Joan Lawrence and Kathryn Scruggs agreed.

General comments:

Linda Kelleher thought that the posters were informative although some of the information was already in the slides. Should have been dispersed throughout the room for more people to see, and reduce congestion. Mathew de Ferranti added that one of the posters should reflect current housing policy.

Linda Kelleher requested that a map showing all CAFs and MARKS be available.

5. October Workshop overview:

Amy Clark gave preliminary ideas for the October 11 forum. Suggested that there will be a menu of topics based on the work done on goals and objectives to date.

Ori Weisz made the suggestion that comment cards be made available at the meetings for anyone who may prefer to write comments or did not have an opportunity to take part in the discussion, or prefer not to comment in public.

Mathew de Ferranti suggested that there should be some synthesis of the ideas and discussion which gives some guidance on moving forward. Maybe there are 6 or 8 themes that we can agree on to move forward. He also suggested that the synthesis should be done by someone other than County staff or a County Official.

Michael Spotts cautioned about drawing conclusions from the discussion. As it is a public forum and is not the final aspect of the study, he felt that presentations summaries were sufficient.

Joan Lawrence gave the example of the Columbia Pike process that culminated in a brief summary of what was discussed at tables and offered an opportunity for questions afterwards.

Linda Kelleher offered that we should have an open question such as “what are we missing” which will allow everyone to feel included.

6. Next steps through the end of the year:

Russell Danao-Schroeder described the next steps

- Work session planned for December would be in January instead.
- October 2 presentation to Long Range Planning subcommittee of the Planning Commission – Needs Analysis, Principles, Draft Goal, objectives. Working group invited to attend.

- Oct 7 – Russell and David Cristeal to give presentation to Civic Federation
- October Working Group meeting – Consultants to present work on objectives, goals, policies. Opportunity to refine document and get input from working group.
- No Nov. meeting. Next meeting date for working Group is December 11th date of working group.

Dave Leibson asked a question to clarify how Big issues such as density will be discussed and at what level and how will small issues be identified.

Russell Danao-Schroeder in response, described the proposed structure of the study: Three components

1. Comprehensive Plan element – big policies
2. Strategies tools and targets – Implementation Framework
3. Evaluation, Measures

Marsha Allgeier commented that a lot of work has to be done and perhaps outside of regular working group meetings, more meetings may have to be scheduled to shape the finished product.

Kathryn Scruggs asked about a presentation to the group on public land for public good as she thinks this may have some impact on the work of the group.

Marsha Allgeier explained the work on this initiative. She commented on the public comment process and that generally sites are determined individually as suitable for affordable housing. However, the working group would not be expected to comment.

Matthew De Ferranti requested a schedule for upcoming meetings to allow for future planning.

7. Subcommittee reports

a. Needs Analysis

Michael Spotts reported that the Needs Analysis subcommittee had provided feedback to consultants on the report and that the presentation at the Forum was the finished product. Group is ready to look at other topics moving forward.

b. Civic Engagement

Linda Kelleher asked members of the Working Group to indicate what meetings or organizations they have spoken with or made presentations to:

Shelynda Brown reported on two meetings that she held with her organization

Dave Leibson – 10 year Plan to End Homeless Housing Task Force

Kathryn Scruggs – Interfaith Council

Joan Lawrence– Historic and Landmark Review Board

Dave Peterson - preliminary meeting with Disability Advisory Committee

Ori Weisz – on the next Tenant-Landlord Commission meeting agenda.

Linda Kelleher – will speak at her Civic Association and at Community Services Board

Linda Kelleher commended members on their progress and she reported that APAH has had an interview with notable Harvard Research group and this is a great media opportunity to talk about the study.

Linda Kelleher announced that a table is available at Clarendon Day to share with Alliance for Housing Solutions.

David Cristeal asked what has type of feedback has been received so far.

- Joan Lawrence responded that people are generally curious and want to know what opportunities they have to voice their opinions.

David Cristeal responded that this is not the only nor last opportunity to comment or weigh-in.

- Linda Kelleher indicated that the CSB group is concerned that their population's needs are being considered.

Michael Spotts added that he will contact his civic Association to be on the agenda soon.

Wrap up/take away:

Joan Lawrence expressed appreciation to staff and consultants for work on the Forum on 9/22.

Michael Spotts – reminded the group that there was a lot of work to be done and thanked everyone for their engagement. October 23 is an important meeting, towards the January County Board meeting.

Announcements: Michael Spotts invited Amy Clark to talk about National Housing Policy “paycheck to paycheck” NHC.org new research completed by National center on Housing Policy

David Cristeal announced Bike Tour of Affordable Housing Projects as part of Affordable Housing Month Sept 27.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm