
Members Present: Leonard L. Hamlin, Michael Spotts, Shelynda Brown, Robert Bushkoff, John Grant, Linda Kelleher, Dave Leibson, Kathryn Scruggs, Dave Peterson, Candice Rose, Ori Weisz.

Staff Present: Marsha Allgeier, David Cristeal, Russel Danao-Schroeder, Cynthia Stevens, Anita Friedman, Jennifer Daniels, Rolda Nedd.

1. Welcome and introductions

Ice breaker – members were asked to respond to the question where was your first apartment and what percentage of your income was spent on housing?

The variety of responses allowed members to reflect on the cost of housing at that stage in their lives and how different things are now.

2. Approval of April 25th meeting notes

Leonard L. Hamlin asked if there were any corrections to the meeting notes. The meeting notes were approved by acclamation.

3. Subcommittee reports

a. Needs Analysis subcommittee reported that the group signed off on the RFP which was released on May 20 and will be open until June 24, 2013.

The subcommittee's next assignment is to work with staff to review the preliminary data report as data is collected and compiled. A member asked if it was possible that all committee members could get a copy of the RFP. <http://www.arlingtonva.us>

b. Civic Engagement group reported on it's meeting prior to the Working groups meeting. County staff is requested to set up a 'drop box' for committee members to share articles and contact lists of clients and web addresses of important organizations. The information would eventually be available to the wider working group.

4. Overview of Housing Goals and Targets

Staff presented additional detail regarding the source of contributions from commercial or residential developments to AHIF. This was in response to a request from a working group member after the last meeting. Bob Bushkoff manifested that the Affordable Housing Ordinance was achieving its purpose.

Dr. Hamlin commented that it appears that a substantial amount of funds is collected but that gaps exist; so how do we deal with these gaps? Michael Spotts commented that the committee's job is to identify the gaps and see if any changes are needed to the Affordable Housing Ordinance.

One member asked if it was possible to "stage" the contributions so that they are available over a longer period. Staff responded that the contributions to AHIF are paid to the County upon receipt of the certificate of occupancy for the development and that the timing of the payments has not been an issue in regards to the operation of the AHIF fund.

Overview of Housing Goal 1, 2

- There are various definitions used by the County and by HUD.

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- Dr. Hamlin requested that staff provide clear definitions such as the elderly, 65 and over or 62 depending upon the program.
- Katherine Scruggs commented that the Real estate Tax relief seems furthest from the target of the elderly homeowner who cannot afford to occupy their home. There are many people who are not getting assistance. The gap to be addressed, is people who are not elderly but maybe homeowners. Is it possible to expand Tax Relief program to cover other than the elderly? Anita Friedman explained that county policy is to provide for the most vulnerable.
 - Goal #2: Staff to provide HUD definition of “adequate housing”. Homelessness among school aged children is self reported and is almost always undercounted
 - Dr. Hamlin asked if it is possible to see where pockets of homeless individuals/families reside? Anita Friedman responded that the “Point in Time” survey provides this info.
 - Target 2B: Comprehensive Homeless shelter on schedule to open Fall 2014.
A member asked how many are chronically homeless. Anita Friedman responded that 136 are chronically homeless out of 479 homeless persons. A member asked if there is any cross information among jurisdictions to share information on homelessness persons? Dave Leibson responded that there is a regional body and that jurisdictions share information and communication. Are there programs within the counties that are more effective and is this information shared? Anita Friedman responded that supportive housing works and (HPRP) Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing programs work. A member asked if there was any information on the success of the ‘housing first’ program. Cynthia Stevens indicated that from 2004 to the present 90% of the clients served have remained in housing.

5. Overview of Housing Assistance Programs

Cynthia Stevens will send file with program statistics. Staff pointed out that the definition of poverty used is important as there are differences between the Federal definition or Waldon Cooper definition. <http://www.coopercenter.org>

Michael Spotts raised the question about the effects of potential sequestration cuts and the possible effect on these programs? Cynthia Stevens responding that the County was in the process of servicing vouchers but had to make changes. Other actions may require waivers. The least desirable action would be to withdraw the vouchers.

There are over 3,000 persons on the wait list for Housing Grants and Housing Choice vouchers. Members sought clarity on the wait list numbers and whether there were separate lists for both programs. Staff responded that the housing grant is an open program there is no wait list; everyone who is eligible is served. It’s possible that households could be on both lists.

- Regarding Target 2D staff indicated that given the small number of persons in this category, that the measure should be revisited for changes. Instead we should look at “rent burden” individuals, how many are paying more than 40% of income in rent.
- Target 6A: Staff pointed out that the challenge to this goal is that it has no limit; we do not know how many households are eligible. The goal raises the question, how many households can we afford to support? Currently 8M is spent annually on this program; is it financially sustainable?

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- Target 6b : Several layers of subsidies are required to make housing affordable to 40 and 60% AMI; some are permanent while others are dependent on annual appropriations. This makes the goal less secure over the long term.
 - Target 6c: Staff indicated that currently there is a of 61% placement rate of homeless persons in jobs in Arlington, which is the highest rate in the region

Summary: Dr. Hamlin summarized by requesting staff to provide definitions, clarify terminology and additional information such as COG report for the group.

Staff to provide eligibility requirements for programs to the working group.

Resource – NLIHC.org –Advocates guide – Federal and State Housing programs information.

Alliance for Housing Solutions website also useful.

Wrap-up and adjournment.

Announcements: Bumper stickers from Alliance for Housing Solutions available for members.

Russell Danoa-Schroeder highlighted future meeting dates indicating that feedback is needed, particularly for August. Staff will send email for members to respond. The Housing Division will be planning a forum in September to include wider community and ensure that we are reaching out to as many groups as possible.