

DRAFT

Affordable Housing Study Working Group

Meeting Notes

February 27, 2014

Members Present: Robert Bushkoff, Richard Donohoe, , Linda Kelleher, Joan Lawrence, Dave Leibson, Saul Reyes, Candice Rose, Kathryn Scruggs, Steve Sockwell, Michael Spotts, Umair Ahsan, Shelynda Brown, Doris Topel-Gantos, Ori Weisz,

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

Vice-Chair Michael Spotts called the meeting to order at 6:45 and passed on apologies from Dr. Hamlin who could not attend this meeting.

Approval of January Meeting Notes

Michael Spotts moved for approval of the meeting notes, Kathryn Scruggs seconded and all members were in favor with abstention from Steve Sockwell.

Russell Danao-Schroeder introduced Pam Gannon from Department of Human Resources (DHS) who presented a Draft Supportive Studio Report (handout) . The report is a Final working draft, that is being shared with the community and is available to the Working group as part of the deliberations and the Consultant's work on Housing needs.

Michael Spotts asked whether the size of the units were in compliance with zoning requirements or whether the projects required variances. Pam Gannon indicated that unit sizes varied across the project examples but in general they met minimum code requirements. She commented that this may be an area in which consideration may have to be given with regard to land use and zoning.

Russell Danao-Schroeder introduced the Consultants to the Working Group

Lisa Sturtevant, the Project Lead, introduced members of the team and their individual roles:

David Versel , AICP, and Jeannette Chapman – George Mason responsible for Data Analysis

Agnes Artemel - Artemel and Associates – Communication

Keith Frederick – Frederick Polls LLC – Survey

The presentation (handout) detailed the individual tasks included in the Consultants scope of work .

American Community Survey (ACS) data such as housing trends and socio-economic data at the County level, will be presented at the March Working Group meeting.

Reid Goldstein (attendee) questioned how input from the people who work in the County but do not live here, but have a significant impact, will be included in the study? Lisa Sturtevant responded that non-

resident commuters would be identified and surveyed, for example with flyers at bus stops, at major employers locations, and they would be invited to respond online.

Linda Scruggs asked why the discussion is set at 80% of AMI and not up to 100%. In response Lisa Sturtevant indicated that the Scope of study is limited to 80%, according to the charge.

A member of the public expressed concern about how the varied non-resident commuter group will be included, since many of them may not have computers or access to computers and therefore likely to be underrepresented in the sample. Lisa Sturtevant responded that the only way to get feedback from this group is to direct them to take the survey online. The advertisement of the survey could include information on where public computers are available; or major employers could be involved to encourage employees who are commuters to participate. This may be one area of limitation, but will seek to augment with other methods in order to collect as much information from this group. But there may be gaps.

Reid Goldstein (attendee) questioned the methods for engaging the four groups – individuals with disabilities, immigrants (Hispanics), seniors, homeless, how will they be identified? Lisa Sturtevant responded that the groups will be identified with assistance from County staff. The Disability group will be surveyed using a combination of one-on-one interviews and/or whole group discussions, there is flexibility in using different approaches to meet the needs of different groups.

Linda Scruggs commented that her interest is in the County's major employers – VA Hospital Center, APS, Arlington Government, how will these employees participate? Keith Frederic suggested that an easy way to get input from the Government employees would be to make employees email addresses available and ask those who live outside of the County to take the survey.

Dave Leibson asked whether any form of cost/benefit analysis would be done of the programs as his understanding of the charge, is to determine how best to use resources. Lisa Sturtevant responded that cost benefit analysis is outside the scope of the study, however some patterns and trends would emerge from the data analysis and this can be further analyzed to produce more details and lead towards decisions related to prioritizing the use of resources. Dave Leibson questioned whether the study would produce more than one scenario, in this way many vulnerabilities which surface from the data could be analyzed.

Lisa Sturtevant responded that based on different assumptions, different forecasts may result, shifts in demand, this may lead to different scenarios. The role of the study is to lay the groundwork for major policy recommendations. Could possible develop a model and County could use and adjust in the future.

Dave Leibson commented that in addition to the overall goal of the study, he sees the need to educate the community on the need for Affordable housing and would like to see the study identify opportunities to build interest and support for this. Agnes Artemel responded that a series of easy to read fact sheets would be prepared along the way, as a tool to educate the community.

Steve Sockwell asked for elaboration on the Comprehensive Plan Element. Lisa Sturtevant responded that specific goals and program approaches would be developed, in conjunction with stakeholders and

staff and working groups. Policy options and funding priorities would be explored and implementation strategies identified.

Dave Peterson commented that he hoped the study would yield more than the conclusion that the “County needs a greater supply of Affordable housing”. Lisa Sturtevant answered that the needs assessment would help to determine more specific actions and perhaps what interventions may be needed to affect supply and demand. The intention is to have more specific recommendations.

David Cristeal commented on the need to see Affordable Housing in relation to the overall provision of Housing including the role of MARKS and the wider housing market

Reid Goldstein (attendee) commented on Task #7 and whether the money that makes that work is the decision of the Board; would recommendations be made to fund these programs at this level over a period...concern whether this will end up as another study. Lisa Sturtevant commented that the study must be followed up with mechanisms, implementation and tools, how it gets adopted by the board is beyond consultant’s work.

Russell commented that establishing priorities in the distribution of housing resources is the Manager’s decision. Marsha Allgeier responded that it is the Managers’ responsibility to identify resources to make actions possible. Consultant’s role is to give orders of magnitudes and broad range of options which can guide decisions about the use of resources.

Dave Peterson expressed concern that the consultant may come up with recommendations that may not be acted upon by the Manager. Marsha Allgeier responded that this is the Manager’s report which will be presented to the Board hope that it would be collaborative

Doris Topel-Gantos commented that the work that is being done by the sub groups such as financial tools will feed into the work of the Consultants and will should provide more direction for policy and implementation.

Dave Leibson comment that it is not clearly stated in the Scope that specific recommendations would be developed and by whom? Is that a part of this process? Russell responded that policies can be developed around the consultant’s recommendations.

Marsha Allgeier: This is a Long range plan. Implementation work plan will take years to plan out. By June 2015 the hope is that the study and the Comprehensive Plan Element would represent the long term goal, for the community which the Board will approve. More work is required to decide what tools are possible for implementation.

Task Force Reports

Homeownership Task Force Report - Richard Donohoe

- The committee discussed affordability and looked at the nventory of “For- sale” properties.
- History of h/ownership program and what programs are used.
- Discussed Community Land Trust model – Boston
- Looking at Incentive zoning for workforce development and other topics.

- National Community Land Trust;
- Community Land Trust in Transit oriented communities

Geographic Distribution Task Force – Michael Spotts reported in John’s absence.

- How to maintain and promote a geographic distribution of affordable housing throughout the County
- Existing target Unimplemented
- The committee discussed how to keep track of distributions and use it to promote better balance /distribution.
- The group is looking at land use and zoning patterns. Looking to see how major corridors can be used fully, including Lee Highway
- Monitoring MARKS availability
- Looking to finalize and edit report to have for the wider group

Question Reid Goldstein (attendee): Are we only going to see CAFs in areas where there were MARKS?

Michael Spotts responded that in order to be serious about geographic distribution we need to look at creating other strategies for creating affordable housing in North Arlington. Look at other tools eg. Public land for public good

Financial Strategies Sub-committee – Doris Topel-Ganos

- Partial property tax exemptions; real estate tax relief
- Taking on additional tasks
- Transfer Development Rights, bonus density, zoning process next meeting

Sub Committees

Michael Spotts - Needs Analysis sub-committee has not met for some time, but now that the Consultants are on board they will establish a meeting

Linda Kelleher - Civic Engagement Committee met with the Consultant will set date for next meeting- March 20

Russell commented that it is critical to get the Working group’s input on how the study will unfold. Now is time for the Working group to participate fully. Attendance at upcoming meetings is important as significant input is required in the upcoming tasks.

Announcements/comments

Linda – Arlington Mill grand opening March 24. Not sure if 8 unit SRO wing will be open to tour, because all units will be occupied by March 17.

Michael Spotts provided a brief update on House actions related to updating the Corporate Tax Code.

A motion was moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m.