

DRAFT (to be finalized)

## **Affordable Housing Study Working Group**

**March 31, 2015**

### **Meeting Notes**

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Members present: Michael Spotts, Dr. Leonard Hamlin (Chair), Matthew de Ferranti, Linda Kelleher, Joan Lawrence, Dave Leibson, Dave Peterson, Saul Reyes, Candice Rose, Kathryn Scruggs, Steve Sockwell, Ori Weisz

Staff: Russell Schroeder, Rolda Nedd, David Cristeal,

Consultants: Lisa Sturtevant, Jeanette Chapman, David Versal

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

Meeting called to order at 6:45 by Michael Spotts, Vice Chair

#### **2. Public comment**

No public comment

#### **3. Approval of March 9 meeting notes:**

Meeting notes moved and seconded for approval

Dr. Hamlin expressed thanks to WG members and staff for all work done, substantial document to foster good discussion. Work has resulted in good conversations so far and expect that this will continue.

#### **4. Recap of the March 23, County Board Work Session**

Russell Danao-Schroeder briefly summarized comments from the Board Session held on March 23

- On the issue of affordable housing consideration when planning for major capital investment (public land) - Board members agreed that it was necessary to look at opportunities as they arise. Board directed to use language from the public land policy already agreed upon
- Reframe the question on middle-income to address homeownership
- On the issue of preference, four out of five Board members were in favor of preference based on residency and place of employment.
- On the issues of greater flexibility in housing types – the Board advised on a change in language of policy 1.2.3. to read “explore” instead of “allow”
- Board members agreed the County will continue to look at Affordable Housing as part of future public facilities when appropriate. Board directed staff to include language approved in January 2015 regarding parks and housing. This was one issue with which there was closure, no need to extend conversation on this after this Board meeting

Observations from Working Group members: There were several comments from working group members related to the five major questions discussed at the work session with the Board.

- How By-right development options could be incentivized to accommodate Affordable housing
- How information on availability of accessible units could be made more public; more advertisement and a better clearing house needed. This is one topic that can be discussed in depth at the relevant Commission and feedback used to influence policy

- It was pointed out that there is a lack of public understanding about how Arlington County produces Affordable housing utilizing nonprofit partners as opposed to having a Housing Authority. This is part of the discussion and the overall “story’

Questions regarding the public response and how these would be incorporated into the document or whether they may constitute changes to the document were discussed.

Russell D- Schroeder described the process which involves wide community discussion over a six week period. Which will include documentation and assessment of responses by the working group. Working Group expected to finalize document early in May, followed by a request to advertise in June. Staff report will accompany the Master Plan laying out discussion and public feedback.

## 5. Report out on Community Forum

Amy Clark provided a detailed synopsis of discussions around the five issue areas from notes from the small group discussions. She has a report which will be provided to Staff.

Discussion:

- Preference – general agreement with preference but there was unease with having this as a requirement.
- ADUs policy raised questions about being able to be regulated and parking as a potential issue where this becomes possible.
- S. Sockwell expressed agreement his opinion about what concern group participants expressed about the proposed policy on Geographic distribution. May not want to focus primarily on transit corridors. There was a comment about the availability of garden properties ripe for redevelopment which are located off transit corridors and therefore may be less expensive
- M. Spotts offered the argument that there are two aspects of the geographic argument; that of preservation of existing Affordable Housing and that of new production. This difference is important to point out. He reiterated that it is important to support and promote recommendations of the proposed Master Plan which seeks to encourage affordable housing in areas where it currently does not exist; the plan is promoting balance in the distribution. It is important to use the data gathered as support for policies.
- D. Leibson suggested that a map showing % and regional income distribution by Civic Associations would be useful to counter the argument about Affordable Housing location creating concentrations of low-income areas. Staff indicated that such a map is available.

## 6. Civic Engagement Plan

1. L. Keller described the Civic Engagement tool kit and its content. The intention is for Working Group members to utilize the various documents to share the plan and have discussions with their organizations and civic groups. She pointed out that Civic Groups such as Lions and Rotary clubs are noticeable absent from the stakeholder list, but that these are influential groups and that members should seek to make contact or connect with people who belong to these groups, as they represent areas in North Arlington.
2. Feedback forms are important to return to staff, as these are records of the conversations. Members were encouraged to become familiar with the plan and could request staff to attend meetings.

3. D. Cristeal , supported by R. Danao-Schroeder offered to attend meetings and make presentations with working Group members.

Matt de Ferranti offered to attend NCAC meeting; D. Leibson and D. Peterson offered to attend Lee Highway Group meeting.

Actions: Staff will send recap of the Forum, there will be an online version of the forum by week's end and stakeholder list will be informed.

Twitter and Facebook accounts launched and more information will be available through these social media platforms.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10