

DRAFT

Arlington County Tenant-Landlord Commission

Meeting notes – December 7, 2016

Members present: Chair, Kirit Mookerjee, Zachary Butler, Thomas Gibson, Michael Campbell, Kendon Krause, Kristen Clegg, Mary Rouleau (by phone).

Call to order: Meeting called to order at 7:29 p.m. by Chair, Kirit Mookerjee,

Catherine Bucknam, Director of Resident Services AHC, Inc. introduced the new CEO of AHC Property Management Company- Dennis Laylor, who has more than 30 years of experience in managing Affordable Housing, from California.

Public Comment

Alexandria Belinsky – comment on applicability of County guidelines when relocation is not needed or intended to be used when residents are facing relocation. Shared short history of Arlington County Relocation guidelines which shows that guidelines do not apply directly to nonprofits. He highlighted an existing county policy - Real Property Acquisitions - Chapter 37 of the Arlington County Code- which is not being used when the county is partnering with nonprofits. It is a valid policy. Suggests that the Commission add it to an agenda for more substantial discussion and bring to County Board attention.

Current Business

1. **APAH, Westover** - Kim Painter, Chief of Staff and Michael Chiappa provided information on APAH's purchase of properties at Westover. They informed the meeting that three different owners agreed to sell 8 buildings. Six have been acquired and the remaining 2 to be purchased in January. APAH will renovate the buildings, but no relocation will occur for at least a year. The renovation is substantial and will include, roof replacements, plumbing, electrical upgrades and possible upgrade to Earth craft standard. First resident meeting was held October 3. Ms. Painter provided a handout "Fisher House II Tenant Profile" and highlighted aspects of the property and tenant composition and profile. **Unit mix-** 64- 1 bedrooms, 1- 2 bedrooms and 3-3 bedrooms. **Incomes-** 28 households have incomes that qualify them at 60% AMI, 9 households fall within 80% AMI and 20 households are at market rate. Residents at 80% AMI were most concerned about relocation. Rent prices were comparable to other units. **Length of tenancy** – there were 8 households with tenancies of twenty plus years while the majority of residents (17) have lived there between 1-3 years, and 12 households 3-5 years. It was noted that overcrowding occurred in about five households. APAH will work with households to resolve this issue. **Plans after renovation** – the majority of households would like to remain after renovations, the majority of whom were at 60% AMI; 11 market rate tenants wanted to stay. **Relocation and renovation plans** – APAH is anticipating significant renovations to the buildings that will likely take 4-6 months. A full relocation plan will be done early 2017. In order to help residents with relocation, APAH has reached out to nearby landlords and is creating MOUs with AHC to give preference to residents; there are many MARKS in Westover that residents may be able to utilize. APAH intends to offer relocation benefits early to give residents more flexibility in moving. **Financing Plan-** had contemplated LIHTC to be 100% affordable, however may be able have some unrestricted leases. Financial implications for this may be the need for additional \$50,000 subsidy per unit. \$160,000 per unit already committed. There were several questions from Commissioner

Gibson about the financing plan, and a comment on the uncertainty in the market with regard to financing LIHTC deals at this time, particularly around anticipated changes in taxes. Several projects are affected and closings are on hold or delayed. In response, Mr. Chiappa indicated that in general, APAH is conservative in underwriting estimates for its projects and will be able to bridge the gap. Residents may get 180 day notices, that maybe likely around April 2017. A relocation Plan will be submitted around October. Chair Mookerjee expressed concern about residents at 80% AMI and how they will be accommodated and that there be clear documentation about relocation actions because Westover is a high profile project.

Mr. Alexandr Belinsky provided the meeting with a copy of APAH's AHIF Application for the Westover project. He made the following points/observations:

- It is unclear how many residents will be displaced
 - In his opinion, the properties may not need substantial renovation as a thorough assessment has not been done. He used VA Department of Housing and Community Development's rehabilitation guidelines to support this point (handout).
 - More than 80% of residents are over- income
2. **Calls data chart** – Staff, Hector Mercado provided a revised version of the proposed calls report provided by Commissioner Gibson. There was discussion about the data fields, what information is collected and documented by staff and what type of report can be generated. The Commissioners commented on need to see trends in the data, what types of complaints are received, which management companies are involved and the frequency of the complaints. Staff will organize a meeting with IT staff to discuss what is needed.
3. **Short-term rentals** – Commissioner Clegg had attended the public meeting called by the County on this issue to get public feedback on proposed regulations. The County is seeking to regulate and mitigate potential impact on the community. There is also the issue of providing meals; this must be done with necessary permits to ensure health and safety and also the issue of taxes. From the perspective of a landlord such as Ditmar, whose policy does not permit subletting as there are concerns with liability around safety, control and enforcement of leasing standards. Other views expressed concerned the possible impact on parking in neighborhoods; increased transiency could have negative consequences on the community.

Commission Business

- Chair, Mookerjee informed the meeting of his attendance at a County Budget meeting for Commission Chairs. He offered a statement about the need to include funding in the County Budget for mediation services for tenants and landlords. Commissioner Butler suggested that Commissioners could possibly become trained mediators, so that they could offer this service to tenants.
- Code Enforcement- A response from Code Enforcement was received that evening and was forwarded to Commissioner Campbell. A representative will attend at a future meeting.
- Chair, Mookerjee brought the schedule of meetings up for discussion and there was unanimous agreement that there be a change in the time of Commission meetings. Starting in January, the

meetings will begin at 7 pm. Meeting dates will remain consistent throughout the year, second Wednesday monthly with no change in November and December.

- Chair, Mookerjee announced that Commissioner Kendon Krause, would be Chair of the Commission beginning January; he will continue to attend as a member.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.