

HOUSING COMMISSION

APPROVED MEETING NOTES – April 12, 2018

Attendance			
	Present		Present
Berkey, Eric	Y	Lederer, John	-
Brescia, Eric	Y	Withers, Larry	-
Borthwick, Russell	Y		
Blank, Rolf	-	Staff:	
Bray, Holly	Y	Franklin, Joel	Y
Browne, Paul	Y	Planning Comm. Liaison:	
Certosimo, Jeff	-	Weir, Daniel	-
de Ferranti, Matt	Y		
Gee, Evelyn	-	Disability Advisory Comm Liason	
Hogan, Alice	-	Ray, Doris	Y
Langenbeck, Kay	Y		

Held in: Courthouse Plaza, 2100 Clarendon Blvd, Room 311

Other Staff Present: Maureen Markham, Caitlin Jones and Yoomie Ahn of the Housing Division, Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development (CPHD).

The Chair, Holly Bray, called the meeting to order.

Public Comment

Aleksandr Belinskiy said that part of the charge of the Commission is to develop a comprehensive housing policy. The implementation of a relocation plan was mentioned in presentations as a requirement of the Housing Conservation District's (HCD) tier 1. However, the relocation plan has never been mentioned in the HCD Framework or staff reports. As one of HCD incentives, County could offer priority placement of displaced very-low income tenants to County's existing CAFs. Ideally, County CAF production plans should anticipate displacement of very-low tenants from MARKs units within HCD.

Dave Leibson noted that he used to serve on the Housing Commission and for the last 10 years has been co-chair for the 10-year Plan. He said he is here to recruit you or people you may know as a possible replacement. Over the last few years the consortium has grown and this would be an opportunity to shape where it goes next and to keep the momentum going. If you think of a person that would be a good fit please pass it on. Holly Bray asked what the time commitment is and Dave Leibson said that the organization has a lot of meetings but you don't need to go to them all, there is an executive committee once a month in addition to the monthly meeting, can share the meetings with the co-chair.

Approval of Notes

Holly Bray moved approval of the March 8, 2018 notes, Russell Borthwick seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Trenton Street Site Plan

Staff Presentation

The 172,194 sq. ft. (3,953 acres) site is located at 4333 Arlington Blvd. between North Trenton Street and North Thomas Street in the Buckingham Neighborhood Conservation Plan area. The subject site is currently occupied by the existing Whitefield Commons apartments, comprised of four buildings with 63 total dwelling units, two single-family homes, and the Red Cross Arlington County Chapter office. The site is bounded by Arlington Oaks condominium property to the north, North Thomas Street and Saint Thomas More Cathedral and School to the east, Arlington Boulevard and the National Foreign Affairs Training Center to the south, and North Trenton Street and Arlington Oaks condominium property to the west.

The Applicant, Wesley Housing Development Corporation (WHDC), proposes to rezone portions of the property from R-6 to RA8-18, and from RA8-18 to R15-30T, and to construct a new multi-family residential building with 115 units and two rows of townhouses with 19 total units. The site area includes the existing 63-unit Whitefield Commons buildings, which will remain. Two additional units will be constructed in space now used for storage and the current management office. The County recommends that the Applicant meet the affordable housing requirements of the Zoning Ordinance (ZO) by providing one hundred percent (100%) committed affordable units on-site in the new multi-family building, or 115 units, which includes 29 units of additional density for an affordable housing bonus. It is anticipated that the Applicant will submit an application for Affordable Housing Investment Funds (AHIF) in order to help finance the development at a later date.

Public Comment

Steve Maddalena said that he disagrees with everything Wesley said. He is a resident of Arlington Oak and we strongly disagree with this proposal and Buckingham does as well. He said that this is a massive building and will destroy the character of the garden apartments. The design of the building would put all the impacts onto the adjacent properties, there is nowhere for a delivery vehicle to park. This would add 700 additional vehicle trips on Trenton and Thomas, this is a huge amount of traffic and density being focused on our neighborhood in an unsafe way. He added that this is strictly forbidden in the GLUP and the AHMP.

Aleksandr Belinskiy said that he praises the developer for using a reasonable high parking ratio for the project. He said that a majority of the people in this neighborhood have a substantially lower income and would have to move if the rents increase.

Pat Findikoglu said she is here representing VOICE and noted that they have been around for 10 years. She said that they choose what to follow based on listening sessions and that there isn't a listening session where affordable housing doesn't come up, they view this issue as a crisis. She noted that there has been a large loss in the number of market affordable units and they see this project as a good one that adds a number of affordable units, is on a transportation line, has a number of two and three bedrooms and provides economic diversity. She urges the Commission to support this project. These households are being squeezed out of Arlington, they are the ones that provide a lot of the services we rely on. She added that she feels that it does follow the AHMP.

Commission Questions and Discussion

Eric Berkey asked if the current units at Whitefield Commons are income restricted and Maureen Markham said that they are and it is based on VHDA restrictions and not County restrictions. Matt de Ferranti noted that the biggest issues were the storm sewer, recording of a historic easement on Whitefield Commons and how many units will be committed as part of the site plan condition.

Maureen Markham said that is correct, Wesley is proposing ten units and staff is recommending 100% affordable. Eric Berkey asked what staff's thinking is on 100% and Maureen Markham said that it was presented as a 100% affordable building and there were some concessions based on that such as the reduced parking. She added that they are also looking for relief on storm water sewer requirements and that would be allowed for as an affordable building. Holly Bray said that she feels you can't commit the developer to 100% affordable units without the AHIF financing. Eric Brescia asked if there is any precedent on this and David Cristeal that this was done at the Berkley and Queens Court. David Cristeal said that from the County's perspective where is the protection for the County. Eric Brescia asked if this essentially leaves them in limbo and David Cristeal said that there will be a NOFA on the street and that would be a funding stream for this. Holly Bray asked how many units can you do by right and the applicant thought around six single-family units and maybe a 30 unit building. Eric Berkey said that the implication is that the County wouldn't allow the additional density if this isn't affordable and that Wesley would still have to compete in the NOFA with others to get that money.

Holly Bray asked the applicant what they are you doing on the Arlington Boulevard side as far as sound attenuation. The applicant noted that they haven't gotten to that level of detail yet, but we could do an acoustic study. Holly Bray asked if they have guest parking and the applicant answered that recently staff made a recommendation of 5%, which equates to six spaces and that condition is being written now. Holly Bray asked about service and delivery access and the applicant said that there is a lot of width in the road with still plenty of space to maneuver past a stopped vehicle. Eric Berkey said that this is a very dangerous area and from a planning perspective you need to rethink that with the amount of high speed traffic there. The applicant said that there is additional traffic calming that will be implemented. Holly Bray asked if you can talk about the historic easement. The applicant said that Whitefield Commons is listed as important and there isn't currently a historic easement so the County is requesting that this be added. The applicant added that they want to be able to have a density provision if we do the easement. Eric Brescia asked how large the AHIF request was and the applicant said that there are two requests around \$10 million. Holly Bray said that she doesn't think we should tie up a private property owners land if we aren't committed to helping them build an affordable property. She added that she also has a problem that this has no mention of price indexing and that she is fine with the building, would be a nice addition weather it is affordable or not. Eric Berkey said that he agrees and that we also need to think about middle income housing, this does not meet the goal of geographic distribution just because it is north of route 50, he would like to see Wesley do mixed income. Kay Langenbeck said she agreed as well, Buckingham has the most committed affordable units and has the lowest income census tract in Arlington. She added that Buckingham already has a pocket of poverty and this project doesn't get us to our goal of inclusion. She would like to see some mixed income or higher income for this project. Eric Brescia asked if she has any issue with the density and Kay Langenbeck said she is fine with that but doesn't want to see one additional CAF unit in Buckingham. Doris Ray disagreed and said that this project is on a prime bus route and it is important to have a place like that to be close in to a job. She thought the VOICE testimony was right on and that given the location why not add some 40% AMI units as well. Matt de Ferranti asked staff if they have an answer to the income averaging and David Cristeal said that it is new and will be ready for the next tax credit round. Holly Bray noted that she would support it as is without the 100% affordable condition. Eric Berkey said that he could support a motion to support as is without a 100% commitment and added that he doesn't think this is the right forum for a discussion on CAF makeup in Buckingham.

The Commission advises the County Board to support the affordable housing program as outlined below:

Affordable Housing Ordinance – the Applicant has the choice of providing or making:

- a cash contribution in the amount of \$306,104;
- on-site units: 736 sq. ft. or approximately one (1) unit;
- off-site nearby units: 1,103 sq. ft. or approximately one (1) unit; or
- off-site units: 1,471 sq. ft. or approximately two (2) units.

Affordable Housing Bonus:

- The Applicant has proposed to provide nine (9) units, or 31%, of the proposed 29 bonus units as CAFs committed for 30 years with rents affordable to households earning up to 60% of the area median income (AMI).

The Commission does not support staff's additional recommendation that the Applicant provide 100% committed affordable units on-site in the new multi-family building, or 115 CAF units. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Members in favor are Mr. Berkey, Mr. Brescia, Mr. Borthwick, Ms. Bray, Mr. de Ferranti, and Ms. Langenbeck.

Vouchers from HUD for Veterans

Staff Presentation

The Department of Human Services found out last Friday and got an award letter yesterday that Arlington was awarded 15 Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH) vouchers from HUD that comes with an annual \$161,000 subsidy with some money to administer the project. A component of the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, the HUD-VASH vouchers enable homeless veterans to obtain affordable, decent housing in the private market. These vouchers are critical tools in helping communities effectively end homelessness among veterans.

Commission Questions and Discussion

Kay Langenbeck asked if you have family-sized information as it relates to these statistics. Vanessa Street said that we can get that for you. Kay Langenbeck also asked if there is data on port-ins and Vanessa Street said that we are absorbing the port-ins right now and that they are in the regular count. Holly Bray asked who does the income certification with people that port-out. Vanessa Street said that we start the process and then we have so many days to send the info to the new housing authority and they finish it. Kay Langenbeck asked if there is a waiting list and Vanessa Street said that they have about 1,000 people on it and it was last open in 2012. Paul Browne asked if it has been determined what you will do with the VASH vouchers. Vanessa Street said that we will either partner with a developer or take advantage of existing affordable housing. Matt de Ferranti asked that even though we are at functional zero is there still a need for these vouchers or would they be coming from DC. Vanessa Street said that there is a need and that we touch about 57 veterans now, but yes some could be coming from DC.

NOFA Update

Staff Presentation

Staff will release a second NOFA for Federal and local loan funds on April 16, 2018. Staff anticipates having approximately \$5-6 million in CDBG and HOME funds available. In addition, staff anticipates approximately \$2-\$2.5 million in local AHIF that could be available because of the reduced AHIF request for Queens Court. The use of CDBG and HOME funds are subject to timeliness requirements that, if not followed, would require the County to return funds to HUD. Projects that do not propose feasible use of Federal funds will not be eligible to apply through this NOFA process. Staff will consider making the AHIF available to projects that are able to use Federal funds, as an added incentive to apply. Staff will determine the feasibility of using federal funds according to certain

timeliness criteria as a threshold for the application. Projects that staff determine propose a “feasible” use of Federal funds will then be scored using the “guidance” score sheet from last year’s process. No other changes to the application or scoring guidance are proposed. Staff will do a complete review of the guidance and application process after two complete funding rounds in 2019. The application period will extend through mid-June 2018 with developer notification in August 2018.

Commission Questions and Discussion

Doris Ray asked about the review of Federal funds and it was identified that this would have to tie into the Action Plan. Paul Browne asked if the amount of the AHIF is fixed since it looks like Ballston Station might not win a tax credit award, would that money be surrendered. David Cristeal said that is in the realm of possibility.