

HOUSING COMMISSION

APPROVED MEETING NOTES – October 11, 2018

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

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

Other Staff Present: Yoomie Ahn of the Housing Division, Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development (CPHD) and Michelle Isabelle-Stark from Arlington Economic Development.

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

Public Comment

Aleksandr Belinskiy said that the rents charged for these renovated units are sometimes higher than what had been charged before the redevelopment or renovation. The issue is how do you distinguish rent increase as a result of renovation versus a result of regional AMI growth. He suggested an analysis of the property before renovation compared to other renovated CAF properties which were able to charge the LIHTC maximum allowed rent.

Approval of Notes

Approval of notes was deferred due to a lack of a quorum.

Nonconforming Dwellings Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Staff Presentation

Staff recommends amending §16.1 and § 16.2 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance, Nonconforming Lots and Nonconforming Buildings and Structures. The proposed changes have been developed to address difficulties for homeowners created by the existing zoning regulations with making interior structural alterations and exterior additions and expansions in nonconforming one- and two-family dwellings located in districts other than one- family zoning districts.

Specifically, this amendment would permit nonconforming one- and two-family dwellings in the R2-7 Two-Family and Townhouse Dwelling District to make expansion and additions as a matter of right with approval by the Zoning Administrator (i.e., by-right), however retaining the gross floor area cap on additions (i.e. 50 percent of the floor area contained in the existing building or structure as of July

15, 1950) to two-family dwellings nonconforming in height or lot area. This amendment would also permit nonconforming one- and two-family dwellings in the currently excluded R districts (R15-30T, R10-T) and all RA districts to make structural interior alterations by-right. These proposed changes are intended to remove zoning barriers that have existed for decades that limit the type of reinvestment and renovation activities for nearly all of the County's supply of two-family, and some one-family, dwellings that have otherwise been allowed (such as exterior additions and expansions) for the majority of nonconforming one-family dwellings in one-family zoning districts. These changes are consistent with the Affordable Housing Master Plan's recommendation to support preservation of housing stock at the more affordable end of the housing spectrum.

Commission Questions and Discussion

Holly Bray asked what the Planning Commission thought of the proposal. Kellie Brown said that they were very happy that this amendment is coming forward and that there was a lot of support for creating this flexibility. Eric Berkey asked if any setback is violated then they would have to go through this process and Kellie Brown said that they would have to get a use permit. Eric Berkey also asked if any addition of any substantial size would hit some kind of setback. Kellie Brown said that the rear yard setback is 25 feet and that most of these lots are pretty deep and Eric Berkey asked about the side yard. Kellie Brown said that in most cases they are already exceeding the side yard, but if they were building above this amendment would allow that. Eric Berkey asked if the intent of this is to be able to bypass the existing process and Kellie Brown answered yes, they will not need to get a variance.

Holly Bray asked how you think this will affect property values. Kellie Brown said that it is hard to say, some have already been getting variances but this could increase that interest. Holly Bray said that she thinks that it makes those 1,500 units more valuable. Eric Berkey said that he has the same concern and wondered if this would cause more pressure for someone to come and buy them up and redevelop them. Kellie Brown said that they have identified a phase two to look at the right dimensional standards for a two-family dwelling, to also encourage new production of this type of development and to look at where this type of development would be allowed in the GLUP. Eric Berkey said that this is allowing for greater capacity but you are also increasing the value and Holly Bray added that this would lower the number of people that could afford those properties. Alice Hogan said that this could preserve them with these additions and thus not tear them down and build a McMansion. Kellie Brown said that it could also prevent them from moving farther out as their family grows. Doris Ray asked if this will facilitate expansions and Kellie Brown said that it makes it easier to create additions. Doris Ray asked if it would make it easier to add a driveway for accessible vehicles and Kellie Brown responded that they are not changing any rules for parking or lot coverage. Eric Berkey said that he has concerns but feels this is a discriminatory practice and would potentially allow families to stay. He added that price is another factor and shouldn't get in the way of getting rid of these barriers; there wasn't a lot of single family stock in Arlington this last year and this is a way to keep families in Arlington if they can't move into a single-family home.

The Commission advises the County Board to adopt the ordinance as presented. The Commission vote on this motion was 4-0, a quorum was not present at the meeting.

Artspace Market Study Report and Results

Presentation

Artspace's mission is to create, foster, and preserve affordable space for artists and arts organizations. Established in 1979, Artspace is a national nonprofit real estate developer for the arts. A leader in the creative placemaking field. Based in Minneapolis with offices in Seattle, Denver,

New York, New Orleans, and DC. Art space has 50 projects in operation or in development in 37 cities and 23 states. The process includes a preliminary feasibility study that was done in August 2017, an arts market study that took place from March to September 2018, and the project development that is yet to be determined.

Commission Questions and Discussion

Holly Bray asked what are the areas being considered in Arlington. Stacey Mickelson said Columbia Pike, Virginia Square, Four Mile Run and Crystal City. Doris Ray asked if Clarendon and Ballston had been considered since they are going under some development already. Stacey Mickelson said that they looked to housing staff for help identifying these areas. Doris Ray curious when you build the housing, what steps you take to make it accessible. Stacey Mickelson said that each of our properties, because they are financed by housing tax credits, will need to follow those requirements. He also added that they look for a body of work to prove you are dedicated to your art. Holly Bray asked how the results of the survey compare to other cities and Stacey Mickelson said that they are very comparable to Silver Spring where we are doing a project. Holly Bray asked if this would be something you could do in a building in Crystal city and Stacey Mickelson said that they are open to anything and that they have been in touch with JBG Smith. Doris Ray asked if these units will be studios, one-bedroom, etc. Stacey Mickelson said that they will be a mix based on the needs of the community. Doris Ray asked if the artist space will be in the unit and Stacey Mickelson said that it will and the lobby doubles as a gallery space.

Fulfilling the Promise Report

Presentation

Alice Hogan noted that it is the one-year anniversary of the document and it would be a good time to weigh in on it and give direction to the Board on where to focus. Michelle Winters talked about the group that put the report together and walked through each recommendation.

Public Comment

Aleksandr Belinskiy said that goal before the AHMP was to require that 25% of the CAF units be for lower income units. What the County is doing now is using the housing grant to get lower income and this is a hidden cost. The County should be looking at how to do a mix of income levels in order to support the lower-income households

Commission Questions and Discussion

Holly Bray noted that all these things cost money and questioned doesn't the County work off these fees. Michelle Winters said that in some areas we fully recognize this is shifting money from other areas, but there are good reasons to do this. Holly Bray asked if the cost of the NOFA come up and Michelle Winters said that it did not. Alice Hogan said that she feels that the fees are robbing Peter to pay Paul and that doesn't make sense to her because this is circular funding and inefficient. Kay Langenbeck said that the AHIF money goes out as a loan correct. Michelle Winters said that is correct and that not all the recommendations in here are just moving money around such as reducing the permitting requirements. She added that the concept of green taping is done all over the country. Alice Hogan asked staff to reflect back on how the NOFA or other things that have directly impacted affordable housing and to have a list for the meeting. Eric Berkey stated that a lot of these are financing questions and asked if anyone from DMF weighed in on this. Doris Ray asked which site plan requirements would be exempted. Michelle Winters said that there is not a specific list and nothing has been prioritized. Eric Berkey asked if we could get an update on where we are now from the June document. Alice Hogan said that it would be good to identify what site plan

conditions are required and what could be waived. She also suggested that maybe staff could comment on what is a better use of funds between housing grants and AHIF.