

DRAFT

Arlington County Tenant-Landlord Commission
Joint Meeting with City of Alexandria's Landlord-Tenant Relations Board
Meeting Notes – January 8, 2020

TLC Members present: Zachary Butler, Kristin Clegg, Kirit Mookerjee, Kellen MacBeth, Matthew Whitefield, Esq. Elyse Hayes, Bismah Ahmed (by phone), David Timm. Absent: Chris Bruno

Members present from City of Alexandria's LTBR- Jeanette Shepherd (Chair), Soomin Kim, Melodie Seau (Staff), Monique Banks, Valerie Ianieri, Alex Howe, Elliot Waters.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chair, MacBeth.

Introduction of all present took place; Chair, Macbeth gave opening remarks.

Public comment:

Ms. June O'Connell, an affordable housing advocate, voiced concern and timeliness and management of information on the availability of affordable housing units in market rate properties to eligible residents. She proposed the need to design an "app" or central place where notice of all vacant units can be posted by owners and centrally coordinated by the County, a way to manage the turnover of these units. Staff explained that a vacancy list is available monthly to anyone who has registered to receive this information.

David Huanan – requested participation in the Housing Discrimination subcommittee, a sub-committee of the Arlington Tenant Commission. He was told that the subcommittee was open to anyone to participate.

New Business

Review of Alexandria LTRB 2019 Report: The City of Alexandria's LTRB, Chair Jeanette Shepherd provided highlights of the Board's accomplishments in 2019; also briefly described the functions and responsibilities of the LTRB. There was some discussion and questions from Arlington TLC commissioners. In response to a question about the general concern from Alexandria residents about the potential impact of Amazon, Alexandria staff responded that they track rents bi-monthly and have not seen increasing rents, but there is very low or no vacancies. Much of their work is ongoing plans for redevelopment of areas such as the Route 1 south corridor and other areas. Any anxiety is managed by working with community associations.

Review of Arlington's TLC 2019 Report: Arlington's TLC Chair, Kellen MacBeth read the TLC 2019 report and provided additional highlights of activities (copy of report provided). He was pleased with the opportunity to collaborate with the City of Alexandria on the Communities of Opportunity Act – financial incentives to landlords to accept Housing Choice Vouchers – which is being considered by the General Assembly in the current session. In response to a question from Elliott Waters, about how often and in what manner elected officials are kept informed and are engaged in the work of the TLC, Chair MacBeth responded with examples of once yearly attendance at Commission meetings, and his ongoing engagement with the Board through the County Board liaison, requests for feedback and ongoing

contact. On the question of how often tenants and landlords seek assistance from the Commission, the Chair responded that the public comment period within the meetings is the opportunity for interacting with landlords and tenants and also the role of BuGata, a tenant organization that provides updates to the Commission on interactions with tenants. Commission. Increasing visibility of the Commission is an ongoing area for improvement. Following discussion, Chair Macbeth requested a motion to accept the Arlington 2019 Annual report. Commissioners Butler and Timm, moved and seconded the motion respectively.

Alexandria's LTRB 2020 Draft Work Plan – Jeanette Shepherd, Chair, presented the work plan (copy provided) and highlighted the proposed activities for each month There was discussion of “Enhanced Displaced Tenant Protections for Relocations”. This is the City’s relocation policy which is currently voluntary and is site specific; plans to seek expansion of the policy through legislation to make it citywide. There is no tenant assistance fund.

Arlington's TLC 2020 Draft Work Plan - Kellen Macbeth, Chair presented the draft work plan of the TLC he described in detail the objectives of the work plan, the role of existing subcommittees and plans for future subcommittees and collaborations with other Arlington Commissions. A motion to approve the TLC work plan was unanimously approved.

Joint Resolution on 2020 Collaboration – Chair, Macbeth read the proposed joint resolution including edits that were subsequently proposed. After some discussion and wordsmithing to address concerns raised by Elliott Waters of Alexandria, the final paragraph of the Resolution was revised to read “advocate on behalf of vulnerable populations’, protected classes, low and moderate income residents’ housing needs and challenges before public and private decision-makers.” Separate votes were taken by each to jurisdictions to accept the resolution.

The Arlington TLC unanimously approved the Joint resolution on 2020 Collaboration.

The City of Alexandria LTRB unanimously approved the Joint Resolution on 2020 Collaboration.

Discussion on Housing Collaboration: There was a short discussion that highlighted the joint agreement between governing bodies of Arlington and Alexandria, which took place in September 2019 and proposed an “Inclusive Growth Joint Task Force”. There were questions about any follow up action since the meeting and whether there are any other similar models (best practices) of collaboration across neighboring jurisdictions, throughout the country, after which this could be modeled. Alexandria representatives spoke about the need for collaboration between the LTR Board and the City’s Affordable Housing Advisory Commission. The view was expressed that the roles of a Commission could be as broad or as narrow, depending upon how the charge is interpreted. In conclusion, all felt that the future holds opportunities for sharing information and working together.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.