

## Arlington County Tenant-Landlord Commission Meeting

### Meeting Notes -February 14, 2018

**Commissioners present.** Michael Campbell, Zachary Butler, Kellen Macbeth, Kirit Mookerjee, Kristin Klegg, Bismah Ahmed, Kendon Krause, Chair. **Absent:** Charlyn Stanberry.

The meeting was call to order by Chair, Krause at 7:00 p.m. The County Board Liaison, Libby Garvey was introduced to attendees.

**Public comment** – Mr. Belinsky proposed amendments to the Queens Court Draft Relocation Plan which was heard by the Commission on January 10. He commented on the statement “parking spaces would be limited” and that it could possibly be used as an opportunity to deny leasing to returning residents who may own a car. He also commented on the statement that addresses maximum allowable rents and ensuring that maximization of residual receipts would not preclude tenants from returning; and queried definitions with regard to temporary relocation and permanent relocation and related relocation payments in each instance.

**Approval of meeting notes** – A motion to accept the minutes was moved by Commissioner Michael Campbell and seconded by Commission Kellen Macbeth.

#### Current Business

**Queen Courts Relocation Plan (action item)** – Kim Painter, APAH Chief of Staff presented the plan and focused on the few changes that had been made since the first draft was submitted in January. The tenant survey had been updated to reflect changes in the tenant profile. Charges for parking have been removed. On the question of residual receipts it was explained that this is part of repayment to the County loan and that APAH would be mindful that the maximum allowable rents (if higher) minus utility allowances would not preclude vested tenants from returning. The plan indicates that there will be three available units for three households with incomes between 60 -80% of AMI. All residents, once eligible will be able to return to the new buildings. After some discussion about temporary versus permanent relocation, and clarity about the availability of three units for households with incomes higher than 60%, a vote was taken to approve the plan. The plan was approved unanimously, by all seven Commissioners.

**Tenant- Landlord Commission Overview (discussion)** - Jennifer Daniels, Manager Community Planning Division(Housing) provided an overview of the functions of the Housing Division, the T-L Commission roles and responsibilities within this context. The presentation also focused on the Affordable Housing Master Plan and the yearly progress report. There were questions related to the Commission’s role in advising on policy.

Ms. Libby Garvey – Ms. Garvey added that the Commission represents the bridge between the Board and the Community; able to give feedback and suggestions to the Board, advice on policy changes, and is important as a resource for the County Board. All Commissions have responsibility for providing policy direction to the Board. Ms. Garvey commented on the value of citizen involvement overall and shared a thought about moving towards lessening the number of Commissions and Advisory groups in the County, with the view towards better coordination and resulting efficiencies.

Commissioner Kellen, shared information about a recently released book “Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City” by Matthew Desmond and asked about evictions, and whether this was tracked by the Division. Staff Hector Mercado indicated that evictions are handled by the Sheriff’s Office and the Courts. The Housing Information Center advises on the VRLTA law with regard to evictions. Commissioners Klegg and Campbell will provide a presentation at a future meeting. On the question of housing discrimination and the Commission’s role, it was pointed out that complaints are directed to the Human Rights Office for investigation and follow up. Bi-annual testing is conducted by the Office.

**Chair’s Report** – Relocation Guidelines, should be ready for presentation to the Board in March. Chair Krause will attend budget meetings in early March. An annual report, to be reviewed at the next meeting. A subgroup of the Commission met and discussed ideas for community outreach.

**Staff Report** - Hector Mercado proposed changes to the definitions of Temporary and Permanent relocation for consideration by the Commission. There was some discussion of the definition in terms of the extent of rebuilding or renovations to be done. It was suggested that the Working Group be reconvened to consider this. The Chair, offered to compare definitions across, State, Federal and VHDA guidelines. Copies of the definitions proposed were requested by Commissioner Kellen.

Commissioner Mookerjee reintroduced the discussion of the definition of Tenant Associations, citing Montgomery County’s definition. This was tabled for further discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.