

## Tenant-Landlord Commission Meeting

### Meeting Minutes March 14, 2018

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair, Kendon Krause. The Colonial Village West Relocation Plan was the first agenda item, as there were 20-25 tenants present.

Colonial Village West Relocation Plan (discussion) – Laura Manville, AHC provided a summary of the proposed repairs for the buildings. The development comprises 70 units in 9 buildings all covered by project-based Housing Voucher contract. Repairs would include replacement of plumbing, heating and cooling systems, without extensive renovations. Painting and other minor repairs as needed would be done as well. Furniture would remain in units, and storage and moving costs for residents would be covered by AHC. The repairs would begin in the summer and were expected to last about 2 months. There were several questions from Commissioners, about the extent of repairs, how soon notices would be issued, and whether the proposed timeframe was adequate for completion by summer? How are households with school aged children likely to be affected by this project? How will utility bills be handled for the short term while residents are moved off-site? AHC responded that there will be a house account to cover the cost of utilities. With regard to the time-line, AHC anticipates meeting with the construction staff soon and would have a better idea of the extent of work and timeline for issuing 120 day notices.

Questions from the tenants, were about the widespread problem of mold throughout the buildings and how this will be addressed. The mold problem has been brought to management's attention but it appears as if the treatment has not been satisfactory. Commissioner Campbell describe the process for mold remediation and the role that tenants have in preventing and managing mold. Other needed repairs such as unstable flooring, broken closet doors, and other fixtures were identified as well. AHC indicated that residents, would need to identify which units and what type of repairs are needed and inform management. There were several concerns about relocation and being properly accommodated elsewhere in same size units, whether rents will be the same and if rental subsidies will be transferred to available units. AHC indicated that all costs will be covered and rents off-site would be the same. Other concerns from Commissioners, were about the short timeframe and the inconvenience that residents will experience; the need for a better timeline related to the scope of work and how residents will be accommodated elsewhere if vacant apartments are not available in other sister properties. Communication with residents to keep them informed and respond to their concerns was identified as an important element of the relocation process.

**Approval of February 14 Meeting Notes** – a few minor corrections were noted. A move to approve was given by Commissioner Campbell and seconded by Commissioner Bismah Ahmed.

Eviction (discussion)– This topic was identified for discussion and a presentation from Commissioners Campbell and Klegg was postponed as Commissioner MacBeth was absent. AHC, Resident Services Assistant Director Cindy Rozon had been invited to talk about AHC's eviction prevention programs. A full and comprehensive set of services were described as available for all residents to prevent eviction and also to help tenants remain in their homes. In some cases, this amounts to case management; the level of support is adapted to suit resident's need. Resident service staff often identify what other community

and County resources may be available and they make referrals. Hoarding, overcrowding, assessment of care for elderly are some of the problems identified and addressed. Commissioners, commended AHC for providing these services. It was pointed out by Saul Reyes, that residents may not be aware of these services, and that it would be helpful to have coordination between the property management office (five- day notice issuance) and resident services to ward off evictions. AHC indicated that a new program recently instituted at the properties, would provide better coordination.

### **Work Plan items – Follow up**

Outreach sub-committee – Chair, Krause and Commissioner MacBeth met and brainstormed outreach ideas, such as off-site meeting locations perhaps at select properties or at nonprofit organizations where programs and services are funded. Will look to hold a meeting in June or July, after some more research.

Tenant Associations- Commissioner Mookerjee, made a case for having a definition of tenant associations as a recognized body be included in the County's Zoning Ordinance; this will give this group recognition as is given to Civic Associations. He cited the case of tenants at Westover who were not recognized as a legitimate organization with regard to having a voice to speak towards the proposed historic designation of the neighborhood. He will do further work, and bring definitions to the Commission for consideration with the hope of making a recommendation for inclusion in the Zoning Ordinance.

### **Reports**

**Chair's Report** – Budget session was attended but due to lengthy discussion, she was unable to stay to make Commission request for funding. Requested that staff keep account of large groups attending Commission meetings, and also keeping track of topics/issues brought up at public comment periods by individuals. Staff to monitor complaints, look at calls report to see if there are trends and patterns.

Bugata will present a report next month about prevailing tenant concerns to inform the Commission.

Member's Reports/announcements – Commissioner Klegg announced that VHDA will be holding training on Fair Housing for certification on March 22 at Ditmarr properties. She invited Bugata to send staff to attend if needed.

### **Staff Reports**

Hector Mercado – Relocations Guidelines are being reviewed by the County Attorney's Office and a copy will be available prior to Board approval.

Rolda Nedd – Annual Commission Report distributed; Announcements – Landlord Seminar April 14, flyers distributed; Invitation for Commissioners to attend meeting on May 21 with Board Liaison and other Commissions. Commission to participate in Libraries program on May 1 as a panel; more information to come.

Mr. Belinskyi had comments on the URA Fixed Residential Moving Costs schedule and compared this to what is proposed in the revised County Relocation Guidelines. He commented that the language proposed by staff is not consistent with VHDA guidelines and requested that discussions take place with the Commission before Board acceptance.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.