

Arlington County Tenant-Landlord Commission Meeting

Meeting Notes –December 9, 2020

Commissioners present: David Timm (Chair), Kirit Mookerjee, Elyse Hayes, Kristin Clegg, Nicole Merlene, Emily Camardo, Matthew Whitfield, Esq.

Excused Absent: Bismah Ahmed

Virtual meeting held through electronic communication. A recording of the meeting is available on the TLC webpage.

County Board Member and Liaison to the TLC, Takis Karantonis was introduced and provided welcoming remarks, to staff and Commission members. He acknowledged the value of the rental market to Arlington's economy and concern for families and their housing needs. He encouraged new ideas and suggestions from the Commission and individuals.

New members Emily Camardo and Nicole Merlene gave brief introductions, highlighted their reason for and interest in joining the Commission.

Public Comment – No one for general public comment.

Approval of meeting notes –December's meeting notes were approved unanimously, with motions from Nicole Merlene, and Kristen Klegg.

Item #1 Wesley Housing Development

Gabriela Montufar, Relocation Coordinator entertained questions. Commissioners Mookerjee and Merlene questioned whether the stated income level was current information. Gabriela responded that she would provide an update from property records. Commissioner Camardo raised a question about additional information on the number of residents interviewed and the timeline for relocation. Gabriela indicated that interviews were being done in phases, by buildings and were 50% completed. Staff asked about the tenant profile information and whether there were more details. There were several exchanges and questions as to whether the Plan as submitted satisfies the Relocation Guidelines. Saul Reyes from Bu-gata expressed concern that the process be followed and that all conditions be fully satisfied, including complete tenant profile information, as this has been a problem for some past relocation projects. Commissioner Whitefield requested information on the moving company employed by Wesley, since his agency had received complaints from tenants. After much discussion, it was agreed that provisional approval would be granted, pending submission of additional information from Wesley. The following information is requested: 1. List of third-party properties where tenants would be relocated 2. Response to question raised about moving company and 3. Clarification on income data. Chair Timm proposed that a provisional vote be taken. Commissioner Camardo, moved to vote for provisional approval, which was seconded by Commissioner Whitefield. The vote was unanimous. Wesley was informed that additional information should be submitted within a week.

Item #2 2021 Work Plan

Chair Timm, introduced the discussion on the 2021 Work Plan

- He plans to speak with each Commissioner to get their views, suggestions on areas of focus for the Commission.
- Suggested that the TLC research and produce a stakeholder's report from interviews with community organizations, individuals to determine what policy areas the Commission should focus on.
- Coordination with nearby jurisdictions such as Alexandria and other jurisdictions.
- FY22 Budget recommendations for the County be prepared by March
- Legislative Recommendations

Commissioner Mookerjee commented that the General Assembly was holding its first meeting and that there were several tenant related bills proposed. He accepted the request to track the bills and bring them to the Commission's attention. Commissioner Merlene added that the Poverty Law Center had produced a document which she could share with members.

Item #3 Staff Updates

Jennifer Daniels, Planning Supervisor, Housing Division provided updates on Housing initiatives

- Review of Master Plan Kickoff to take place January 21st – Housing Needs Analysis
- Missing Middle Housing Study – Neighborhood Listening Tour by zip codes to begin January 28th
- Eviction prevention – Eviction Moratorium extended to January 31st. 1,100 households served since November. Over 2M spent to prevent evictions; top priority for the County, to use all designated Emergency Assistance Funding to address the need.
- 7M allocated to County from the State and estimated to last through FY21
- Advised the Commission on data available quarterly through the County's rent tracker. (link)

Member reports: Commissioner Klegg, the TLC representative on the Ft. Henry Site Plan Review Committee, reported that the project has been paused, until further noticed.

Chair Timm, brought the meeting to a close at 8:15 p.m.