

Community Development Citizen Advisory Committee (CDCAC) Meeting
February 3, 2020 6:30 p.m.
Virtual Meeting

Members: Lincoln Cummings, Steven Gallagher, Walter Sargent, Jose Quinonez, Lara Malakoff, Greg Bramham, Tim Denning, Rosemary Leffler, Mike Tully, Nicole Merlene, Risha Bailey

Members of the Public: Nathan Feely, Saul Reyes, Nory Flores, Kellen MacBeth

Staff: Caitlin Jones, Jennifer L. Daniels, Rolda Nedd, Joel Franklin

1. Approval of January 6, 2020 Meeting Minutes (Action)

The meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Fair Housing Plan (Information)

Joel provided overview of the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing (AI) and a Fair Housing Plan, which is meant to address fair housing impediments. The AI is a review of demographic data, metrics of discrimination and disparity, and local regulations and administrative policies, procedures, and practices that affect the location, availability, and accessibility of housing. It also assesses the conditions, both public and private, that affect fair housing choice. The AI, along with community engagement to ensure that the experiences and perspectives of community members inform development of policies, will result in the establishment of measurable fair housing goals and priorities:

Goal 1: Preserve and increase housing affordability throughout Arlington County

- Increase production of Committed Affordable Units
- Exceed the required number of affordable, accessible units
- Continue to fund the Housing Grant program
- Consider new land use and housing policies to expand the supply of missing middle housing

Goal 2: Revise existing internal policies/ procedures and establish new ones to further fair housing

- Examine the effectiveness of the geographic distribution goal
- Revise the zoning ordinance to eliminate or change the restrictions on the number of unrelated persons residing in one unit
- Review and, if necessary, revise policy documents related to housing plans for persons being released from institutional settings

Goal 3: Strengthen fair housing investigation, enforcement, and outreach

- Provide education and outreach to elected and appointed officials
- Provide education and outreach to potential homebuyers
- Continue to conduct fair housing testing in the rental market
- Reduce individual barriers to access to housing.
- Reduce language barriers when seeking housing services
- Increase education of fair housing rights

One CDCAC member asked if the number of Housing Grants that the County provides each year is a fixed number or if that is based on the amount of money that is available? Staff responded that it is relatively similar each year but DHS recently looked at max allowable rent and recommended an increase for the

first time in many years. The goal is to continually evaluate program to ensure that everyone that needs a housing grant is able to access one.

A CDCAC member asked about the process for obtaining a CAF. He observed that in his experience the process seems to be very disjointed and was surprised to find out that many of the housing providers don't even maintain a waitlist when he was helping someone find a unit. Staff responded that the County relies on housing providers to develop affordable housing and they all maintain separate waitlist systems.

A CDCAC member asked about the major recommended changes other than fair housing testing and expansion of missing middle housing types. Staff responded that the County is looking to clarify and refine how the County develops housing units, looking at availability of accessible units, expanding homeownership opportunities (ensuring appropriate AMI levels to accompany affordable homeownership units), etc. The CDCAC member followed up to ask if there was a timeline for any of these studies or set deadline. Staff responded that the Fair Housing Plan is a 5-year plan so staff includes things that can be realistically achieved within that timeline. Also trying to come up with some more metrics to incorporate into the Plan.

A CDCAC member asked if there was any emphasis or thought around ensuring that landlords are renting fairly and charging reasonable rents? Any conversation to be had with this segment of the rental market? Is there potential to have a discussion with landlords regarding selling out to market rate developers? Staff responded that this is an ongoing discussion amongst County staff about retaining market affordable units - or if they are sold and redeveloped to ensure that we maintain affordability. Staff also educates landlords on fair housing laws and so they understand what their responsibilities are. The County has also developed zoning and planning tools in the Housing Conservation District (HCD) to provide incentives for landlords to maintain market affordable housing.

A CDCAC member asked staff to elaborate on the missing middle housing and affordable ownership component of the study. Staff responded that the County has both affordable rental and homeownership units. Rental units are developed in partnership with nonprofits and rented to individuals. Homeownership units are largely available through site plan process, available to potential homebuyers that make below 80 percent of AMI, but staff is currently reevaluating this AMI level. The County also operates a program called the Moderate-Income Purchase Assistance Program (MIPAP), which provides income qualified homebuyers with direct assistance.

A CDCAC member asked about zoning regulations related to group homes and notes that most group homes in the County have fewer than 8 occupants. Staff responded that the recommendation in the plan relates to encouraging less regulations related to group homes to ensure group homes can be easily accommodated throughout the community.

3. FY 2022 Non-Competitive Program Interviews (Discussion)

BUGATA, Tenant Outreach Program

Saul Reyes and Nory Flores provided an overview of BUGATA's Promotora program, which encourages civic engagement of low-income residents in the Buckingham community. The goals of the program are to build social networks, use neighborhood leaders to reach isolated residents, identify barriers faced by Latinos to accessing services, and work with low-income Latinos and other renters to participate actively in ensuring implementation of Arlington's Affordable Housing Master Plan.

Since the program's inception, BUGATA has conducted outreach with 2,500+ households, a majority of whom were low-income residents of different races and ethnicities, a majority Latinos, others are African Americans (includes Africans), Asians, Whites, and other multi-racial. In FY 2020, BUGATA continued to serve these individuals as the COVID-19 pandemic began, conducting outreach with 1,500+ households. In addition, the organization helped 394 gain access to services/programs and assisted 73 households with eviction prevention services. Between FY 2020 and the beginning of FY 2021, BUGATA has seen the need for food assistance increase substantially and has responded to twice as many requests for assistance in locating housing and other resources.

One CDCAC member asked what specifically has changed or evolved about the program over the years? Are you serving different people or conducting different kinds of activities? BUGATA staff responded that the network has expanded considerably over the years and it proved to be very useful for when COVID hit and needed to communicate with the community about resources for low-income persons. For example, BUGATA created a What's App account and was able to get information out to particularly Latino residents more efficiently.

A CDCAC member also commented that many local organizations that are working with youth have noticed that because kids are spending so much time by computer all day, it has become difficult to get them involved in other activities using their laptop or technology. BUGATA staff responded that it has been a challenge for them too and they have had to rethink how they communicate.

4. 2021 Community Development Fund Tour

Staff reported that they will be organizing a virtual Community Development Tour for 2021 and are currently working on the format. Staff asked CDCAC for suggestions for format as well as organizations to invite to participate.

CDCAC suggestions included:

- Organize a video to introduce services of various organizations
- Ask more organizations to participate
- Ask organizations to provide something different than what is presented during the proposal presentations
- Would like to hear from beneficiaries of the programs to enhance the experience

5. Chair Report:

Nothing to report.

6. Member Report:

A CDCAC member asked if the Committee would be back to meeting in person in 2021. Staff responded that the County Manager has indicated that likely will not be back in person until there is significant reduction in COVID community spread.

7. Staff Report:

Staff reported that the CDC eviction moratorium has been extended through the end of March. Virginia is getting \$570 million, both tenants and landlords can access funding - should be available through September 2021.

The meeting adjourned at 8:03pm.