

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
HOUSING COMMITTEE
JOINT W/REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2009**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District
John Litzenberger, Sully District
Rodney L. Lusk, Lee District
Timothy J. Sargeant, At-Large

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Walter L. Alcorn, At-Large
Suzanne F. Harsel, Braddock District

OTHER COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

James Hart, At-Large
Kenneth Lawrence, Providence District

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:

Barbara J. Lipa, Executive Director, Planning Commission Office
Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk, Planning Commission

REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Albert McAloon, Lee District
Robert Carlson, Sully District
Ronald Christian, Braddock District, Chairman
Elisabeth Lardner, Mount Vernon District
Lee A. Rau, Hunter Mill District
Robert Schwaninger, Mason District
Rod Solomon, Providence District

STAFF PRESENT:

John Payne, Acting Deputy Director, Real Estate and Development, Department of
Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
Mary Stevens, DHCD
Tom Fleetwood, DHCD
Charlene Furhman-Schultz, DHCD
Fred Selden, Director, Planning Division (PD), Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ)
Donna Pesto, PD, DPZ

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Chairman Rodney L. Lusk called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m., in the Board of Supervisors Conference Room, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22033.

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Commissioner de la Fe MOVED THAT THE HOUSING COMMITTEE MINUTES OF JANUARY 23, 2008 BE APPROVED.

Commissioner Sargeant seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

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Chairman Lusk introduced Ronald F. Christian, the new Chairman of the Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RHA) and Braddock District Commissioner.

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Chairman Lusk noted that the purpose of tonight's meeting was to discuss how the Planning Commission and RHA could work together to increase affordable and workforce housing.

Lee Rau, Hunter Mill District RHA Commissioner, pointed out that if regulatory constraints, such as building height limitations, were eliminated, the marketplace would be able to provide affordable housing profitably.

Robert Schwaninger, Mason District RHA Commissioner, stated that affordable housing was looked at from two slightly different perspectives. He said the County looked at it from a planning and zoning perspective whereas the RHA looked at it opportunistically. He said a cooperative way was needed to deal with the challenges presented by each perspective. He spoke in support of single occupancy residences (SROs) in commercial and industrial areas and said they could contribute to ending homelessness in the County.

Chairman Lusk said affordable housing could also be collocated with County facilities, such as the Police and Fire Departments.

After a brief discussion, Donna Pesto, Zoning Administration Division, Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ), explained that in April the Board of Supervisors would be requested to authorize a Zoning Amendment to allow SROs, now known as residential studios, in almost all zoning districts.

In response to a question from Commissioner Litzenberger, Fred Selden, Planning Division, DPZ, said that a definition of universal design features had been put into the Comprehensive Plan consistent with the RHA definition and was encouraged in all residential development.

Albert McAloon, Lee District RHA Commissioner, noted that the George Mason University Center for Regional Analysis had determined that the County would need 63,660 affordable housing units based on projected job growth through 2025. He said this was impossible and would present a problem for new businesses that wanted to locate in the County.

Chairman Lusk commented that a number of commitments had been made for workforce housing in accordance with the newly adopted regulations but more were needed.

In response to a question from Chairman Lusk, Ms. Pesto said that residential uses in commercial and industrial districts were still on the Priority 2 Work Program.

John Payne, Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), commented on universal design and residential studios.

Mr. Schwaninger and Chairman Lusk discussed the possibility of placing affordable housing in commercial development. Commissioner de la Fe said housing in proximity to commercial areas had economic advantages and would reduce transportation demands.

Mr. McAloon said it was not necessarily true that people wanted to live where they worked.

Mr. Schwaninger commented that if owners of commercial property were encouraged to contribute to the community at a greater rate, it could be integrated into the lease rates and spread out over the square footage of the building as whole. He said the commercial occupant of the building would not be involved in the discussion; it would be buried in their square footage rate. Chairman Lusk noted that since commercial vacancies were rising, significant discounts on lease rates were often available. Mr. Schwaninger said this was not true for retail space.

Mr. Schwaninger and Mr. Christian commented on the need for housing for nurses at Inova hospitals.

In response to a question from Commissioner Litzenberger, Mary Stevens, DHCD, said that the turnover rate for HCD housing had dropped dramatically with the decline in the economy and was below 5 percent.

In response to a question from Mr. Christian, Chairman Lusk said that dialogue between the committee and the Housing Authority was essential for developing future initiatives. Commissioner de la Fe agreed. He said one issue that needed to be looked at were policies that conflicted with each other such as sidewalks on both sides of the street and low impact development techniques which encouraged neighborhoods without sidewalks.

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Mr. Christian introduced Rod Solomon, the RHA Commissioner from the Providence District. Mr. Solomon said his background was in the public housing and voucher area and that he was looking forward to learning about planning and zoning issues pertaining to housing.

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The committee agreed to schedule meetings about every six months and that the Work Program would be discussed at the next meeting.

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The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.
Rodney L. Lusk, Chairman

An audio recording of the meeting is available in the Planning Commission Office, 12000
Government Center Parkway, Suite 330, Fairfax, Virginia 22035.

Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Administratively Approved: July 13, 2010

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission