

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
HOUSING COMMITTEE  
JOINT W/REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14, 2007**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Walter L. Alcorn, At-Large  
Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District  
Ronald W. Koch, Sully District  
Rodney L. Lusk, Lee District  
Suzanne F. Harsel, Braddock District  
Timothy J. Sargeant, At-Large

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Earl L. Flanagan, Mount Vernon District  
Nancy Hopkins, Dranesville District

**OTHER COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Kenneth Lawrence, Providence District  
Peter F. Murphy, Jr., Springfield District

**PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF PRESENT:**

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

**REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

John Litzenberger, Sully District  
John Kershenstein, Springfield District  
Lee A. Rau, Hunter Mill District

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STAFF PRESENT:**

Paula Sampson, Director  
Tom Fleetwood, Strategic Planner  
Charlene Furhman-Schulz, Affordable Dwelling Unit Project Administrator  
Robert Fields, Director, Revitalization Projects

**DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING STAFF PRESENT:**

Fred Selden, Director, Planning Division (PD)  
Heidi Merkel, Planner III, PD

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Goldie Harrison, Hunter Mill District Supervisor's Office  
Michael Scheurer, AHOME  
Jim Scott, AHOME  
Bill Hanks, AHOME  
Jim Edmondson, AHOME

Planning Commission Vice Chairman Walter L. Alcorn constituted the meeting at 7:33 p.m. in the Board Conference Room at 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia, pursuant to Section 4-102 of the Commission's *Bylaws & Procedures*, and indicated that the first order of business was to elect a committee chairman.

Commissioner de la Fe MOVED TO ELECT RODNEY L. LUSK AS CHAIRMAN OF THE 2007 HOUSING COMMITTEE.

Commissioner Sargeant seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Vice Chairman Alcorn turned the chair over to Commissioner Rodney L. Lusk, Chairman, who noted that the first order of business was approval of minutes.

//

Commissioner Alcorn MOVED THAT MINUTES OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 24, 2007 BE APPROVED.

The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

//

Commissioner Lusk noted that the purpose of tonight's meeting was to discuss revisions to the recommendations of the High-Rise Affordability Panel presented to the committee on January 24, 2007.

Mr. Rau explained that since the last meeting, the panel had continued to engage in dialogue with the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) and presented the following revised recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Continued adherence to guidelines that at least 12 percent affordable housing be provided in new developments and applied to "Development Centers" as identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendation 2: Revised from a four tier affordability of 60, 80, 100, and 120 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) to three tiers between 80 and 120 percent due to high construction costs and the amount of subsidy needed to reach below 80 percent of the AMI.

Mr. Rau explained that three tiers of 80, 100, and 120 percent of the AMI for sale units and some rental units with concrete/steel construction and tiers of 80 to 100 percent for rental units constructed of wood would compensate for the bonus density needed to preserve the economic feasibility of extending the policy to high rise buildings. To address concerns about eliminating the 60 percent tier, he said that it was recommended that Housing and Community Development staff participate in the proffer process more actively with a view toward

identifying opportunities for the production of affordable housing in new projects with public resources where appropriate.

Recommendation 3: Revised to implement the policy through both the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.

Mr. Rau explained that this recommendation would create an expectation within the development community and landowners that affordable housing would have to be provided.

Recommendation 4: Reduced from a 2.2 bonus density to 1.8 and revised again for a one-to-one affordable/workforce to market rate bonus ratio, with a maximum bonus of up to 20 percent.

Mr. Rau said this compromise had been reached after discussions with DPZ staff who had questioned the need for any amount of bonus density. He noted that the proposed language recognized that steel and concrete construction was more expensive and only time would tell how successful this provision would be and that it should be reevaluated periodically.

Recommendation 5: Continued recommendation to allow affordable housing in commercial and industrial districts.

Mr. Rau stated that even though concerns had been expressed about this recommendation, the panel believed that it could ultimately result in the most significant production of affordable/workforce housing. He said this could be done by special exception approval or by-right development.

Commissioner Alcorn noted that he had served on the panel and although he had been concerned about the impact the original recommendations would have had on the overall planning process and density, he was pleased with the compromises reached. He pointed out that, under the current recommendations, the program would be implemented similarly to the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program but with higher income levels and focused around development centers. He said the compromises addressed concerns of both the development community and the County. Fred Selden, Director, Planning Division, DPZ, concurred.

Responding to a question from John Kershenstein, Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RHA) Commissioner representing the Springfield District, Jim Edmondson, developer and AHOME member, explained that a typical two bedroom, two bath high-rise condominium consisting of 1,100 square feet would sell for \$500 a square foot for a cost of up to \$600,000. He said buyers of such units would either have a large down payment with a low mortgage or a down payment of 10-20 percent of the purchase price with an income of 150 to 200 percent or more of the median income. Commissioner Alcorn pointed out that this would equate to an income of \$175,000 to \$200,000 a year. Commissioner Harsel commented that she thought workforce housing was for those making substantially less than that. Paula Sampson, Director, Department of Housing and Community Development, said family size and unit size were considered when determining income eligibility for workforce units.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Murphy, Mr. Rau said that although the development community was not thrilled with a one-to-one bonus density, they had accepted it. Commissioner Alcorn pointed out that eight or nine percent of affordable units had been provided in the last year or more with no bonus density and that developers seemed to be agreeable to providing 12 percent with a bonus.

In response to another question from Commissioner Murphy, Mr. Selden said retail or office space could be an amount equal to the size of the workforce housing units; i.e., if there were ten workforce housing units at 1,000 square feet each, 10,000 square feet could be used as retail or office space in a mixed-use development.

Ms. Sampson explained that an analysis done by George Mason University for the Housing Authority showed that rental housing assistance was needed up to 100 percent of the median income and that for sale housing needed assistance of up to 120 percent, noting that a concession had been made for rental units constructed of concrete and steel of up to 120 percent.

In response to a question from Commissioner Sargeant, Mr. Rau that this program would be administered through the ADU Ordinance with a minimum period of 30 years' affordability and that resale of a unit would extend that period for another 30 years. Mr. Edmondson said that leasing and subleasing would not be allowed. Ms. Sampson explained that under the ADU program, RHA qualified applicants and established a waiting list with certain priorities and that units were usually financed privately. She said units would be rented by the developer or property manager with oversight by RHA. She noted that incomes were allowed to increase under the program.

Responding to a question from Commissioner de la Fe, Mr. Edmondson said workforce housing was not financed by sub-prime lending. He said other devices were used to make sure that people were qualified under normal standards. Mr. Edmondson also explained that Fannie Mae, a major buyer of loans, had specific rules that differentiated the purchase of workforce housing loans from sub-prime loans.

Commissioner Alcorn pointed out that Recommendation 5 was the starting point for exploring the possibility of allowing workforce housing in commercial and industrial districts and required further study.

Mr. Kershenstein commented that RHA had suggested establishing a list of critical occupations needed by the County. Ms. Sampson noted that input from the County Demographer and the Economic Development Authority had been requested to accomplish this.

In response to a question from Commissioner Harsel, Commissioner Alcorn said that the Panel had discussed how Recommendation 5, workforce housing in commercial and industrial development, would affect P-Districts without reducing floor area ratios. Mr. Rau added that the Panel wanted to encourage the placement of housing close to work sites.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Murphy, Mr. Selden said staff envisioned a Plan Amendment that would address placement of workforce units to ensure they were not put in less desirable locations.

In response to a question from Commissioner Sargeant, Ms. Sampson said as long as federal funds were not used and there was no discrimination, specific groups, such as County employees, could be targeted for workforce housing. Chairman Lusk noted that a proffer for the Tysons Corner development had provided for marketing housing to specific individuals but there was no guarantee that they would get a unit.

Commissioner Alcorn pointed out that 12 percent of affordable units could include both workforce and affordable units.

Mr. Rau noted that the Board of Supervisors' (BOS) Housing Committee would meet on April 23, 2007 to review the Panel's recommendations.

Commissioner de la Fe MOVED THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION'S HOUSING COMMITTEE EXPRESS NO OBJECTION TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HIGH-RISE AFFORDABILITY PANEL PRESENTED TONIGHT

Commissioner Alcorn suggested that another committee meeting be scheduled prior to the April 23, 2007 BOS committee meeting before the committee endorsed the recommendations to the full Planning Commission.

Therefore, Commissioner de la Fe WITHDREW HIS MOTION.

//

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.  
Rodney L. Lusk, Chairman

For a verbatim record of this meeting, reference may be made to the audio recording which can be found in the Office of the Planning Commission of Fairfax County, Virginia.

Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Approved: June 21, 2007

---

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk  
Fairfax County Planning Commission