

**FAIRFAX COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
REDEVELOPMENT & HOUSING COMMITTEE
JOINT W/REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY (RHA)
WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2005**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

John R. Byers, Mount Vernon District
Frank A. de la Fe, Hunter Mill District
Ronald W. Koch, Sully District
Suzanne F. Harsel, Braddock District
Nancy Hopkins, Dranesville District
Rodney L. Lusk, Lee District

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

OTHER COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Walter Alcorn, At-large
James R. Hart, At-large
Kenneth A. Lawrence, Providence District

STAFF PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ronald F. Christian, Braddock District, Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RHA)
Conrad Egan, Providence District, RHA
John Payne, Housing and Community Development (HCD)
Lee Rau, Hunter Mill District, RHA
Mary Stevens, Deputy Director, HCD

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Planning Commission Vice Chairman John R. Byers constituted the meeting at 7:31 p.m., pursuant to Section 4-102 of the Commission's *Bylaws & Procedures*, in the Board of Supervisors' Conference Room, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035, and indicated that the first order of business was to elect a committee chairman.

Vice Chairman Byers MOVED TO NOMINATE RODNEY L. LUSK AS CHAIRMAN OF THE 2005 REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING COMMITTEE. The motion was seconded by Commissioner de la Fe and carried unanimously.

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Vice Chairman Byers turned the gavel over to Chairman Lusk.

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Chairman Lusk indicated that the agenda for tonight's meeting was a presentation of the findings and recommendations of the Housing Preservation Task Force.

Conrad Egan, Providence District, Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RHA), distributed a handout entitled "Keeping Doors Open To Affordable Housing," a copy of which is in the date file.

Mr. Egan pointed out that the first of twelve recommendations made by the Task Force was the dedication of one penny of the real estate tax rate to the preservation of affordable housing effective in Fiscal Year 2006. He explained that when this idea had first been put forth, no one believed it would gain much support. However, he said the Board of Supervisors had received more letters in support of this proposal than they had received about decreasing the real estate tax rate. He noted that recommendations 2, 3, and 4 concerned affordable/workforce housing, preservation incentives, and creation of a "SWAT" team to prevent the loss of at-risk affordable housing.

Mr. Egan noted that recommendations 5 and 10 addressed extending the control period of affordable dwelling units (ADUs) to 30 years and/or to restart the control period when a unit was sold to a new owner. He explained that if these recommendations were implemented, the ADU Ordinance would have to be revised. He pointed out that recommendations 7, 8, and 9 focused on state and federal incentives for low income housing tax credits, the authority of localities to provide incentives to preserve affordable housing, and the expansion of the Governor's Virginia Community Development Bank to urban areas like Fairfax County.

Mr. Egan said recommendation 11, to broaden the use of accessory dwelling units as a way to effectively expand the affordable housing stock would not legalize an illegal unit but would set up procedures and policies whereby accessory dwelling units could be used for housing. He noted that recommendation 12 was the establishment of an advocacy and public education campaign to promote the need for affordable workforce housing and the public-private resources to fully fund the recommendations.

Mr. Egan explained that the Committee was working with the County Executive to present an action plan to the Board of Supervisors to achieve these objectives, which not only included units previously covered by government programs, but also conventional market rate affordable units, many of which were being converted to condominiums. He said he was very pleased that the Board of Supervisors had taken ownership of this challenge and noted that it was important for the County to get involved in the decision-making process as early as possible.

Mr. Egan described two recent cases where the opportunities to preserve affordable housing had been lost, Madison Ridge in the Sully District and Carter's Lake in the Hunter Mill District. Commissioner de la Fe commented that it was just as important to work with the

private sector as it was to work with the non-profit organizations so that current owners would have an opportunity to buy converted units. Mary Stevens, Deputy Director, HCD, pointed out that this was an area where the "SWAT" team would assist developers, owners, and potential purchasers to move expeditiously through the planning, zoning, permitting, and other approval processes within the County.

Ms. Stevens and John Payne, HCD, responded to questions from Commissioner Byers about using "penny for housing" funds to buy trailer parks. Ms. Stevens noted that there were certain risk management issues associated with mobile homes. Mr. Egan said he would follow-up on this issue.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Harsel, Mr. Payne said a major impediment to replacing trailers with modular homes was the cost of land and although it could be done, a determination would have to be made about what level of subsidy would be appropriate. He also mentioned that infrastructure costs, soil types, and building restrictions could also increase costs.

In response to a question from Chairman Lusk, Mr. Egan said that workforce housing was for moderate income families and affordable housing was for the disabled and the elderly. He added that the goal was to preserve both types of housing.

Commissioner Lawrence asked if multi-family housing was the recommended strategy. Mr. Egan replied that the drive was toward denser development or the conservation of large acreages which were not built up to the density that might be encouraged today. He said they would like to be able to work with current and/or new owners to give them redevelopment opportunities while preserving an affordable component.

Chairman Lusk raised the possibility of workforce housing being placed in overlay districts and suggested that perhaps this was an area where the Planning Commission could play a role. Mr. Egan commented that because there were significant transportation problems in the Richmond Highway Corridor, for example, citizens might not be amenable to such a district. Chairman Lusk pointed out that in order to support businesses relocating to the County, workforce housing must be provided. He suggested that the County collaborate with businesses to provide such housing.

Ronald F. Christian, Braddock District, RHA, said that there was pressure from the Board of Supervisors to provide affordable housing but pointed out that RHA could not do it alone and that collaboration with the private sector would be necessary.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Harsel concerning recommendation 2, to revise the Comprehensive Plan to provide flexibility and incentives for affordable/workforce housing, Commissioner Alcorn said that no revisions to the Plan were being suggested at this time but would be considered after study and discussion. Mr. Egan added that a detailed strategy and timeline for recommendations 2 and 3, to provide incentives for preservation, would be developed.

Mr. Egan pointed out that redevelopments, such as Fairlee, provided an excellent opportunity to ensure that an affordable component would be preserved.

Chairman Lusk commented that follow-up was needed to continue the dialogue about affordable housing. Ms. Stevens noted that Fred Selden, Planning Division, Department of Planning and Zoning, was working on affordable housing initiatives to present to the Board of Supervisors later this month.

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The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.
Rodney L. Lusk, Chairman

Note: Due to technical difficulty, there is no audio recording available for this meeting.

Minutes by: Linda B. Rodeffer

Approved: July 27, 2005

Linda B. Rodeffer, Clerk
Fairfax County Planning Commission