

Embark Housing Advisory Group
Meeting Summary

January 24, 2019

- Committee Members in attendance: Taylor Holland, Will Jasper, Stanley Koussis, Michelle Krocker, Elisabeth Lardner, David Levine, Pam Michell, Christine Morin, Shelley Murphy, Soledad Portilla, James Smith, Lynne Strobel.
- Opening Remarks: Taylor Holland, Chief of Staff from Supervisor McKay's office, welcomed the advisory group and stated that changes had been made to the Embark Housing Strategies document from last meeting. Mr. Holland also introduced Sarah Rohrschneider, Outreach Coordinator from Congressman Donald Beyer, Jr.'s office. The Director of the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), Tom Fleetwood, spoke of the Federal Government shutdown and its effect on housing programs, stating that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development will be making payments as scheduled on housing assistance programs, including the Housing Choice Voucher program, in February. He stated there was to be a discussion, in general, about steps the Board of Supervisors would be taking regarding the shutdown at the January 29 Board Health, Housing and Human Services Meeting, and he stated that staff will keep the advisory group and others informed of developments and their effects on housing programs.
- Embark Housing Strategies Language Updates: Mr. Fleetwood stepped the advisory group through the revised Embark Housing Strategies narrative document, prefacing it by stating that he had felt it was important to flesh out some of the principles that had been listed. After reviewing the principles, Mr. Fleetwood stepped the group through the revised strategies language. In updating the language in the document, Mr. Fleetwood stated that staff tried to be responsive to the discussions and supplemental feedback from advisory group members. Discussion ensued regarding the document, and Sophia Fisher of the Planning Division of the Department of Planning and Zoning remarked that, regarding density bonuses, there is already existing policy regarding this and that she would be happy to work with staff to revise language in this section. In commenting about the equity focus, Michelle Krocker referred to a slide that Karla Bruce, Chief Equity Officer for the County, had developed containing specific questions one needs to ask regarding an activity or policy, and Ms. Krocker stated she would like to see the questions imbedded into the document. Mr. Fleetwood responded that staff would input the additional equity language, possibly using the language that another group is incorporating in their work. Lynne Strobel commented that having the sentence under Density bonuses that references having 20 percent of new residences in Tysons be set aside as workforce or affordable housing establishes a comparison to Richmond Highway that she thought was unfair. Mr. Fleetwood stated that this language would be re-crafted to address that concern. David Levine expressed concern regarding the last strategy, Partnerships to Relocate Displaced Residents, specifically the reliance of families on rental subsidy programs in the event a person faces losing their market affordable rental home due to redevelopment. Mr. Levine stated that he didn't think housing vouchers was a long-term solution. Mr. Fleetwood responded that he recognized this was not the optimal step, but if a unit were not to be preserved, this would be almost a last resort measure. Mr. Fleetwood thanked all for their comments and stated that staff plans to craft another version to have back out to the advisory group quickly. Before leaving this agenda item, it

was agreed that staff would also revise the Sliding scale section, eliminating the examples and stating that a sliding scale should be developed.

- “Market Affordable” Survey Data Estimates: Vin Rogers, Director, FCRHA Policy, Reporting and Communications for HCD, handed out an updated “*Preliminary* Tabulation of Affordable Units in Lee and Mount Vernon Districts of Fairfax County”. Mr. Rogers pointed out that this version contained units in both districts broken out by All Housing Units and then a subset of that labeled Unsubsidized Housing Units. Mr. Rogers informed the advisory group that this document was substantially complete, but that there were some discrepancies with the Co-Star and County data that needed to be resolved. Mr. Rogers then handed out four maps to replace the one map that was in the advisory group’s packet. The maps identified, for the Lee and Mount Vernon Districts separately, the location of all rental units and where the unsubsidized rental units were located. Elisabeth Lardner inquired whether the number of units for each of the circles on the maps represented individual properties or properties geographically grouped together, and Mr. Rogers stated that staff would get the answer to that. It was decided that, instead of the term “unsubsidized” rental units, the maps should say “market affordable” and that a definition of what the term means be added at the bottom of the appropriate maps. It was also decided that the names of the properties would be provided on a separate sheet.
- Overview of Comprehensive Plan Amendment Process: Mr. Holland informed the advisory group that he had a conversation with County staff and he formally requested that they provide a pros and cons report of what would work best regarding the proposed recommendations of the advisory group in light of any Comprehensive Plan processes that need to be followed.
- Embark Housing Advisory Group Road Map Check-In: Mr. Rogers reviewed the road map and what was expected of the advisory group in the third quarter. It was determined that the advisory group’s recommendations would need to be in near final form for it to go to the Strategic Economic Development Team (SEDT) for their February 27 meeting. Mr. Holland stated he would put the advisory group on the SEDT’s February 27 meeting agenda.
- Status of Communitywide Housing Strategic Plan Phase 1 Strategies: Mr. Fleetwood reference a report on the Communitywide Strategic Plan Phase 1 strategies status that was in the advisory group’s materials and informed the advisory group of recent accomplishments including two bond deals involving affordable housing projects; a new grant for homeownership; and a public hearing that will be held on the Oakwood property for senior housing in Lee District. Mr. Fleetwood stated that staff will make it a regular practice to do these reports to the Board of Supervisors and will include the advisory group in the distribution.
- Citizen Time: During Citizen Time the following comments were made:
 - A citizen stated her understanding that the transit money involved with funding the BRT had associated affordable housing requirements which she thought should be incorporated into the Embark Housing Strategies document. Mr. Fleetwood responded that staff will provide information to the advisory group regarding this. The citizen also stated that she had heard a comment about restrictions involving affordable housing projects using funding from the Penny Fund and Housing Trust Fund that were impediments to the projects. Mr. Fleetwood stated that HCD has been working on improving the Housing Blueprint project-funding process and Shelley Murphy

commented that it had changed for the better and that she did not see the application process as being an impediment.

- Another citizen introduced himself and said that he was a staff person for the Department of Family Services (DFS) and knew that DFS serves many clients from the Embark area. He wanted to hear what was discussed at these meetings to be better informed.

Christine Morin, Chief of Staff from Supervisor Storck's office, reminded the advisory group members of Supervisor Storck's Town Meeting on February 2.