



Housing Plan Implementation Committee

Date: June 4, 2020

Time: 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Minutes

Present: Lourie August, Pam Hallett, Karen Kelleher, Jonathan Nyberg, Jenny Raitt, Patricia Worden, Erin Zwirko.

On the minutes from March 5, 2020, Lourie made a motion to approve the minutes and Karen seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The Committee then turned to reviewing the workplan from 2019-2020. Erin provided a review of the workplan noting that on some of the items there has been progress this year, but on other items no progress has been made. Erin provided some suggestions on what to include for the 2020-2021 workplan, including continuing working on the Housing Trust and the Real Estate Transfer Fee to be well-positioned for a future Town Meeting as these articles will be refiled at the appropriate time. Jenny noted that the Housing Production Plan will expire in 2021, and there will be funds available to hire a consultant in the upcoming fiscal year to assist. The Committee then discussed their thoughts for the upcoming year.

Karen noted that there are significant implications to housing due to the pandemic. Many households are at risk of displacement. She noted that the Committee should move forward with the Trust as soon as possible. Although funding the trust might be more difficult now, the function of the trust is more important now. Erin noted that in a couple of weeks an application for tenant assistance funded through CDBG funds will become available. She also noted that the Health and Human Services Relief Fund is also planning to support renters and homeowners. Pam also noted that HCA's Homelessness Prevention Program is accepting applications, and they have 80 applications already. She expects that there will be many more in the future. Lourie noted that there is a lot of rental assistance available, and not much mortgage assistance. Karen noted that the end of the eviction moratorium has been triggered as well, so there is need to ensure that people are still sufficiently protected from evictions after the moratorium ends.

Karen then asked what the process is to update the Housing Production Plan. Erin noted that an RFP will be released to retain a consultant. Once a consultant is selected, the work could begin. Jenny noted that engagement for the current plan includes focus groups, forums, a survey, and direct outreach. She also noted that a Housing Production Plan is required to

have three parts: a needs analysis, a housing demand analysis including a review of development opportunities and constraints, and goals. It is also required to set yearly housing production goals to achieve 10 percent affordable housing. Jenny noted that we will have to consider where the most help will be needed, as the funding is modest. Patricia observed that the most appropriate housing production goal for Arlington to achieve is the statutory requirement of 1.5% of land area as affordable housing.

Lourie noted that the outreach task on the 2019-2020 workplan might overlap with the work to update the Housing Production Plan. Karen thought that the outreach might not necessarily be the same. Based on current events, general outreach on the pandemic, systemic racism, equity, and anti-displacement may be relevant. Karen suggested a screening of *Segregated by Design*. Jenny noted that the staff will work with Jill Harvey, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator, to brainstorm some joint events.

Karen asked about tracking the transfer of multifamily properties that might be at risk. Erin noted that it is not something that she tracks now, but could develop a system to track this information. Patricia noted that this is an important issue in Arlington due to displacement. It is an issue that the Town should do something about. Pam noted that it would be important to be more proactive rather than just tracking the issue. If the Town is proactive, there might be the option to prevent a transfer. A policy or regulation could be developed.

Turning back to the update of the Housing Production Plan, Karen noted that the document could maintain that the Town has achieved the 1.5% minimum land area dedicated to affordable housing but develop a plan to reach 10% over the course of the plan's 5-year lifespan by choice. Patricia thought that reaching 10% would be an impossible goal, so it is more realistic to work toward maintaining the 1.5% minimum land area. Pam noted that land use needs to change to ensure that the Town can maintain the minimum land area. Jonathan noted that both could be mutually achievable.

Jenny reminded the Committee that the purpose of a Housing Production Plan is to produce housing and setting housing production goals to achieve that purpose. Patricia noted that new housing is difficult in a land poor community such as Arlington. Ten percent is a goal that may not be embraced by the community. Jenny reiterated that there is a need to create all types of housing through the state mandate. Converting existing units to affordable units is one strategy although it does not create new units. Patricia stated that Arlington does not need to create all types of housing. Arlington's Master Plan specifies need only for affordable housing and senior housing.

The Committee discussed whether it is important to work with the developer community that focuses on affordable housing development. Jenny indicated that a group could be convened to work on holding a roundtable on this topic.

Patricia also noted that there should be work around teardown and replacement housing and a policy developed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.