



Workforce & Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee Minutes
Regular Meeting, April 20, 2023 at 11:00 a.m.
ABC Conference Room of the George L. Gordon Government Center
1300 Courthouse Road | Stafford, VA 22554

Call to Order: Chair Monica Gary called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

Roll Call: The following members were present: Tinesha Allen, Monica Gary, and Pamela Yeung

Also in attendance were Randal E. Vosburg, County Administrator; Donna Krauss, Deputy County Administrator; Michael Morris, Deputy County Administrator; Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney; Paul Santay, Chief Community Development Director; Crissy Kendall, Planning & Zoning Administrative Specialist; and other interested parties.

Additions/Deletions and approval of the Consent Agenda: Ms. Gary opened the floor to additions or deletions. Mr. Santay brought to the attention of the committee a few additional sheets that were not part of the agenda but included for reference.

Ms. Allen shared she would be unable to attend the next meeting and wished to discuss the calendar of speakers provided as an added attachment. Mr. Santay expressed these are not set in stone but followed the pattern of meeting every third Thursday of the month and reiterated it was up to the committee to determine meeting times. Ms. Allen stated the individuals agreed to those days. Mr. Santay requested the discussion be tabled for discussion at item number four of the consent agenda. Ms. Gary requested a calendar be established and dates be subject to change. Mr. Santay asked Ms. McClendon if being the committee is ad hoc, does there need to be a set calendar. Ms. McClendon replied that since it is a lot less formal than the Board of Supervisors but ultimately meetings must meet the notice requirements beforehand; however, meetings can be set on a periodic basis. Ms. Gary requested date recommendations for the next meeting. Ms. Allen recalled her personal calendar. After a brief discussion, Ms. Allen requested the meeting continue and Mr. Santay and/or the Clerk provide her with the meeting information. Mr. Santay obliged. Ms. Gary asked Ms. Allen if she wished to call in for the meeting. Mr. Santay reiterated the speakers are penciled in and as Ms. McClendon mentioned, there is flexibility in the meeting schedule due to the committee's informal nature. Ms. Gary requested a schedule and the committee will address it moving forward. In addition, Ms. Gary said she had met with Feras Qumseya and was glad he was on the list of speakers and will bring a lot of knowledge and experience to informing what the committee is doing. Ms. Gary requested to move on.

Mr. Santay shared there was nothing further for additions/deletions. Ms. Gary requested a motion to approve the consent agenda. Dr. Yeung made a motion to approve the consent agenda, Ms. Allen seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0.



Unfinished Business: Ms. Gary requested to review the Workforce and Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee Draft Charter to see what was amended. Mr. Santay informed the committee that the charter that was presented during the last meeting was a draft. During that meeting, the Ms. McClendon was asked to make amendments to the charter, which she did. However, the redline amendments were not included in the agenda packet. Mr. Santay suggested that the committee could walk through some of those items based on membership and other related matters, if required.

Ms. Gary sought to know if anyone had submitted any feedback or changes regarding the charter. Mr. Santay replied that he had not received any feedback. Ms. Gary inquired if the committee needed more time to review the charter. Mr. Santay mentioned that the draft charter stated that it did not need to be reviewed or approved until May 31.

Dr. Yeung suggested having a mission and vision statement in the charter. Mr. Santay replied that Article One, Letter B, in the charter gave a brief idea of the mission and vision statement. Ms. Gary stated this should be discussed with the whole board.

Ms. Krauss gave an example of how the DAC charter had a purpose statement that reminded them of their purpose. Dr. Yeung agreed with seeking input from the whole board in addition to Ms. Krauss's suggestion. Ms. McClendon reiterated that the purpose of the charter was to mobilize the committee and that expanding the mission and vision statement could drive the committee more. She suggested that the mission and vision statement be included in the charter itself.

Ms. Allen requested more time to review the charter. Ms. Gary agreed to wait for Ms. Allen's feedback. Ms. Allen offered to respond through email with her directions, and the attendees could adopt it, even though she would not be present during the adoption. Ms. Gary asked if Ms. Allen would like to call in, Ms. Allen declined.

New Business: Ms. Gary opened the floor for discussion on "Research and Define Terms associated with the Workforce & Affordable Housing Ad Hoc Committee". Mr. Santay emphasized the importance of defining affordable housing and potentially defining workforce housing as well. He referred to the state code that defines affordable housing as "housing that's affordable to households with incomes at or below the area median income, provided that no occupant pays more than 30% of their income towards rent or mortgage and basic utility." He mentioned this definition is consistent with Stafford County's comprehensive plan and the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition. In addition, Mr. Santay noted the committee can manipulate the definition as per their preference, but for the most part, the region and the state use that 30% threshold based on AMI as the definition of affordable housing.



Ms. Allen asked if the definition of affordable housing can relate to those who are trying to acquire rental property or a mortgage. Mr. Santay suggested that guest speakers and programs that the committee hears from can address those questions. Dr. Yeung expressed her concern about the name of the ad hoc committee and suggested staying consistent with workforce and affordable Housing. Ms. Gary suggested using the state definition to avoid confusion in the future. Ms. Allen suggested adding something to the effect of ALICE and/or central workforce to the definition. Dr. Yeung reiterated her concern about the name of the committee. Mr. Vosburg asked if the definition is tied to the charter. Mr. Santay mentioned the committee has four objectives under the charter, the first being researching and defining these terms. Ms. Krauss asked if the committee changes the definition or amends the definition, and it goes before the board, will it be reflected in the comp plan. Mr. Santay agreed that was a good point and shared that as of now the definition is the same as the state's definition and should it change slightly, the comp plan would have to be reviewed. Ms. Gary suggested going forward with the state definition of affordable housing and moving on to discuss other definitions in the future. Ms. McClendon stated that the committee needs to define workforce affordable and variety housing, and that the board members need to understand what those terms mean. Ms. Allen suggested starting with an affordable housing definition and then adding appendices for workforce, ALICE, and other relevant terms. Ms. Krauss expressed that the committee needs to think about its purpose in guiding future conversations and plans for the community as a whole. She then added that the federal-state standard of affordable housing means something different to developers than it does to the county and the community. Ms. Gary suggested that the committee provide feedback to staff before the next meeting on how to lay out the definition and what subcategories to include. Ms. Allen agreed and reiterated that the committee should add subcategories to specify what affordable housing means to them. She included example subcategories such as senior housing, workforce housing, ALICE, and variety housing. Dr. Yeung asked how the committee plans to use the definition and whom they will work with. She questioned whether the committee plans to substitute and work with HUD or the developers. Ms. Allen emphasized her preference for a private-public partnership because the private sector will be the ones leading that change. She also stated a housing authority is an option because there will eventually be a need for a partnership with the private sector. Ms. Gary agreed and reiterated sending feedback to Mr. Santay.

Ms. Gary ushered in the next agenda item being a discussion regarding presentations/guest speaker proposed calendar. Mr. Santay expressed that after the last meeting and upon receiving feedback, connections were made with different individuals in the housing industry from the Realtor's Association to United Way and Virginia Housing. He mentioned the draft calendar was a proposal and to provide basic information and the deadline of September was based on October being when the committee would report to the full board for discussion. Mr. Santay reviewed some of the individuals on the proposed calendar. Ms. Gary opened the floor for feedback.



Mr. Vosburg requested to discuss the process of how the calendar/charter would align and expressed his concern on whether the speakers would be helpful to the creation of the charter for fact-finding purposes or whether it was preliminary. Mr. Vosburg expressed that if the speakers will assist with developing the charter, that would be helpful otherwise the charter should be in place relatively quickly. Ms. Allen expressed that she believes the speakers will personally guide her in regard to the charter and definitions.

Ms. Krauss asked Ms. McClendon if the definitions/appendices of definitions need to be in the charter and agreed upon before presenting to the full board. She mentioned her concern being the board may not agree with the definitions however the definitions will be created based on data and information received from industry experts.

Ms. Gary asked Dr. Yeung for her comments. Mr. Vosburg stated that the committee needs to compile enough research and education, through speakers, definitions, and any information provided by Mr. Santay, to develop a charter that can be taken to the board for approval. Mr. Vosburg emphasized the need for a clear charter to be developed by the board to avoid frustration among committee members. For example, if the committee members want to focus on housing authority and include it in the charter, but the board does not support it, it would not make sense to have speakers on that topic. Therefore, it is essential to develop a broad charter that gives the committee more latitude, rather than a narrow and specific charter that limits exploration.

Dr. Yeung raised her concerns about the committee's focus on affordable housing and asks which slice of the pie the committee wants to address that the whole board will accept. Dr. Yeung suggested that the committee needs to identify what it wants to accomplish in terms of affordable housing and what it wants to do with it. She suggests that the committee should focus on finding a house that individuals in their district can live in and afford with help from Stafford County or Virginia Housing Association. However, she is stuck on the issue of how to develop something within the committee's program that is going to stick and grow, allowing them to build homes that people can afford to work in or not. Ms. Gary suggested that the committee nails down a broad charter as soon as possible to drill down a little bit further. Ms. Gary emphasizes committee members providing feedback to Mr. Santay and recommended having a broad charter to get something back to the board soon. Mr. Vosburg highlighted the two speakers Mr. Santay has lined up for the two subsequent meetings can assist the committee with how the charter will exist in our market and our area and requested the committee revisit the general outline of the calendar so they can be invited. Ms. Gary agreed and asked if having speakers was typical before developing a charter. Mr. Santay said that was up to the committee and referenced Mr. Vosburg's suggestion of their industry experience guiding the development of the charter in addition to noting a charter doesn't have to be adopted until the next meeting. He mentioned he would prepare additional research and talking points for the committee to consider before the next meeting.



Dr. Yeung asked what was already existing in terms of qualifying for affordable housing and workforce housing. Mr. Santay answered by stating staff has already done research to figure out what is available for rent and purchase but didn't want to share that research without additional oversight from someone such as Ms. McClellan from FAAR to confirm what the market is like in Stafford currently. Mr. Santay shared staff has drawn some conclusions on available three-bedroom apartments for rent and townhomes and what those are costing based on the AMI in the community and additional data and assured the committee research was being done. Ms. Krauss stated there was a list that's calculated based on the federal and state definition of affordable housing and would share with the committee.

Dr. Yeung stated she was more interested in not what the federal government has across the United States but what Stafford County has in stock. Mr. Santay replied there is none. Dr. Yeung asked if it was the case that no developer has ever been able to get workforce housing in here as of yet. Mr. Santay said that was correct.

Ms. Krauss mentioned there are apartments and other complexes including senior living that is on the list she had mentioned but noted they are not county-owned and they were developed using the standard definition of federal funding. Mr. Santay mentioned he had already addressed finding Stafford-specific information with Ms. Walsh from Rappahannock United Way. Dr. Yeung expressed she was not interested in assisted living and those who receive waivers but more those that are working. Ms. Gary asked if Ms. Walsh could provide information when she comes to speak. Ms. Allen responded to Dr. Yeung's comment regarding assisted living and commented she doesn't want to focus solely on the working body but also retirees who are unable to afford rent. She referenced a resident in her district who retired from Giant and can no longer afford her mortgage and requested options for assisting individuals like this. Mr. Santay mentioned the reason why Mr. Broyles with GWRC is on the speaker list is that based on GWRC's regional study, it was approached as not just an affordable housing issue, but a housing issue in general for different demographics and age restrictions. Ms. Allen requested to see the data showing seniors that are retired and on a fixed income that don't meet the AMI.

Ms. Krauss noted there is not enough housing for the market Ms. Allen described and that the county constantly receives calls from people who have parents that need assistance and there is no place for them. Ms. Allen replied stating she is aware and typically refers these individuals to the county from her job. Ms. Allen explained there are nurses that begin this process with patients and in discharge instructions, there is an assessment for patients to determine if the patient can meet Maslow's Hierarchy of Basic Human Needs. If determined their basic needs cannot be met, they are connected with resources. Ms. Allen reiterated there is not enough housing and it becomes an issue with compliance and deterioration of health in addition to other issues and said that is the reason she wishes the committee not solely focus on the workforce housing. Ms. Gary asked if the committee could seek data referencing Ms. Allen's point from the hospital.



Dr. Yeung clarified that she was not excluding these individuals and cited her concern is what she is interested in and wanted to see additional data. Ms. Gary expressed her appreciation that between the committee members, the committee is going to cover all of the different needs and concerns.

Mr. Vosburg requested the committee think in terms of the charter who is really important and because there are so many layers to affordable/workforce/senior housing. He expressed he has heard a lot of different and valid ideas but couldn't place a priority and recommended the committee prioritize what they wish to focus on or the committee may be fighting too many different fronts and may not be as effective as opposed to prioritizing one issue considering it is a lot to fix by September. Ms. Gary agreed and expressed this is not something that can be crammed into one year and referenced recent tax struggles. She also stated she feels the direction will continue to turn as the committee receives more data before they present to the board. Ms. Gary and Ms. Allen both emphasized the importance of taking a broad approach to addressing affordable housing in the county, rather than narrowing the focus of the committee from the outset. They argued that if the committee were to start with a narrow focus, it would be much harder to later expand its scope, and that taking a broader approach would allow the committee to build on its work over time as new data became available and housing needs evolved. Dr. Yeung offered a counterpoint, suggesting that the committee could start by prioritizing a specific area of affordable housing and working to develop a concrete outcome that could be presented to the board. She argued that having a tangible result could help demonstrate the committee's effectiveness and progress, and that additional areas of affordable housing could be added later.

Ms. Gary requested the meeting wrap up as only an hour was allotted and asked if the date for the next meeting needs to be changed. Dr. Yeung asked for a date. After some discussion, moving it to the week before the original date was agreed upon contingent to Mr. Santay confirming with the speakers.

Ms. Gary thanked the committee and staff moved to adjourn.

The next meeting is planned for Thursday, May 11, 2023, 11:00 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

The full transcription of the meeting is available at:



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