

ARLINGTON INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ADVISORY COMMISSION

6:00 PM, Wednesday, June 23, 2021

Virtual Meeting via TEAMS

MEETING MINUTES

In attendance:

Chair: Mary Crannell

Vice Chair: Frank Jazzo

Members Present: Jonathan Adelstein, John Burke, Mike Carleton,
Phil Caughran, Martha Moore, Kevin Robins,
Jackie Snelling, David Husband

County Staff: David Herlihy, County Staff liaison
Jack Belcher, CIO

Members of the Public: Kevin Broadhurst, Comcast and Louise Anderson, Verizon

Visitors: Eric Berkey, Chair, Citizens Advisory Commission on Housing
Sharon Valencia, Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission Chair.

Meeting called to order by Chairman, Mary Crannell

6:00 PM

Public Comment

None

Introduction of Guest Speaker by Chairman, Mary Crannell

- The Pandemic has exposed how much high-speed Internet access is critical. Eric educated on some of the dimensions in terms of the requirements for housing.
- We looked at 1 gig up, 1 gig down and Eric will be able to give us perspective about what some of the challenges are from a housing perspective.

Eric Berkey, Chair, Citizens Advisory Commission on Housing

- Erick has been Chair of the Housing Commission since January of 202 and on the Commission since 2016.
- The last 6-7 years, he has been very interested in housing policy as it relates to equity and civil rights, economic issues.
- The Housing Commission look generally look at housing issues but about 80-90% of the time is focused on housing affordability, affordable housing, which in term of art described .
- We look at other market rate housing issues but we predominant look at affordable housing that Arlington supports and helps create.
- It is a highly regulated program. A brief overview of how it is funded, requirements that our developer, partner, providers face and some of the policy choices.
- AHIF: Affordable Housing Investment Fund. It might not seem like it's totally tangentially connected to what you all are interested in, but it is incredibly relevant.

- The vast majority of our discussion about policy are really about financing and that's what you learn really quickly. It's all about how you pay for it and how you can structure deals and make it work.
- It is very critical to understand how these developments, especially the large apartment building developments get funded. That really dictates the policy choices we can make as a community and the programs that we can choose to provide or not.
- Most jurisdictions in Virginia don't have something like this. It has been around at least 17-years or so. It is a low interest revolving loan fund.
- It could be as low as \$10-\$15 million and as high as \$25-\$30 million depending upon several factors. One million each year that the County can decide to loan out to developers. It is typically affordable housing developers to help facilitate the development and construction of affordable buildings in Arlington.
- The County locks in a certain rate of affordability for those units, especially as the County's stock market rate, affordable housing and the terms of ART.
- AHIF is funding by several sources:
 - Local general revenues
 - Federal HOME/CDBG funds
 - County recordation taxes
 - Developer contributions
 - Loan repayments and payoffs
- If the developer is to do a site plan they have got to do a lot of planning with the County and as part of the process, typically the developer will have a choice between creating a certain amount of committed affordable units on site, or putting them elsewhere in the County or contributing a certain amount that's dictated by this scheme to the counties affordable AHIF. Almost always the developers are making the cash contribution.
- AHIF is used for:
 - New Construction
 - Acquisition of existing multi-family buildings
 - Rehabilitation of affordable housing\
 - Housing Services Grants
- AHIF helps:
 - Finances funding gaps in exchange for affordable housing commitment
 - Demonstrates the County commitment to project.
 - Leverages additional funds, and makes projects competitive in the state-wide Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)pool - Administered by Virginia Housing (formerly VHDA)
- What AHIF takes under consideration:
 - Developers secure AHIF loans through Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) competitive process
 - AHIF allocations from the County can fluctuate
 - Developer repayments are not always predictable
 - County defines CAF at 60%(at point of construction) is challenging but possible
 - Virginia LIHTC scoring Rules
 - HUD rules

- AHIF NOFA Scoring/Arlington also as its own scoring systems in order to get loans. Because there is not an unlimited pool of money and also competitive process by which developers such as HC or App or Wesley Housing were kind of the Big Three in Arlington. So many of the deals can be challenging and that's not withstanding federal government rules through the Department of Housing and Urban Development and other federal and state regulations.
 - NOFA is competitive
 - Points for free broadband(similar to Virginia Housing guidelines)
 - High-speed broadband is defined at 30 Mbps (no distinction between upload/download)
 - The County recommends that project applicants consult its Digital Equity tram about different approaches to broadband connectivity, including ConnectArlington and that applicants consider a solution that does not limit resident choice to a single internet service provider(ISP)
- We'd like to do more to try to decrease the cost of at least lessen that pressure. There are a lot of other things that are being discussed as for as fees or other things that can be relaxed to make these projects more viable. Parking is another thing we talked about.

Q&A

- Kevin Robins: Why is the affordable housing stock going down so much in the County
 - This is a desirable place to live and it's really expensive. If we paused development, for the County to just catch up to reclaim a lot of the market rate affordable units that have been lost. The county would need to invest at least double or 2 ½ times what it does right now.
 - The County has been fairly aggressive in trying to take steps to loosen things up and try to get developers to build more, but that's ultimately still the private market. The County can encourage, but it can't force.
- **John Burke:** Affordability calculations there's not just the price of the housing but there 's some other calculations that cost may or may not be included in the official calculations. One of the things that should be included, is Internet, and not just committed affordable units but also for the market rate affordable units. We will never subsidize out way too affordable housing. Is Internet access currently included in the cost calculation for affordability overall as other utilities or transportation costs might be?
 - Don't know the precise answer to that. I think it is a fair point. I think it is certainly on their radar. It seems like that should be pursued more and may be integrated into maybe these developments or at least to encourage the developers.
- **John Burke:** You can pay \$10 bucks a month for internet . \$65 bucks a month on a 30-year mortgage is a lot of buying power, so I would encourage the Housing Commission to think about some more aspects of affordability generally and try and make some recommendations for incorporating those into our housing policy.
 - More units means more in the market, means a little less pressure on the market, which is what we want to see. Zoning is complicate and it's affects the market and you never know exactly what the market is going to do. Obviously the market will dictate cost.
- **Mike Carleton:** If we could address some questions about Master planning, I understand there's a housing 's part of the comprehensive plan.
 - There's an affordable housing master plan that was adopted in 2015. The implementation is under review by staff

- My question is how? How much? How much does the Master planning process inform and help your folks? What's the division of Labor between County staff, Commission members and the public at large in creating that Master Plan?
 - The plan was created in 2015 and I was not on the Commission. That had a working group from representatives around the community. The County had a holistically looked at this about 10-years prior. I'm not saying you shouldn't do it, it was a very heavy lift by staff. They had a lot of community meetings. It was 6-8 months until they finally adopted it because then they did a roadshow. Everybody did a lot of public presentations.
 - The implementation spells out what the Master Plan goals are. I think the best thing we can do is provide a public forum before issues have to be discussed: housing development, also housing conditions has been a big focus of ours. There's been a lot of failures at Serrano which is an HC property on Columbia Pike. Last two meetings have been like 4-hours long, listening to residents and trying to help them.
 - I think the most valuable thing that we can do as an advisory group is to write a public forum, the board does not the bandwidth necessarily to do that all the time. I also think we can put together a record of things that we observe, either responding to staff's recommendations or coming up with their own ideas. I think we can put this in writing by having reports by going to the County Board regularly.
 - Often time what we are coming up with isn't necessarily an original concept, but the County Board has a lot going on. My experience is you just gotta keep pushing because it is very easy for things to kind of fall off their radar.

Review Draft Digital Planning Letter for Arlington County – John Burke

- I am trying to incorporate all of the edits that I received. Phil provided. I was trying to just capture the sense of our conversation, not put my own kind of view on it. I think we should proceed through Roberts rules and if anybody has edits or suggested amendments, you can propose it and I'll do that editing now on the screen, we can vote it up voted down and finalize the letter.
 - **Mary Crannell:** open it up to the Commission members any changes. Any suggestions for? The Chair is suggesting one think I wanted to make the need to address the lack of far reaching current policy. It is not a change of content but just a change of flow.
 - I was saying we could split up the sentences and start with "We believe this is an urgent priority because currently there is a lack of far reaching consistent policies across the County.
 - The reason I wanted to switch that as I read it again was I want to emphasize the urgent priority and wanted to make the points a little easier to read so nothing substantial is missed. If the Commission members don't support it, but just thought I'd suggest a flow.
 - While we are in pause, Sharon Valencia has joined us. Sharon is my counterpart of the Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission, so we have 3/3 commissions tonight of walkthrough. Thank you for carving out time.
 - **Frank Jazzo:** I have a motion; I think I do. I want to go straight to adopting the letter itself, Do we have a motion to? David Husband: "I Move"; Frank, Do we have a second?" Mike Carleton 2nd. All in favor say I. No nays. Motion adopted.

Review Draft Joint Letter from EPAC and Tech Commission , Sharon Valencia, Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission Chair.

- You are likely aware by now, EPAC communicated with Mary because we had several issues with what is happening. Our meetings are generally a week before Tech Commission. At our meeting we decided unanimously to approve the letter either as is, if Tech Commission does not approve it, we will go ahead and submit it on our own.
- The discussion was that we do think this is very important, and even though the board has already made the decision, we as representatives of the community would like a board advisor, would like to further go on record and submit the letter.
- **Mary Crannell:** The joint letter, I will entertain motion from the floor if unless there's any suggestions, any changes before we move to either adopt or reject. John and Jackie do you want to make any comments before we move forward.
- **Jacqueline Snelling:** It's very challenging role we're representing our commissions. I'm trying very hard to be neutral and to provide guidance both for the board and also for our commissions. To have that pretty firmly rooted in the role that was defined for us, which was dealing with privacy. They want us to know about the other things and they want us to see the other things through the vision of privacy, Maybe not what they want but maybe what they need.
- This is an uncomfortable position with the public on this, so I have been concerned from the beginning that the way this is being approached is on giving the public sufficient information to understand this before having it approved.
- The issue has been how to try to work with staff and the more technical ask experts that are on this going to try to understand and to translate. The cost benefit analysis is a way that the answers are clear to the public, when and why are we doing this are the biggest question, why are we doing this? Another question I think is that a large part of the public are saying there are a lot of risk that we need to know.
- **Mary Crannell:** I think one of the things that we want to make sure of, is that this will not be the last pilot. We've got to figure out how to do innovation, that was one of the reasons that I was interested in us looking at this. I want to make sure certain questions are asked.
- **John Burke:** I agree with Jackie's comments, so I won't repeat them. The original Board report had engagement level of communication and this was raised to communicate and consult. I think that was a direct result of some of the feedback that this Commission and I had provided. I think it was a miss that it wasn't engaging consult upfront. All of the questions and all of the mistrust were totally predictable.
- Holly in her presentation to the board, clarified that they would not in fact be using this data for operational decision making during the course of the pilot, which I think is good. It substantially reduces the risk.
- I do think it is important for us to voice our concerns as a Commission because one of the other practices and I laid this out during our last meeting is we get the scope of the privacy Data Governance Board that Jackie and I sit on. I think there is going to be a lot of lessons learned coming out of this pilot and think it is illustrative of the need for the digital planning framework.
- **Sharon Valencia:** want to clarify that there has been lots of back and forth on whether there will be video and whether there will be operational use of anything that is happening in Clarendon. For

example, at one point, there was many times actually, they've said that there was going to be video to see whether or not that data getting captured accurate or not.

- Mike Carleton proposed that we adopt the letter, 2nd by Frank Jazzo. I's have it, we will share and we will send a joint letter to the board an I can coordinate that so we can send it.

Legislative Update—Frank Jazzo

- On May 20th the FCC adopted a further decision reducing interstate rates and charges for incarcerated people with disabilities. Mary reported on Connecticut's free calls for incarcerated people . It's putting focus on this but the idea is that the lot this falls on intrastate, which falls to the interstates and the FCC is encouraged by actions like what happened with Connecticut.
- The Emergency Broadband Benefit program that start date was May 12 and when eligible households that became able receive \$50 monthly discount on broadband. Over one million households enrolled in the first week. It is now over 3-million.
- We also have the Emergency Connectivity Fund program \$7.1 billion. The report and ordered that enables schools and libraries to purchase tablets and laptops, as well as provide broadband service for students and staff through again, money that's gone. The FCC has adopted rules now on the ECF program.
- The FCC is proposed to accelerate the date by which small voice providers that originate in especially large amount of call traffic must implement the stir shaken caller ID authentication framework. The FCC has also issued cease and desist letters to two companies to stop illegal Robo call campaign.
- FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr has called for a new approach to fund closing the digital divide. Currently, traditional telephone service has a Universal Son service fund. USF contribution factor of 30% calls for big tech, large internet companies to pay their fair share. There's also been a push to have tech companies also pay the regulatory fees that help support the FCC. Currently only largely licensees have paid those fees.
- The FCC is reached agreements with a AT&T mobile and Verizon to start delivering vertical location information in connection with 911 calls nationwide, which will help first responders quickly locate 911 call is in multi-story buildings. There had been a lag in implementing.
- Finally, our own Jonathan Adelstein testified yesterday before the Senate Subcommittee on Communications. Media and Broadband and called for the inclusion of wireless in any broadband infrastructure package. The maximized, resilient, reliable and redundant broadband network. He emphasized the role that brought a wireless play.

Review 24 March 2021 Meeting Minutes, 28 April 2021 Meeting Minutes, 26 May 2021 Meeting Minutes

- March minutes were adopted
- April Minutes were adopted with note to remove Mike Carlton in attendance
- May Minutes were adopted with a not to add question from Mike Carlton "Was County Staff for or against Master Plan?"

Which month – July or August for summer Tech Commission meeting?

Information Technology Advisory Commission

- Any preference about July or August. We usually have one month that is actually considered a summer month. John Burke suggested to skip July because of the arrival of his second child in July. All agree on July. Motion adopted to meet on August 25.
- David Husband said his goodbyes to commission. Just moved to Fairfax County.

Adjournment

7:40 PM

Next Meeting

Next Virtual Meeting: August 25, 2021 at 6pm via Teams