

HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
RCLCO Housing Study Recommendations Subcommittee
Meeting Notes
Neighborhood Development Services Conference Room, City Hall
July 20, 2016
12:00 pm

Attendance Record	Present	Absent
MEMBERS		
Betsy Lawson	X	
Carmelita Wood	X	
Dan Rosensweig	X	
Jody Lahendro		X
Jennifer McKeever		X
Kristin Szakos	X	
Ridge Schuyler	X	
Grant Duffield	X	
NON VOTING MEMBERS		
Trish Romer (UVa)	X	
STAFF		
Kathy McHugh	X	
Tierra Howard	X	
Missy Creasy	X	
Alex Ikefuna	X	
Lisa Robertson		X
OTHERS		
Sean Tubbs – C’ville Tomorrow	X	
Sean Cudahy – NBC Channel 29	X	
Kathy Galvin	X	
Beth Kennan	X	

The meeting began around 12:05. Kathy McHugh (KM) started off the meeting by asking everyone to sign in and pick up copies of the documents on the handout table and went on to review the proposed schedule for the review of the RCLCO report and a recap of the prior meeting/recommendations - referencing the summary chart which contains RCLCO recommendations and HAC comments to date. The proposed meeting schedule for future meetings is as follows:

August 17, 2016 – Full HAC Discussion of Subcommittee Recommendations/Report to go to City Council in September

September or October – Look to take recommendations to Council (contingent upon hiring of replacement for KM and getting that individual up to speed on recommendations of this subcommittee)

KM advised that today’s meeting is targeted toward discussing the **Long Term Recommendations (LTR)** from the RCLCO report, but that there was one of the **Short Term Recommendations (STR)** that needs to be revisited. Specifically, the group discussed STR #5 and instead of recommending against it, one member proposed the following wording (handout was provided for attendees):

“Further study is recommended to identify the extent to which privately-managed housing units are in violation of Virginia property maintenance code. Should the results of such a study identify a clear need for increased enforcement, it should be developed in tandem with existing property

maintenance staff as well as resources that will enable owners or other organizations to make repairs.”

Dan Rosensweig (DR) asked Betsy Lawson (BL) to speak to this matter due to her passion regarding this topic. Betsy stated that she would like to leave the door open instead of recommending against this - particularly if there is a clear need, in which case it should be developed with resources in mind.

After a discussion with City staff on hand regarding current practices, including proactive sweeps of all neighborhoods and complaint based (reactive) enforcement, DR spoke to his concern over potential displacement of low income persons and driving up housing costs if there was more targeted property maintenance enforcement. BL spoke to this by saying that this is why resources need to be part of the wording.

The issue of resources was further discussed with Kristin Szakos (KS) asking about use of a loan fund to provide a source of funding for owners to access and make repairs. KM responded that this is something that could likely be done, but that we do not currently do this now and it would require more staff capacity to oversee.

DR proposed the following wording to revise STR #5 with the group generally in agreement that this approach would be viable, if concern is noted over the need to avoid targeting abuses:

Strengthen programs to enable health and safety upgrades in exchange for non-displacement mechanisms.

Moving on to the LTR column item number 1, KM indicated that she would read each recommendation aloud and then ask for feedback. DR responded that he felt that use of the word “financial” would limit incentives that might otherwise be achievable through zoning. The group agreed that this recommendation was viable, with removal of the word “financial.”

For LTR number 2, the group briefly discussed that inclusionary zoning is not currently allowed under Virginia Code and that while it would be a nice tool to have to advance affordable housing efforts that it would most definitely require a legislative change. Accordingly, with changing the word “may” to “will” – the group felt that this recommendation should remain, but agreed that this would be more of a long term effort. KS mentioned her involvement with the Virginia First Cities organization and offered to speak with them about supporting inclusionary zoning as a group.

For LTR number 3, KM referenced the sustainable communities grant effort, the resulting alignment of Comprehensive Plans and the recent MOU between Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville (approved by Council May 16, 2016). She advised that she felt that working with the County is very important, but that despite efforts since 2010 that progress has been slow primarily due to a lack of interest / focus by the County (staff and elected leaders) on affordable housing. DR mentioned that at a recent Albemarle County work session that he heard more than one Supervisor mention something to the effect that they were not concerned over the MOU and that they needed to concentrate on their own issues. Ridge Schuyler (RS) mentioned that the County has more of a need for affordable units than the City and that they need to take more interest. With reference to the MOU, the group felt that this recommendation could also move forward.

As for LTR number 4, KM denoted the RCLCO typos which omitted the word “refusal” and that the second “or” should actually be “of”. KS asked how this would work when it’s not city funded. KM responded that the RCLCO study mentions an example from Virginia Beach, and that she was concerned over logistics also and how the City could make this program work from a legal standpoint. For example, if the City actually acquired properties to provide or preserve affordability (e.g., in turn selling the units based on a commitment of some term for low income persons) they would have to comply with the sale of city owned land policy in selling these. Accordingly, there would be much to figure out and details to work through to make such a complicated process work to accomplish the end goal. DR mentioned that he thought that deed restrictions

could be used along with tax policies to make something like this work. Grant Duffield (GD) suggested changing this to specify multifamily properties only and the group recommended that we speak to creation of a program rather than a policy, with the understanding that this would have to be a long term effort.

For LTR number 5, KM asked Missy Creasy (MC) about her thoughts on this recommendation. MC responded that this has potential and that it does come up from time to time, but that it would be a large project and that a comparative study is needed. DR asked how this would aid in the provision of affordable housing and MC responded that it could serve to simplify the review process. After a short discussion, the group decided to support this, noting the need for option #2 (consideration/inclusion in the NDS code audit) and for coordinating with STR #3.

For LTR #6, KM mentioned that this recommendation goes back to the affordable / low income housing survey where the high cost of internet service was noted as a concern by those surveyed. RS noted that school and employment basically requires that households have access to a reliable internet service. BL added that free / reduced fee service is becoming a national trend. DR added that this is a good recommendation that is consistent with the survey results and should be supported.

Related to LTR #7, there was much discussion over how such an office could function and where it should be housed. There was mention of the Human Rights Commission, PHA and the Haven. Organizational experience with Human Rights, Fair Housing and Housing Navigation were all thought to be important in considering this recommendation. RS suggested that such an office/position could work to serve as a clearinghouse for new tenants to find affordable housing and to support others that need help with navigating the system. DR recommended language as follows: Support coordination of fair housing and affordable housing location services as well as tenant advocacy, modeling this after the UVA Off-Grounds Housing Office and coordinating with Albemarle County.

LTR #8 was thought to be needed, as it would target expansion of current subsidy programs for low income households. Alex Ikefuna (AI) remarked that we are not currently addressing the needs of workforce housing and he suggested that this recommendation could be targeted to categories in the middle income bracket from 80% to 120% AMI and that this needs to be moved to STR instead of remaining in LTR. With no further input, KM agree to incorporate these changes.

Kathy Galvin (KG) mentioned hearing concern from the group over possible form based code changes. In looking to the our own code audit, she reminded everyone of an upcoming Urban Land Institute presentation and panel discussion featuring Rick Bernhardt to be held on September 21st at City Space. She promised to send out a reminder to everyone, as she thought it would be helpful to attend this presentation.

For LTR#9, KM asked RS to speak to this because of his advocacy for such a program in the past. RS explained that shared equity is essentially gap financing that could be in the form of a loan/deferred mortgage, etc... DR was concerned that this would further tax the limited resource of the Charlottesville Affordable Housing Fund (CAHF), but RS suggested that it could use a different funding source. AI spoke to UVA needed to be involved with such an effort, with KG adding that this is a similar problem for City staff. As an example of local government involvement, DR explained a recent effort where Habitat worked with Albemarle County to provide on-site affordable housing at one location in the County. The group agreed to support this recommendation, but to revise the wording to reference *other resources including employer provided/generated* and to move it to STR.

For LTR #10, KM spoke to using CAHF funds to support Carlton Views, but that this was a substantial investment and that perhaps use of loans might be a more viable way to assist and expand the use of LIHTC in the community. BL explained that loans are valuable mechanism for gap financing as they serve to increase basis. KM suggested that use of the OED strategic housing set aside fund (used previously to provide loan assistance to support CRHA repay the City for purchase of the Avon garage site). GD added that this could also take the form of loan guarantees. The group recommended support for LTR #10 adding *with gap financing to include grants, loans and loan guarantees*. Further they suggested adding **Other Options and/or**

HAC Recommendations (OHACR) #9 to speak to development of a revolving loan fund to be used in support of this LTR #10.

With no further discussion, KM reminded everyone of the upcoming August 17th HAC meeting and asked that they attend to support their recommendations. KM then thanked Tierra Howard for her help with the minutes and everyone else for coming. With this, the meeting was adjourned at 2 pm.