

Board Matters

July 30, 2020

New Commissioner Welcomed to FCRHA

Commissioner Rosser, Commissioner McAloon, and Commissioner McKenna welcomed new FCRHA Commissioner Broderick Dunn, representing the Braddock District.

Concerns Regarding Evictions During COVID-19 Economy

Commissioner Kennedy addressed the issue of evictions during the COVID-19 economy and expressed his concerns. Commissioner Kennedy requested that information be received monthly regarding what staff is hearing in the community regarding evictions. Chairman Schwaninger stated that he wanted to be involved in how information is distributed, and Commissioner McAloon, as Chair of the FCRHA's Planning and Development Committee, expressed his interest in discussing this issue as well. Tom Fleetwood, Department of Housing and Community Development Director, clarified that when staff reports to the FCRHA it would be reporting on Fairfax County, and noted that Dean Klein is heading the County's eviction oversight, with Mr. Klein and Mr. Fleetwood both heading a task force on this issue.

Commissioner Yerby to be Leaving FCRHA

Commissioner Yerby announced that she will be leaving the FCRHA and expressed her appreciation of the experience to serve, stating that she will miss all of the Commissioners. Chairman Schwaninger thanked Commissioner Yerby for her contributions and the perspective that she brought to the FCRHA. Commissioner Solomon reiterated those remarks as did Commissioner McKenna, and Commissioner McAloon wished her well.

Concerns Regarding Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

Commissioner Solomon expressed concerns regarding a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Final Rule that stated that Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing basically had no value and was not necessary. Commissioner Solomon stated that the Rule is not consistent with One Fairfax and what Fairfax County is trying to do regarding social equity, and thought it would be appropriate for the FCRHA to speak up about this stating that this is not acceptable. Chairman Schwaninger stated that he was appalled that there was no public comment opportunity regarding this and that a letter pointing out how this is in opposition to standard rules of due process is appropriate. Other Commissioners shared similar concerns. Commissioners requested that staff work with the County attorneys on how the FCRHA can best submit comments to HUD. Mr. Fleetwood stated that staff would consult with the County's Office of Legislative Affairs on the best way to respond.

HUD Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Program

Commissioner Solomon informed the Commissioners that HUD put out a Notice regarding a Housing Choice Voucher Mobility Demonstration Program. Mr. Fleetwood stated that staff were very interested in pursuing this program that would provide new vouchers to be used by families with children to move them from higher poverty areas to lower poverty areas. Mr. Fleetwood stated that staff will keep the Commissioners informed about this at the September FCRHA meeting. Commissioner Kennedy stated that he saw this as an opportunity to act in line with One Fairfax.

Efforts for Improving Meeting Quality

Commissioner McAloon requested that if meetings continue to be held using the telephone call in method the FCRHA had been using, staff look into how to eliminate distracting background noises. Mr. Fleetwood informed the Commissioners that staff was working on having a different virtual platform to use for future FCRHA meetings, in recognition that all-telephone conference call meetings are not optimal.

Appreciation Expressed to Staff

Commissioner McKenna thanked staff for all that they were doing within the community, their office, with the Commissioners, and with families. Mr. Fleetwood thanked Commissioner McKenna and stated that the Commissioners can be proud of what staff is doing.

Groundbreaking Ceremony for North Hill

Mr. Fleetwood stated that the groundbreaking ceremony for the North Hill Project (Mount Vernon District) would be held on July 31, 2020.