Summary of the Board of Supervisors' Housing Committee Meeting – March 25, 2025

On March 25, 2025, the Board of Supervisors' (Board) Housing Committee held a meeting in Conference Room 11 of the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia. Members of the Board present for the meeting were: Supervisor Dalia Palchik, Committee Chairman; Board Chairman Jeffrey McKay; Supervisor Walter Alcorn; Supervisor James Bierman, Jr.; Supervisor Andres Jimenez; Supervisor Rodney Lusk; Supervisor Kathy Smith; Supervisor James Walkinshaw. Also present were Bryan Hill, County Executive, and Christopher Leonard, Deputy County Executive.

Progress on Housing Initiatives and Development

Thomas Fleetwood, Director, Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) provided the Board with an overview of HCD's progress since the Board's last Housing Committee meeting. Mr. Fleetwood noted that critical County efforts are underway in response to homelessness. He announced that the new Fair Ridge Shelter, located in the Sully District, will open in early April 2025. As a result, additional capacity will be available at the Embry Rucker Community Shelter in the Hunter Mill District for single adults experiencing homelessness beginning April 1, 2025. Mr. Fleetwood stated that progress is also moving forward with the replacement of the Rucker shelter as well as the Eleanor Kennedy shelter located in the Mount Vernon District. Similarly, staff continue to work in preparation for the startup of the new state-funded Permanent Supportive Housing program in partnership with the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA), Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board, Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, and Pathway Homes, Inc.

Anna Shapiro, Deputy Director, Real Estate Finance and Development, HCD discussed HCD's progress toward the goal of creating 10,000 new homes by 2034. She noted that since January 2020, 1,298 new affordable homes have been delivered to households all over the County. Additionally, there are 1,461 new units of affordable housing currently under construction; 1,277 units of affordable housing in the pre-development phase; and over 600 new potential units in the conceptual pipeline. Ms. Shapiro shared a visualization of aggregated data depicting the diversity of locations for which affordable housing is being developed and delivered as of November 2024. Staff will continue to seek opportunities to develop and preserve affordable homes in amenity rich locations near jobs and transit that are dispersed through the County.

Ms. Shapiro also provided updates on manufactured housing, affordable and workforce dwelling units, and HCD policy initiatives. The manufactured housing roundtable has convened and held its first meeting. The roundtable includes representatives from each Fairfax County manufactured community. Additionally, proposals submitted for the manufactured housing repair pilot are currently under review. An award is anticipated to

be made in the coming months. With respect to Affordable Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Workforce Dwelling Units (WDUs), 1,304 new units have been delivered since January 2020 at a range of incomes, with another 100 new units expected to be delivered within the coming month. The WDU Administrative regulations were adopted by the Board on March 18 and will be implemented soon. Ms. Shapiro closed out her presentation with an update on policy initiatives noting that the multifamily chapter of the Tenant Relocation Guidelines has been updated. Ms. Shapiro also announced the launch of the updated affordable housing dashboard which offers a glimpse of housing data throughout the County by magisterial district.

Partners in Progress: Improving Our Response to Homelessness

Tom Barnett, Deputy Director, Office to Prevent and End Homelessness, HCD, shared that staff are preparing for the opening of the Fair Ridge Shelter in April 2025. Once opened, families will be moved from multiple County family shelters and scattered hotel locations into the Fair Ridge Shelter. During the second phase of the project, which will commence in a couple of years, the Capital Improvement Program will fund renovations at the Fair Ridge Shelter, enabling the North County domestic violence shelter to be relocated and integrated into Fair Ridge.

Mr. Barnett provided an overview of the anticipated Continuum of Care (CoC) funding. He noted that on January 17, 2025, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced that Fairfax County and its local grantees was awarded $12,374,905 in CoC funding to support rapid rehousing, supportive housing and planning grants. However, HUD only committed 90 percent of the funding needed for grant renewals. Subsequently, with the deficit in funding, a 25-bed supportive housing project will be sunsetting in August 2025. Through collaborative community partnerships, these individuals will not lose housing and will be moving into various supportive housing vacancies. Mr. Barnett added that a grant agreement is expected to arrive later this year. Additionally, “CoC Builds” award announcements have yet to made and, based on the continuing resolution recently passed the Congress, the funding may be repurposed. A loss in funding will cause a looming regional impact on employment, donations, and homelessness.

In other news, Mr. Barnett shared the annual point-in-time count was conducted on January 22, 2025. The results will be posted in May 2025 in coordination with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. The hypothermia prevention program will end on March 31, 2025. Also, a contract to conduct a panhandling survey has been awarded to the Urban Institute. The survey will be conducted in spring and summer, with results finalized in late summer.

Mr. Barnett also provided updates on the re-chartered CoC Board. He highlighted some of the work completed thus far which included, in part: analyzing shelter supply and demand, identifying gaps in services and needed programming, and meeting with Fairfax County public schools for an update on the homeless school-age population.

Through the remainder of the year the CoC Board, with support from County staff and a consultant, will begin its inclusive community engagement and strategic planning efforts. Strategic recommendations will be brought to the Board in the fall.

David Meyer, Chair of the CoC Board, provided an overview of encampment closure policies and six recommendations submitted to the Board by the Fairfax County NAACP regarding closures. Mr. Meyer stated that the CoC Board reviewed and drafted a response to each of the NAACP recommendations and presented this information to the Board.[1]

Members of the Board commended staff for their efforts conducting homeless outreach throughout the County and the efforts of the CoC. Some members also emphasized the importance of continued communication and collaboration in addressing cross-jurisdictional concerns.

STAFF:
Thomas Fleetwood, Director, Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD)
Amy Ginger, Deputy Director, Operations, HCD
Linda Hoffman, Director of Policy and Communications (P&C), HCD
Brandy Thompson, Associate Director of Policy, P&C, HCD

[1] The presentation shared which includes the Fairfax County NAACP's recommendations and highlights the CoC Board's prepared responses can be viewed here: Encampment Enclosure Policies Presentation.