

# NORTHERN VIRGINIA AFFORDABLE HOUSING ALLIANCE

## ADVOCACY ACTION ALERT

### Fairfax County Housing Activities November 2020

**Public Land for Affordable Housing** A Board Matter, recently introduced by Supervisor Walkinshaw (Braddock District) and approved by the Board of Supervisors, directs staff to begin the process of scheduling a public hearing to consider the transfer of a corner of the existing parking lot in front of the main Fairfax County Government Center to the Fairfax Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) for the purpose of soliciting private sector proposals to build affordable housing. Once the transfer is completed, an RFP will be released for development. Unlike the last few transfers of county-owned property which were dedicated to affordable housing for seniors, this proposal will focus on multifamily rental housing for low and moderate income households.

County financing for Stratford Capital Group's **Arrowbrook Centre Apartments** (274 rental homes in Herndon) will close soon. In addition to \$7.7 million in Blueprint funds, [this project will include six units of SRAP vouchers](#) (serving residents with disabilities) as well as eight federal project based vouchers. We believe that including housing for persons with disabilities with larger multifamily developments is a best practice and should be a requirement for all proposals that receive financial assistance from the county. In other development news, [Lake Anne Fellowship House](#) broke ground in late October to redevelop their property with 240 apartments of housing for low income seniors in Reston. Congratulations to the Fellowship Square Foundation and their development partner Enterprise Community Development.

**Preservation Task Force and Mobile Home and Manufactured Housing Work Group** Follow the presentations and progress of the [Preservation Task Force](#) and the [Mobile Home and Manufactured Housing Work Group](#). You can subscribe to receive email updates on the Task Force [here](#). **The South County Task Force** is presenting **Mobile Homes As Affordable Housing, Thursday, November 12, 7-9 PM**. You can access this meeting at <https://zoom.us/j/92478904610>. To join audio by phone: Dial: 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 924 7890 4610 One tap mobile: +16465588656, 92478904610#

**Housing Committee of the County Planning Commission** The [Housing Committee of the Planning Commission](#) met on Oct 8. As of this date, there is no record or transcript of the meeting, nor is there an agenda of what was discussed. The Housing Committee of the Planning Commission held one meeting in 2018, one meeting in 2019 and the latest meeting on Oct 8. As Fairfax County works to develop 5,000 in the next 15 years, we believe it's important for this Committee to have a strong knowledge of both the challenges and opportunities to achieve these goals. We strongly urge the members of the PC's Housing Committee to convene more frequently; to advertise their meetings more broadly; and to share the agenda and any materials that may be presented or discussed. We believe this is a requirement [or should be] of all public meetings.

**The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee** will meet **Friday, November 13, 9:30 - 11 AM**. The agenda and meeting materials will be posted [here](#).

**Task Force on Equity and Opportunity** In June of this year, Chairman Jeff McKay announced the [creation of a Task Force on Equity and Opportunity](#), "affirming that Black Lives Matter and committing to striving for true equity." In July, NVAHA conducted a survey of county community-based organizations and advocates to address Task Force membership, goals and outcomes. The survey results formed the basis of [recommendations](#) that were sent to the Board of Supervisors and County leadership in September.

We are disappointed that no information about the Task Force on Equity and Opportunity exists on Fairfax County's website. The public does not know who serves on this Task Force; what is presented or discussed at meetings; or even when meetings are held. There is no information about Task Force goals or objectives. Residents deserve transparency and open communication, especially as the county seeks to address difficult but important topics of equity, systemic and institutional racism and racial justice. We appreciate the [presentation](#) on using an equity lens to the Preservation Task Force as they develop recommendations for preserving affordable housing and mitigating displacement. However, a more robust approach to addressing racism and inequity is needed. Arlington County has begun a series of [community conversations on racial equity](#). The goal is "to normalize the conversations that we know are really challenging but we also think will help to lay the foundation for how we can move forward together in the county." We applaud Arlington's approach.

Begin by engaging the broader community with sessions on racial inequities embedded in practices and policies for land use, criminal justice, education, healthcare, access to credit and wealth building. Have frank conversations about who controls decision-making and power in the community - how that came about and why it must change. Look at the City of Minneapolis and their [approach to community engagement](#) to understand and model engagement as a dynamic, ongoing process that is not tied to an incident or event. It is integral to the way that elected officials interact with all residents. We remain hopeful that meaningful work will come from the Task Force, but we know that this is not an initiative that can be completed in six months.

[Keeping Our Promise: Continuing the Work of Affordable Housing in Fairfax County](#)  
watch this video to learn about progress toward the 5,000 by 15 goal is coming!