

LHA BOARD MEETING MINUTES – September 19, 2019

Voting Directors Present (15)

Peter Bota, Ginger Brown, Mike Cantwell, Sandi Chesrown, Michele Cornwell, Pamela Gillen, Edith Gravely, Ralph Johnson, Tom Korn, Jim Lantelme, Laura London, Scott Matties, Richard Price, Chris Sundlof, Michelle Winters

Non-Voting Directors Present (2)

Matt Weinstein and Tom Wolfe

Directors Absent (0)

Executive Director

Vacant

(appointment of Ginger Brown to become Executive Director during meeting, along with appointment of Scott Matties to become President of LHA)

Guests Present

Katie Cristol, Liaison, Arlington County Board
Susan Soroko, AED Liaison
Elaine Furlow, LHA Planning Committee

Welcome & Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Ginger Brown, President, at 6:30 pm.

AED Update

Susan Soroko noted that the Annual Report/Draft Budget & Work Plan are due on December 1. She thanked Ginger for attending the Economic Development Commission meeting, and noted that Alex Iams is now AED's Acting Director and Emily Cassell is the Assistant Directors, with Marian Marquez heading up the Business Investment Group. She noted that the Leaders Challenge Program could be helpful to LHA.

President's Report

Ginger thanked Vanessa Guzman, LHA's summer intern, for her services. Vanessa returned to William and Mary in August. Ginger also noted that LHA's new, part-time Communications Manager is Amanda Lovins, who also works for the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization. Amanda will be responsible for designing various documents for LHA including a newsletter.

Ginger noted that she is stepping down as President to become LHA's Executive Director. She has discussed this with and received approval from each Board member. Jim Lantelme made a motion to nominate Scott Matties as LHA's new President, to commence on October 1. Tom Korn seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Pamela Gillen has agreed to take Scott's position as Chair of LHA's Planning Committee.

(Ginger's seat on the Board is now open. If Board members would like to make recommendations, please send your recommendation to Scott Matties and Ginger Brown. This will be discussed at the November Board meeting.)

In follow-up to a Board motion in May, Ginger noted that Quikbooks has been installed and training is complete. [\(The Board's May motion to further discuss LHA's non-profit status will be re-visited at the November meeting. LHA awaits a memo from BKK.\)](#)

Minutes LHA May, 2019, Board Meeting

It was confirmed that the minutes had been circulated and approved by the Board via email prior to the September Board meeting.

Events Committee

Sandi Chesrown (Events Committee Chair) updated the Board on LHA's Fall activities including the upcoming Mural by Spanish artist, David de la Mano, on the façade of the KH Arf Framing building. The mural was jointly planned with the Spanish Embassy, AED Arts staff, and LHA, as an incredible opportunity to bring temporary public art by an internationally known muralist to one of the corridor's activity nodes. All Board members were invited to attend the Mural Happy Hour, hosted by Long & Foster, on September 25, 5-7 pm. County Board Member Cristol will give the opening remarks. There will also be a ribbon cutting by County Board Member Erik Gutshall on Monday, September 30, to be attended by the event Sponsor, JBG Smith. Sandi also noted two other upcoming events: the September 28 Oktoberfest at the Marymount Farmers Market, 9-1 pm, which will feature German music, food, and a beer garden, and the October 26 Light the Night Halloween Fest at Woodstock Park, being held jointly with the Waverly Hills Civic Association.

Finance Committee

Michele H. Cornwell, Treasurer, provided the Treasurer's report, updating the Board on the [budget \(see attached\)](#). She noted that after the spring fundraising (netting nearly \$25,000) and receipt of the County's grant, LHA has a healthy balance of \$89,901 (as of 9/16). She also stated that the Finance Committee is getting ready to open the line of credit with Arlington Community Federal Credit Union (ACFCU). Thanks to LHA Board member, Chris Sundlof, ACFCU is providing the line without any fees, a significant savings.

Michele stated that the Finance Committee met on September 12 and drafted a new LHA Financial Management Policy and Procedure, which expands LHA's original policy document. [\(See attached.\)](#) A professional bookkeeper has been hired, and LHA's books will be reconciled on a monthly basis. The draft was sent out earlier for Board review. Ralph Johnson moved and Mike Cantwell seconded a motion to accept the new policy and procedure as stated, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Katie Cristol noted that she will work with Susan/AED to ensure that there are no problems with the County Board's understanding of LHA's budget request this year.

STOPPED

Transportation Committee

Richard Price reported on the September 11 briefing with VDOT. The Lee Glebe utilities undergrounding project is supposed to commence soon. He also noted that most of the piers for the new Bicycle Pedestrian Bridge across Lee Highway at East Falls Church are up, with an anticipated completion date of 2020. Richard noted that Jim Todd has requested repair of the Custis Trail (bicycles). He also discussed the Bus Stop Consolidation project along the corridor, and that the bus stop at the Koons Toyota dealer is moving to the opposite side of the street.

Sandi noted that Plan Lee Highway will also look at that study and recommend changes, as necessary. Richard commented that the green striping for the bicycle lane at Five Points is confusing. With regard to pedestrian safety, the County has passed a Vision Zero resolution.

With regard to Cherrydale, Richard made a [motion to send a letter in support of metered parking on both sides of 3200 Lee Highway. This will be a win-win for retail and the two child care projects. Michelle Winters seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously. LHA will send a letter to the County.](#)

There was discussion regarding the County's E Scooter Study. Recently published, the Study shows significantly increased use in North Arlington, and notes that scooters have proven to be a good mobility option. The Study recommends equity and that S. Arlington receive its fair share of scooters. Katie Cristol noted that due to state legislation, the Board has to adopt regulations by the end of the year, and that the study will go to the County Board in November. In regard to concerns about scooter parking, the County is considering docking locations.

Housing and Missing Middle –

Michelle Winters provided an update on the grant application that the Alliance for Housing Solutions and LHA are hoping to submit with the County to the Virginia Housing & Development Authority (VHDA). Conversations are on-going, and there should be something to report at the November meeting. LHA's goal is to educate the community and increase public outreach.

Make No Small Plans at Dorothy Hamm Middle School (DHMS) –

Sandi Chesrown reported that the grant has been funded by the John Shooshan Development Company and the Arlington Community Foundation for the full amount requested (\$3700). The project is being implemented from October-June 2020 with two civics teachers and between 40-50 students. Many volunteers have been recruited to participate as lecturers and professional jurors. Katie Cristol congratulated LHA for pursuing this project for the past three years, and noted that educating the 7th graders at DHMS through Plan Lee Highway is an exciting and important contribution to their education and to Arlington's civic engagement process.

Mike Cantwell noted that he hoped LHA would also continue working with Yorktown HS on a recurring internship.

Chamber of Commerce Report

Tom Wolfe reported on the NoVa Leaders Summit and the Amazon related discussion, which was very interesting and comprehensive.

Housing Conservation District (HCD)

Katie Cristol noted that she appreciated the letter from the LHA Board which was sent in follow-up to the September 10 work session, at which time the County Board gave the nod to staff to continue the project. LHA's Board indicated their serious concerns about having two planning processes running concurrently. Ralph Johnson noted that this is causing confusion – especially about height and density - to property owners and stakeholders, and that there should not be competing plans. In addition, to get 600 new units per year, the buildings would need to be 15 stories, which the community does not want.

Sandi stressed LHA's Guiding Principle and the Visioning Study, both of which state that low to medium density would guide most of the corridor's revitalization and future development, although medium density has not been defined. The tallest development in the Visioning Study

was 12 stories at the Lyon Village Shopping Center, and that has to do with their topography and context (no immediate neighbors). Jim Lantelme mentioned that no current buildings on the corridor exceed 10 stories, and that there are only two including the new Mom's Organic Market site (formerly Bergmans), which Lyon Village strongly objected to during the zoning process, and Potomac Towers. Ginger Brown noted that the HCD drawings that were presented to the County Board showed taller buildings, without the benefit of community engagement as there have been no community meetings with LHA or with N. Arlington civic associations, massing studies, or comprehensive planning – common to all other corridors. Sandi stressed that other community benefits in addition to affordable housing must be discussed and weighed.

The historic designations of two properties – the Ft. Strong Apartments and Lyon Village Apartments – were also discussed. LHA noted that the historic character of Ft. Strong is debatable, and the original rationale for its designation is weak. The designation of Lyon Village Apartments as current market rate affordable housing is also debatable, as the property was recently renovated and rents are now \$1900-\$2400 for one and two bedroom units. Sandi stressed that the PLH process should attempt to remove both properties from the Historic Resources Inventory and to remove Lyon Village Apartments as part of the HCD.

Katie Cristol discussed the origins of the HCD and the fact that by right townhouse development has been removed and that both sticks and carrots have been promised to landowners. The Board needs to keep its word. It was agreed that more conversation on this issue needs to occur in the future, in order to meet everyone's goal of a successful Plan Lee Highway.

Stormwater Management & Flooding

A brief discussion on stormwater management followed, including the flooding of Lee Highway at Spout Run and the flooding in neighborhoods, especially Waverly Hills. VDOT has put in a request for funding to clean the drains, as there is none at the moment. LHA has also encouraged VDOT to look at the need for extra drains.

Katie Cristol referred to July 8th and its unprecedented flood level (1000 year flood) due to climate change. The County is embarking on a comprehensive conversation including analysis of the overall system which is designed to a 10 year flood (dating back to decisions made decades ago - 1930s – including undergrounding of Spout Run) and improvements to spots of recurring flooding – all the hot spots are in N. Arlington. Staff has studied six strategies, and all involve property acquisition, tremendous disruption to neighborhoods, and construction costs in the millions. Staff is getting peer review by stormwater management experts, and the County Manager has organized a series of workshops to discuss options.

There will be a presentation to the County Board on September 24, followed by a discussion on October 16 at the Cherrydale Civic Association Candidates Forum at 7 pm at St. Agnes, a 6:30 pm meeting at Central Library on October 24, and another morning public forum on October 26. LHA will participate in the October 24 meeting. There will also be a November 19 presentation at the Civic Federation, and a November 20 presentation to the Waverly Hills Civic Association, the third presentation by DES staff to WHCA.

With regard to financing, Katie noted that a policy issue is who pays. The County Board is considering both a special tax district and a bond issue, but some situations also involve shared responsibility and technical assistance and potential loans to homeowners, as well as perhaps Federal assistance.

Sandi noted that LHA is beginning work on improving our Guiding Principle on the Environment to include resiliency and stormwater management, and that we are beginning to plan for an Earth Day 2020 Summit to include a broad array of environmental issues and climate change.

Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC)

Jim Lantelme, Sandi Chesrown, and Edith Gravely, all members of the PFRC on Fire Station 8, reported on the concept drawings that were presented last night to the committee. All agreed that the state-of-the-art interior of the building, which benefits both fire fighters and the community, has been expertly designed, and that the cultural interpretive historic features are well liked by John M. Langston/Halls Hill community. However, with regard to the exterior of the building, LHA has requested that the architects change the Lee Highway façade, so that it contains the front door to the building (now facing Culpeper Street). LHA has also requested that the normal streetscaping requirements including tall enough trees to provide shade for walkability while not impeding fire fighters' visibility, and rooftop stormwater management via a green garden be presented at the next meeting. Pamela Gillen also supported the re-naming of the station to the Halls Hill Fire Station. The next meeting will be held on October 16.

Planning Committee Report

Ginger reported on the PC meeting with the VINCI School applicant and the Montessori School applicant and BKK, at which time the PC recommended that the Board send a letter of support for the VINCI Day Care, with the caveat that the staff analyze transportation issues simultaneously for both applications. [Jim Lantelme moved and Richard seconded that letter of support, which the Board approved unanimously.](#) It was noted that the Lee Corridor now has day care centers in nearly all the activity nodes.

Other Business - ZOCO Change to Bonus Density

Matt Weinstein reported that he attended a recent ZOCO (the Planning Commission's Zoning Ordinance Committee) meeting. Proposed changes were to remove the density caps for affordable housing and community facilities and infrastructure, and to limit the permitted height to what is permitted in the Zoning Ordinance or supported by County enacted policies or plans.

Matt felt that if enacted, the amendments would strengthen Plan Lee Highway, i.e., if a site plan project sought to build a 7 story apartment building and PLH called for lesser height, the County Board would not be able to approve the additional height, as the maps drawn by PLH would dictate the height. However, the HCD is a complicating factor. If the HCD recommends taller heights than PLH, which would govern?

(This conversation is on-going with County staff. The amendments might be approved by the County Board by the end of the year.)

Meeting Adjourned – 8:30 pm

Ginger thanked everyone for their participation and reminded members that the next Board meeting will be held at LHA at 8 am on Thursday, November 21. (Reminder - President Scott Matties will lead the November meeting per LHA's Bylaws.)

Sandi Chesrown, Vice President, Reporting

(The Secretary's seat on the Board is vacant; Sandi will be in Australia in November, so the Board needs to either elect a Secretary or identify a volunteer to take the minutes at the November Board meeting)