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HOUSE *rules*

Measuring and reporting on workforce housing

August, 2007

Featured Article



"Hopefully, the Windy Hill Foundation's projects demonstrate that local ownership along with local management can provide vital and vibrant affordable workforce housing that is a welcome addition to the community.

Looking at the big picture however, the work in Northern Virginia has just begun, and the challenges ahead are huge!"

Kim Hart, Windy Hill Development Corporation.



Tale of a City

Once upon a time, there existed, in the very middle of Virginia's fertile and affluent horse country, a hamlet of misery called Windy Hill Road. Here, 15 families shared six outhouses and two outdoor water spigots. Elected to the Middleburg Town Council in 2006, Karen D. "Candy" Robinson remembers those hard times well, times when it seemed that the ice cream man got robbed just about every time he ventured into Windy Hill.

In 1981 a local citizen named Rene Llewellyn said, "This is not acceptable. Not anywhere," and through her efforts the Windy Hill Foundation was created and a redeveloped enclave of tidy, privately subsidized homes replaced the once notorious slum.

"A lot of people think of Middleburg as a bastion of wealth -- the Mellons, the du Ponts, et cetera," said former Mayor C.L. "Tim" Dimos, also a native of Middleburg, who has a law practice in town. "But we probably have more affordable housing than most other communities in Loudoun County."

The example of Middleburg is important not just as an isolated example, but as a model of what can be accomplished if Virginia residents actually "think globally and act locally." As it says in the Windy Hill Foundation's 25th Anniversary publication, 'Today the old sycamore remains, but the rest of Windy Hill Road has been transformed by Rene's vision into just another nice part of town where affordable "workforce housing" looks great.'

In another adjacent area of town, seven single family homes on various stages of disrepair, were converted into 14 duplexes. Only six of the original houses were habitable. That development, Virginia Lane, was primarily funded by \$3.5 million raised locally, and provides rentals for those with incomes between \$18,000 and \$52,000 per year. In 2006 Virginia Lane won a "Signatures of Loudon" award, the highest design award given by the county

would like to thank its founders and supporters:

- The Virginia Association of Realtors
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- The VA Dept. of Housing & Community Development
- Home Builders Association of VA
- Habitat for Humanity of VA
- Fannie Mae
- Freddie MAC
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- Virginia Association of Housing & Community Development Officials
- VA Housing Development Authority
- VA Mortgage Lenders Association
- Indelium
- Community Housing Partners
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In the early 80's much of the work completed on Windy Hill Road was financed through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Moderate or "Mod Rehab" program. Since that time the members of the Foundation have become among the most proficient and adept rehabilitation specialists in the state.

In 2005, a former Foundation president, Kim Hart, became the manager of the newly formed Windy Hill Development Corporation, a nonprofit community development corporation (cdc) tasked with maintaining and expanding the availability of affordable housing for the members of the workforce employed in Middleburg.

Under his guidance, the Windy Hill Foundation has won its first award of tax credits this year. Along with \$800,000 already raised locally, these funds will be used to begin a 20-unit elderly project called Levis Hill House, located between Windy Hill Road and the Middleburg Firehouse. Hart is also working with Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) to structure a loan for the renewal of the original structures along Windy Hill Road, now nearly 30 years old. Aging mechanical and structural details will be updated, and central air is being added.

In addition to their building initiatives, the Windy Hill Foundation has as its mission encouraging all residents to self-improvement and self-sufficiency. In support of this mission, the Foundation's Family Development Committee provides an after school program with the help of AmeriCorps members and 25 adult volunteers from the community; a dental health program through the volunteer efforts of five local dentists, a resident social worker in cooperation with Loudon County, an emergency fund, and a children's summer program through which every child at a Windy Hill property is guaranteed one week at a summer camp or summer program.



"Connections and Choices: Affordable Housing & Smarter Growth in the Greater Richmond Area"

What: A Symposium on Land Use, Transportation, and Housing Affordability

When: Tuesday, September 25, 8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Where: Virginia Historical Society - 428 North Boulevard, Richmond, Virginia 23220

On Tuesday, September 25, the Southern Environmental Law Center and

Virginia LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation) will release a new study entitled "Connections and Choices: Affordable Housing & Smarter Growth in the Greater Richmond Area." The report focuses on the affordable housing, sprawl, and transportation challenges facing the Richmond region, the connections between these challenges, and opportunities to address them. During the symposium, Trip Pollard of the SELC and Frances Stanley with Virginia LISC will provide a comprehensive overview of their findings, followed by a panel response and audience questions and answers.

Please RSVP to attend this event by contacting Kathryn Burke at (804) 422-5010.

Intriguing Ideas

The Fairfax County Penny For Affordable Housing Fund

In April 2004, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors announced the Affordable Housing Preservation Initiative. The Affordable Housing Preservation Forum, a component of the initiative, was held in early June 2004. It convened the development community, large-property owners, non-profit organizations, advocacy groups, state and local political leadership and others committed to the preservation of affordable housing.

To help bring ideas discussed at the Forum to reality, the Affordable Housing Preservation Action Committee was appointed by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors in August 2004. The Affordable Housing Preservation Action Committee was charged with completing its tasks within six months of first convening. In a paradigm of community efficiency, the Action Committee met for the first time on September 24, 2004 and held its final meeting on January 21, 2005 to adopt the final list of recommendations to be submitted to the Board of Supervisors on January 24, 2005.

An original list of 12 "Intriguing Ideas" grew to 26 after the first two meetings. The committee members then rated the feasibility and impact of the Intriguing Ideas. The results of that survey were later presented to the Action Committee. The ideas were plotted on a matrix to show concepts that the Action Committee considered to be highly feasible and would result in high impact against those that were considered to have low impact and low feasibility.

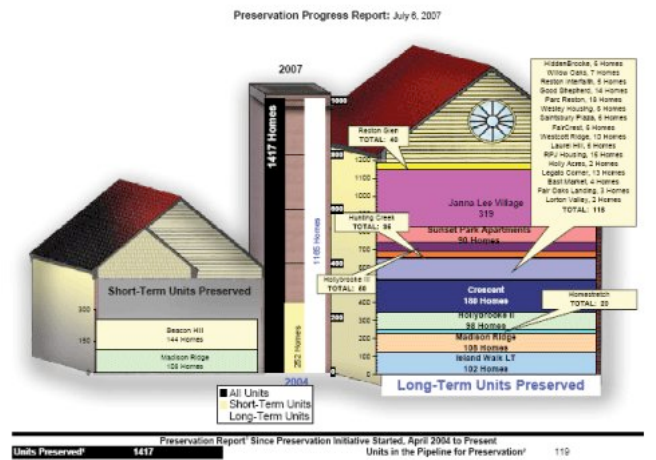
Once the ranking was completed, the committee broke up into four subcommittees: Land Use, Funding Opportunities, State Policy and Non-Monetary Incentives. The Intriguing Ideas were then divided up and distributed to the subcommittee that was best able to address the different suggestions.

On January 21, 2005, the full Action Committee adopted the top 12 recommendations to submit to the Board of Supervisors.

The Action Committee's top recommendation was to dedicate one penny of the real estate tax rate to the preservation of affordable housing. In the spring of 2005, the Board of Supervisors took a monumental step when they approved this allocation of the value of one penny from the real estate tax. This was the single largest commitment of funds to affordable housing preservation in the County's history and generated almost \$18 million in Fiscal Year 2006. Additionally, this bold step by the Board represents the first

time, in its history, that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors had taken such an action. This allocation was not only new to Fairfax County, but also to the Commonwealth-never having been undertaken before.

On July 24, 2007, the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) closed on an Affordable Housing Partnership Program loan (AHPP) from the Penny for Affordable Housing Fund (\$5,300,000) to Coralain Apartments L.P. for the acquisition and rehabilitation of Coralain Garden Apartments in the Mason District. The 105-unit complex is located off Route 50 just inside the beltway and was built in 1962. This transaction resulted in the long term preservation of the 105-unit apartment complex. Twenty percent (20%) of the units (22 units) are affordable to households with incomes up to 50% of the Area Median Income (\$47,250 for a family of four) the remaining 80% (83 units) are affordable to households with incomes up to 60% of the Area Median Income (\$56,700 for a family of four). Five of the units will be rehabilitated to be fully ADA compliant. These units will remain affordable for 50 years. Other results of Fairfax's Penny Program, currently having preserved more than 1400 units, are reported in the illustration below.



We are proud to announce that Housing Virginia has been named one of the four partners in the production of the Governor's Housing Conference from 2007 on. We are pleased to join the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA), the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in this important endeavor.

Housing Virginia hopes to bring you critical data and important stories about new trends in providing workforce housing across Virginia.

Thank you for caring about this important subject.

Sincerely,

Chris Lowrie
Housing Virginia, Inc.

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