

Landlord-Tenant Relations Board  
Wednesday, September 3, 2014 – 7:00 p.m.

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting**

301 King St.  
Conference Room 2000  
Alexandria, VA 22314

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Meloney Driver, Monique Banks, William Mount, Christin Damato, Geraldine Baldwin, Matt Damewood, Julia Colby and Ramon Venero.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Debra Zusman

**STAFF PRESENT:** Melodie Seau, Vicente Espinoza, Caridad Palerm

**GUESTS PRESENT:** Debbie Murphy

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Julia Colby called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:**

There were no comments during this period.

**CONSIDERATION OF CHANGES TO THE BEAUREGARD TENANT ASSISTANCE AND RELOCATION PLAN:**

Melodie Seau introduced Caridad Palerm, coordinator of the Beauregard Tenant Assistance and Relocation Plan (TARP). Ms. Palerm presented a draft of proposed changes to the language of the Tenant Assistance and Relocation Plan. She said that staff recommends two additional priorities for placement in a Committed Affordable Units (CAUs).

The approved TARP includes two levels of priority for income eligible households in determining the order of placement in CAUs. Priority I Households must have lived in a unit identified for demolition on May 12, 2012 when the Beauregard Small Area Plan was approved by City Council and were still living in a unit in one of these properties on April 13, 2013 when Council approved rezoning amendments for the Small Area Plan. All Priority I Households will be assisted within each bedroom size prior to offering CAUs to other Households on the wait list.

Priority II Households are residents of a redevelopment property who moved into that property after May 12, 2012 and who live in a unit identified for demolition as of the date of approval of

a DSUP that will result in the demolition of their unit or will otherwise displace the Household as a result of the approved DSUP.

Additional priorities are given to both Priority I and II households based on the following criteria:

- Lives in a unit to be demolished at the time of approval of the DSUP
- Income is at or below 40% of the area median income
- Has a child or children in Ramsay, John Adams, or Polk Elementary School
- Has a member 62 or older and/or has a disability
- Lived in the plan area for more than three years
- Is within 2 miles of the plan area
- Has been relocated during a prior phase

Staff proposes to divide each Priority category into levels A and B. Level A will be assigned to tenants within each Priority category who have received 120-day notice to vacate. Level B will be assigned to the remaining Priority I and Priority II households. This change will be needed when redevelopment is being done in phases under the same DSUP. In a phased redevelopment all households in units under the approved DSUP will be eligible for 11 additional points. However, not all will be given notice to vacate at the same time, and in some cases the time between phases could be years.

The proposed amendment to the TARP will allow CAUs to be offered to households within each Priority category facing imminent displacement prior to neighbors living in buildings that will not be affected until subsequent phases of the development. The additional priority status change to Priority IA and IIA will last only for the duration of the 120-day to vacate.

Ms. Seau said that staff also would like to seek authorization from Council for administrative approval of future changes (City Manager approval) to the Tenant Assistance and Relocation Plan after consultation with Participating Developers, CAU applicants from the Plan Area, the Landlord Tenant Relations Board and the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.

William Mount asked if all the residents who receive the 120 day notices will receive payments. Ms. Seau responded that all displaced tenants will receive relocation payments under the approved TARP regardless of income.

In response to a question by Ramon Venero, Ms. Seau stated that the City will maintain the wait list for the committed affordable units. On a motion by Mr. Venero, the proposed changes to the plan were approved unanimously.

#### **VOLUNTARY RENT GUIDELINES:**

Ms. Seau stated that according to the City's Apartment Survey and Delta Associates, market rents have decreased. However, in order for apartment owners to comply, the guidelines must

be reasonable. Staff recommends keeping the recommend percentages for increase to existing tenants at 5% if the tenant pays utilities and 7% if the landlord pays utilities.

Mr. Mount asked if the City keeps a list of apartment complexes who comply with recommended Rent Increase Guidelines. Ms. Seau responded that staff does not list complexes in compliance as we are not aware that a complex is not in compliance absent a complaint. She added that the benefit of having guidelines is that it allows staff to negotiate on behalf of tenants who have received increases in excess of the guidelines.

Mr. Mount suggested listing apartment complexes in compliance with the guidelines, or a certification of complexes who comply. Mr. Mount said that information will be helpful for potential tenants who are looking to rent apartments in the City. Mr. Venero said it would be difficult to keep such a list considering month to month tenants, capital improvements or landlords who have not raised rents for several years.

After discussion it was agreed that staff would conduct a survey to determine if property managers were familiar with the guidelines and if they were applied when calculating rent increases. Mr. Mount will work with staff to establish survey.

On a motion by Meloney Driver the board unanimously approved the recommendation to City Council regarding proposed Voluntary Rent Increase Guidelines.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:**

The minutes of June 4, 2014 meeting were approved.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.