

## **Comments by Bob Eiffert for the Commission on Aging to the Housing Contributions Workgroup**

**May 2, 2019**

- The federal Older Americans Act establishes that each planning and service area have an advisory group on aging issues. In Alexandria, that is the Commission on Aging.
- The OAA also charges the advisory group with advocating for persons age 60 and over, but with a special emphasis on those with lower incomes and who are more frail.
- As you heard from Terri, there is a need for affordable housing and assisted living for lower income older adults. The COA has strongly advocated for those needs.
- In recent assisted living development projects in Alexandria, the COA has pushed for the maximum number of units for the lowest income older adults who require the state Auxiliary Grant (AG) to pay for the cost of care. The AG rate for Northern Virginia is \$1,486 per month.
- The COA also notes that the Fairfax County Health Care Advisory Board has a long-standing policy of requesting 4% of new assisted living units for AG recipients.
- The COA would like to see the City establish something similar, potentially by allowing a special increase in density or floor area ratio for those units to help offset part of the cost of building and maintaining them.
- The COA would also be open to having the developer contribution apply to units for individuals with incomes above the AG rate but below 60% of area median income, as long as the value of the contribution is equivalent to that for the AG units. Such a policy would ultimately provide for more affordable units available to a broader population group.