

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

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Housing Advisory Committee



Wednesday, July 16, 2025, noon

Location: 100 Fifth Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902

CitySpace - Large Conference Room

HAC Members Present:

- Joy Johnson, Chair (JJ)
- Phil d'Oronzio (PdO)
- Mike Parisi, Secretary (MCP)
- Nicole Scro (NS)
- Dan Rosensweig (DR)
- Michael Payne (MP)

Staff Attendees:

- Ose Akinlotan (OA)
- Kellie Brown (KB)
- Tori Kannelopoulos (TK)
- Madelyn Metzler (MM)
- Alan Peura (AP)

HAC Members Absent:

- Heather Griffin (HG)
- Peppy Linden (PL)
- Sunshine Mathon, Vice Chair (SM)
- John Sales (JS)

Online Attendees:

- Emily Dreyfuss (ED)
- James Snyder (JS)

1. **Welcome**

MCP: Calls meeting to order at 12:05pm. (SM absent, JJ delayed arrival)

2. **Introductions and Attendance**

3. **Agenda**

- a. **April 16, 2025, Regular HAC Meeting Minutes**
- b. **May 21, 2025, Policy Subcommittee HAC Meeting Minutes**

Approval of each deferred to next HAC meeting

4. **Staff Updates**

- a. **Introduction from Kellie Brown, Director of Neighborhood Development Services**

KB: First visit to a HAC meeting; introduces herself as Director of Neighborhood Development Services (NDS). NDS happy to take on some staff members from Office of Community Solutions (OSC) since it's been dissolved and reorganized, including Antoine Williams and Madelyn Metzler. Antoine is currently out on leave.

Phil d’Oronzio (PdO): Asks about the new zoning ordinance and the court decision voiding the ordinance

KB: No update to provide beyond the press release City recently sent out.

JJ: Notes this is her first time meeting KB.

Dan Rosensweig (DR): Asks about the poll sent out to HAC members asking about preferences re: pausing meetings until October to allow for the transition of OSC staff to NDS, and to allow NDS to address the court’s decision re: zoning ordinance.

Madelyn Metzler (MM): Vote was 6-3 in favor of pausing.

Joy Johnson (JJ): Voted not to pause. Are there other items to look at in the workplan? Want to make sure we’re sticking to workplan we established.

PdO: Can we get a briefing from Madelyn about staff capacity and responsibilities?

JJ: Want to meet with MM like I did monthly with Antoine. Suspicious about committees not meeting, and a lot happening in the meantime.

Nicole Scro (NS): Makes a point of commending OCS staff (Antoine Williams, Alan Peura, Madelyn Metzler) for their work during this time.

PdO: Motion to skip August meeting, and Chair and Vice Chair can decide whether to meet in September.

Motion passes 6-0.

Dan Rosensweig (DR): During COVID, analysis of affordable housing deficit. HAC was working on a blueprint for closing the gap and measuring how we’re doing. Units needed per income level rentals and housing, reasonable assumptions of how many could be constructed. Re: tax abatement program, will facilitate certain kinds of units, but not others. Would like to look at the IAT again (Intervention Analysis Tool). Rory Stolzenberg (Planning Commission member) and Sunshine Mathon were working on that.

KB: Introduces Ose Akinlotan and Tori Kanellopoulos from NDS’s Long Range Planning department.

JJ: Asks about Land Bank Ordinance (LBO) update.

MM: LBO been on back burner due to staffing absences in the newly-formed Housing Dept. Have shared material with the City Attorney but haven’t gotten feedback from the Attorney or City Manager’s office.

AP: Working with a graduate student, Stephen Kelly at Batten School of Public Policy, researching Land Bank best practices. Goal is to develop a comprehensive manual to use as the Land Bank is stood up.

KB: With staff priority being the Zoning Ordinance’s repeal and reinstatement, won’t be able to return feedback to HAC until Fall most likely.

b. **Update on Charlottesville Affordable Housing Tax Abatement Program**

Alan Peura (AP): Presented to the Planning Commission, CADRE (Chamber of Commerce’s Developer Roundtable group), we are getting feedback. Main new item is

contract signed with 3TP Consulting. Doing market analysis in Charlottesville, submarkets (types, sizes, locations). Looking at impediments to construction to determine if and how tax abatement could address costs of ADU requirement. Tariffs and threats of tariffs driving up material costs, possible labor concerns. Goal is to have a penultimate draft in late, then host a community meeting with HAC for further community feedback.

NS: Contracting out to 3TP to develop the program has helped proposal not be delayed during Zoning Ordinance legal issues?

AP: Yes, it's moving forward. Tax abatement is an option to consider under old or new zoning code, whatever happens.

PdO: Before abatement is designed, we need to know what environment we are working in. Particularly interested in how smaller projects could be helped, and those projects would be very different from larger developments.

AP: Study's market research will be necessary to inform the design of the tax abatement. Firm did similar projects in Charleston and Tampa, how various incentives affect projects' feasibility. Grad student Stephen Kelly doing comparative analysis of tax abatement programs across the country. Council, others will have a plethora of data to use come late fall, early spring. Having conversation with Baltimore City staff re: their model that is supported by local advocacy group Livable Cville. They get yearly data about gaps between market and affordable rents to inform how much tax abatement will cover.

NS: At CADRE and last HAC meeting, comments re: covering the affordability gap down to the level of voucher holders' rental payments.

DR: First, Habitat for Humanity has signed off on letters with Livable Cville in the past but not this one. Agree with much of their letter, notes importance of items 7 and 8—tax abatement coming out of City's \$10 million Affordable Housing fund, and gearing tax abatement towards rental units in private market projects. Notes overinvestment nationally in one type of intervention at expense of others. Could be a great program for people just below market-rate levels. Public housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, and homeownership should also be part of this conversation.

PdO: Need to look at this program for what it is, not what it isn't. If it works at 60% most efficiently, don't try to stretch it into other areas where it won't work.

DR: Not speaking to tactics but to larger vision.

NS: Piedmont Housing Alliance has done tax abatements for most of their projects, but that abatement money hasn't been counted in the City's \$10 million Affordable Housing Fund before. Disagree with Livable Cville's point there.

DR: If tax abatement doesn't cover the full difference between market and affordable rent, that leftover difference will have to come from somewhere.

MP: Using Affordable Housing fund money for a tax abatement would be a huge mistake. Incentivizing landlords to accept housing vouchers as part of this plan should be explored. Also shouldn't assume our local housing market needs this intervention.

Because of high land costs etc., skeptical that the City's Affordable Dwelling Unit requirements in the Zoning Ordinance are the major barrier to new projects. Don't want to give an abatement that isn't needed. Student rental market is very different than the rest of the market, shouldn't be treated the same.

DR: Possible that City could make student housing projects ineligible for abatements.

MP: Verve did primarily payment in lieu to meet ADU requirement. Most people who need affordable housing wouldn't want to live in a student housing building.

NS: Verve is under the old ordinance.

MM: Did use the new ordinance's fee schedule for Verve's payment in lieu. City didn't dictate any inclusion of affordable units.

AP: Council, consultants aware of possibility that abatement program wouldn't be indicated for Charlottesville. Example of Boston coming to that conclusion. Agreement that giving abatement to a project that would happen anyway would be a poor outcome.

NS: At CADRE, discussion about how the types of projects remaining in the market have significant challenges to them. Fair to say ADU req isn't the main impediment, but not to say that some projects wouldn't be made possible by abatement. 3TP could offer a useful tool to use moving forward.

MP: Sees new ordinance as giving away air rights for ADU req's. Because AMIs are high in Charlottesville, fear of not reaching the lowest levels of affordability with an abatement. Could end up helping young professionals at 60% and not people with the greatest need.

5. **Public Comment**

- a. **James Snyder:** Wife and I own small cottage at 206 B 5th St SW. Bought in 2005, 1 of 6 on 1/3 acre (Oak Lawn cottages). Oak Grove cottages by Dan Walters across the street, 5th St Flats behind that. Stable, moderately priced. My concern is properties were rezoned to CX-5. Our property is now nonconforming. New projects next to our property will have no setbacks once developed. Re: 7th St Student Housing Project, building would be 3 feet from Oak Grove cottages, very close to historic church. Very destabilizing. Don't want CX-5 zoning to be reestablished if Zoning Ordinance is repealed and then later readopted. City bought houses just to south of Oak Lawn cottages, good investment. This portion of Fifeville will be destroyed by zoning. We didn't know about the new zoning. This is a sensitive area. Student housing doesn't belong here, should be in Barracks Road shopping area. Sent petition to Planning Commission to not reinstate CX-5 zoning.

6. **Next Scheduled Meeting: August 20, 2025**

JJ: Notes that this meeting will not happen unless specifically scheduled by chair.

7. **Adjourn**