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6-14-22



Tuesday June 14, 2022

Sent via email

Mayor Justin Wilson, justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov
Vice Mayor Amy Jackson, amy.jackson@alexandriava.gov
Councilman Canek Aguirre, canek.aguirre@alexandriava.gov
Councilmember Sarah Bagley, sarah.bagley@alexandriava.gov
Councilman John Taylor Chapman, john.taylor.chapman@alexandriava.gov
Councilwoman Alyia Gaskins, alyia.gaskins@alexandriava.gov
Councilman R. Kirk McPike, kirk.mcpike@alexandriava.gov

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and City Council Members,

We are writing this letter as Tenants and Workers United that the City Council support the two proposed projects of Community Housing Partners and Community Lodgings that will be in the docket this evening. Community Lodgings, who have a longstanding positive relationship with the Arlandria-Chirilagua residents as Community Lodgings, understands the needs of this community. We expect you, as our leaders, to support these projects that provide housing at the 40% AMI and below, through approvals and financial support. Deeply committed affordable housing units is what is needed for our working class families in the City of Alexandria

As city leaders, we hope you as our leaders uphold the 2022 priorities that Council has adopted which is, "provide diverse housing opportunities." We remind you that your priorities are shown not just by statements but into actions and we aspire that the City will continue to support projects such as these, that provide housing for families in the city that earn 40% AMI and below.

We hope you can take into consideration our recommendations in this critical housing situation across the City of Alexandria.

Sincerely,

Ingris Moran
Tenants and Workers United

CC: Evelin Urrutia, eurrutia@tenantsandworkers.org

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6-14-22

CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov

From: Michael Starnes <mstarnesai@icloud.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 12, 2022 1:14 PM
To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Unconditional support of 2712 Duke Street Project and Elbert Street Projects

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To the City of Alexandria,

I write to express my urgent support of the Duke Street and Elbert Street Parcels and the City of Alexandria's sponsorship of the development.

Affordable housing projects often are stalled by concerns which are not borne by reality, such as hypothetical concerns around tree cover and parking. In reality, the concerns of our middle class residents are much more pressing. These projects both have wide community support, and provide a vital lifeline for preserving affordability that would otherwise be impossible. Our community severely lacks naturally affordable units because of restrictive zoning, so projects like this are even more critical to develop to maximum density.

That means not only rapidly approving this measure, but also not implementing any reductions in the scope or density of the project. Small concerns about increases in development will always be there, but if we waste the opportunity to add units we will be reducing the benefit to the taxpayer in this project.

Developments like this are much more energy efficient, and are a key part of guaranteeing a "Sustainable Future" for Arlington. This is not conjecture, it has been recognized by groups ranging from the Department of Energy to the Sierra Club. (<https://www.thedenverchannel.com/longform/increasing-urban-density-could-reduce-climate-change>)

Likewise, having communities like this downtown will help mitigate traffic by reducing the distance our friends and community members are forced to commute. By creating a community where people live, work, and play in the same area, it will mitigate auto traffic that we all suffer from.

No project is perfect, and these two projects have already won broad community support from a variety of community groups. While every potential resident of them may not be here in arcane and hard to follow public comment sessions, rest assured that approving these two projects could literally improve the lives of hundreds of our residents with the stroke of a pen.

We cannot let our indecision stand in the way of the basic need for housing.

The City should support both the Duke Street and Elbert Street developments.

Best,
Michael Starnes

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CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov

From: Aidan Lilienfeld <lilienfeldae@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 12, 2022 2:42 PM
To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov
Subject: Re: Community housing in the upcoming city council

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Dear Alexandria City Council,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Aidan Lilienfeld, and I am writing in support of the potential community housing projects on Duke St and Elbert Avenue.

I have been a proud resident of Alexandria city since the day I was born (in Alexandria hospital) in 1995, and I also worked at the city's best (in my opinion!) coffee shop, Swing's Coffee, from 2018-2020. I have seen the revolutionary changes through which the city has gone over the last two+ decades, and even in the last few years.

I count among my closest friends (and my old regulars at Swing's) people across the entire socioeconomic spectrum--people who love Alexandria, people who were born in other countries but found a home here as immigrants and refugees. Alexandria is my home and my favorite place in the world--a feeling I've only reinforced as I've lived in other cities like Chicago, Boston, NYC, and London. I would like to settle down in Alexandria.

Alexandria needs to move *toward* socioeconomic diversity and better urban planning rather than *away* from it. We've all seen how much community and low-income housing has been bulldozed since the 1990s. I've talked with friends, customers, and Uber drivers about how much this city has changed--and not always for the better. Not only is community housing more environmentally efficient than single-family homes or most other developments, it also gives people from all backgrounds an open door into this city's incredible community and resources.

Socioeconomic diversity also benefits all Alexandrians by creating a more dynamic culture (food, music, schools, cars, festivals, the list continues forever). We could all foresee a future in which Alexandria is a city reserved entirely for the most privileged, the ones who can afford to buy the multi-million dollar homes cropping up at every corner. Those communities already exist all across the DMV suburbs, why do we need another one?

I, and my friends, don't want Alexandria to become another McLean, or Potomac, or Bethesda. Let's make Alexandria a more interesting, accessible, and colorful place to live, rather than another homogenous culture vacuum.

I've studied history at a graduate level for two years, including the history of urban planning and segregation. I, and all of us, know what happens when affordability and diversity are given short-shrift in city planning, and when the wealthiest, greediest, most racist voices are given the podium instead.

More low-income housing would Alexandria a place I want to continue to live -- *because these are the places that some of my favorite people live*. An endless sea of million-dollar single-family homes and wealthy people gives me nothing to be proud of at all.

Thank you very much for your dedication to the well-being of this city, and I hope we can continue to make Alexandria a place for everyone.

Sincerely,
Aidan Lilienfeld

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CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov

From: Me Yoy <fedora12343689@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 12, 2022 8:39 PM
To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Parking study

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Has the city done a parking study for the Arlandria area?

There is already excessive parking issue on Elbert Ave, Tennessee ave, Norris Pl, Old dominion Blvd, N overlook drive, and in the shopping centers around Food Star & Moms organic market..

Go walk the streets any night around 7-8pm and see all the over parking that happens from the apartments.

I've lived in the area for 10 years and it's getting worse. Know the city is building a 475 Unit on Glebe with only 180 parking spots and a redevelopment on Elbert going from 29 units to 91, both with subsidized housing so only fraction of parking has to be built.

There are dozens & dozens & dozens of work vans, vehicles with MD plates along excessive speeding through Elbert and Executive Ave.!

The city really needs to look at these parking issues and keep them from getting worse but with these new developments is subsidized housing it's just going to get worse..

Poor people do use public transit but they also own personal cars, work vehicles and people visit these people who live here and also park on the streets...

Do a parking study in the Arlandria area..

Regards

Jack

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CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov

From: Bonnie Lilienfeld <bonniel1995@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 9:01 AM
To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Consideration of Predevelopment Loan Requests to Advance Two Affordable Pipeline Projects

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Hello

As a resident of Alexandria City since 1987, I'd like to go on record in support of the affordable housing initiatives currently under review in City Council.

One of the things I've loved best about the city has been its diversity and inclusivity. Although it is a suburb it has a more urban vibe in part due to the strong downtown core but also because of the variety of people who live there.

The city has changed so much since I moved there. Many of the changes have made it a more fun and dynamic place and a great place for people with means to live. But the downside has been that it's become so expensive to purchase or rent a home in Alexandria.

I hope that the city can continue to be welcoming to people across the economic spectrum. It really benefits us all in so many ways.

Thank you,
Bonnie Lilienfeld
112 E Walnut St, Alexandria

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CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov

From: Mike English <mje213@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 13, 2022 2:38 PM
To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Please Approve Predevelopment Loan Requests to Advance Two Affordable Housing Pipeline Projects

You don't often get email from mje213@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

It has come to my attention that the City of Alexandria is considering the approval of pre-development loans for two sites, .

1) Community Housing Partners (CHP), 2712 Duke Street ("Witter Place"), in the amount of \$400,000; and

2) Community Lodgings, Inc. (CLI), Elbert Avenue, also in the amount of \$400,000.

I will be upfront with you, I am not a resident of your city (I live in Silver Spring), nor am I overly familiar with the sites and background of these projects. But that's just it, I really don't think I need to be. The shortage of housing, especially affordable housing, is dire and clear throughout the region, and people make any number of excuses, well meaning or otherwise, not to build on any number of sites.

I urge you to push past that opposition, should there be any, and approve this funding to keep the projects moving along. The housing crisis is bad enough that we cannot allow a single opportunity to slip away.

You know this is true, you know we need it.

Do the right thing

Thank you,

Mike English
8005 13th Street, Unit 304
Silver Spring, MD, 20910

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CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov

From: David Byrd <davidreidbyrd@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 14, 2022 11:16 AM
To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Support for Items 22-1097 and 22-1182

You don't often get email from davidreidbyrd@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi,

I'm writing today to express my support for the following docket items:

22-1097 Parking Reforms - I am glad that Council is re-examining the role of parking as an aspect of city life and I enthusiastically support the effort to price the use of public parking spaces. I think efforts like this will continue to help with congestion and flow and make downtown more accessible to other forms of transportation.

22-1182 Predevelopment Loans - Alexandria desperately needs more housing, especially affordable units. Accelerating the development of more housing is very important to me, and I'm very happy to see Council supporting this kind of work.

Keep up the good work!

-David Byrd
807 Second St
Alexandria VA 22314

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