



Legislation Text

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File #: 14-3668, Version: 1

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JUNE 3, 2015

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Introduction and First Reading. Consideration. Passage on First Reading of an Ordinance on Changes to the Name and Composition of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee.

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**ISSUE:** Proposed changes to the name and composition of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC).

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Council consider the ordinance on first reading and set it for public hearing and final passage on Saturday, June 13, 2015 to amend Section 2-4-71 of the City Code to change the name of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee to the Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC) and to add five additional members to represent key stakeholder groups including housing consumers under 30 years of age; a representative to be designated by the Commission on Persons with Disabilities; a community banker; a representative of the city's small business community; and a representative of the city's retail, restaurant or hospitality sector, to be nominated by the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce.

**BACKGROUND:** The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) was established more than two decades ago to provide counsel to staff and City Council regarding the expenditure of voluntary developer contributions. While its role in helping to program Housing Trust Fund and Housing Opportunity Fund monies to produce and preserve the City's stock of affordable housing has remained constant since its inception, AHAC has also provided important input and guidance on a variety of housing policies and activities, and its diverse group of stakeholders, which are appointed by City Council, recently comprised the majority element of the Housing Master Plan Advisory Group, as well as served as the Council's primary advisor regarding affordable housing issues with regard to the 2012 Beauregard Small Area Plan as well as the related 2013 CDDs and their implementation plans.

**DISCUSSION:** In January, AHAC unanimously voted to request that it be allowed to change its name to the

Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee. In the Committee's view, this change reflects current best practices within the housing industry, and among advocates, to more broadly message and explain the need for, and use of, affordable housing. By framing the issue in terms of "housing affordability," most advocates feel it can be better understood to describe the range of incomes, ages and abilities of persons who may need, or be served by, various housing options that can make their housing costs more affordable at different stages of life. The proposed name adds "Alexandria" and preserves the group's key mission of providing counsel to staff and Council by retaining "Advisory." This also keeps the pronunciation of the long-used acronym for the Committee approximately the same.

Pursuant to the January discussion, at its April and May meetings, the Committee considered potential changes to the group's composition to include additional key stakeholders who are not currently represented. Again, the Committee acted unanimously in proposing five new positions: one person who represents housing consumers under 30 years of age; one representative designated by the Commission on Persons with Disabilities; one community banker; one representative of the city's small business community; and one representative of the city's retail, restaurant, or hospitality sectors, to be nominated by the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce. AHAC feels that the perspectives of these new stakeholders will be very valuable to informing future policy and program discussions regarding local housing affordability as well as in expanding understanding of affordability issues to important constituencies.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** None.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Cover Sheet for Ordinance to amend and reordain the title of Article H and amend and reordain Section 2-4-71 of the City Code
2. Ordinance to amend and reordain the title of Article H and amend and reordain Section 2-4-71 of the City Code

**STAFF:**

Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager

Helen S. McIlvaine, Acting Director, Housing

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Christina Zechman Brown, Associate Attorney, City Attorney's Office