



# RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRESERVATION ACTION COMMITTEE

## *Summary*

The Affordable Housing Preservation Action Committee has completed its mission to develop a set of recommendations for consideration by the Board of Supervisors which, if implemented, will result in the preservation of over 1000 homes by 2007, keeping them affordable to those who live and work in Fairfax County. Appreciating the extraordinary rate at which the County is losing its precious supply of affordable housing, the Committee members worked closely and quickly to develop its recommendations. The Committee members salute the leadership of the Board on this issue and want to emphasize that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors must show *political steadfastness* and *clarity* and make affordable housing preservation a **priority policy**.

The following list of recommendations, adopted by the Action Committee on January 21, 2005, is divided into three categories: those needing **immediate action** within the next six months, those that can be achieved in the **near term** within the next year, and those that can be achieved in the **longer term**.

### IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

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1. Dedicate **one penny of the real estate tax rate** to the preservation of affordable housing effective in Fiscal Year 2006.
2. Create an **Affordable Housing "SWAT" team**, comprised of business and community stakeholders and County staff, and a **new position** at the Department of Housing and Community Development to act as the point person to prevent the loss of at-risk affordable housing.
3. Develop incentives to encourage the owners of existing Affordable Dwelling Units to record a new covenant to **re-start the control period** when they sell to new owners.
4. Establish a working group to develop recommendations on how to restructure Virginia's **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit** and increase the usage of the **Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit** program, with an emphasis on preservation.
5. Establish a working group to revise the **Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan** to re-examine the definition of affordable housing, expedite the amendment process, and explicitly support the preservation of affordable housing.
6. Support **House Joint Resolution Number 719** directing the Virginia Housing Commission to study the authority of localities to provide incentives to preserve affordable housing.

## NEAR TERM ACTIONS

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7. Revise the Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance to **extend the control period** to 30 years for new ADUs.
8. Develop incentives to encourage the preservation of affordable units in **condominium conversions** within existing affordable garden apartment stock in the County.
9. Determine and provide a **tool box of incentives for preservation**, which may include zoning and regulatory flexibility and financing techniques.
10. Broaden the use of **accessory dwelling units** as a way to effectively expand the affordable housing stock at little or no cost to meet a range of housing needs.
11. Support the establishment of the **Virginia Community Development Bank** and advocate its expansion to urban areas like Fairfax County.

## LONGER TERM ACTIONS

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12. Consider instituting a **meals tax** of three cents, one cent to be dedicated to affordable housing and two cents dedicated to real estate tax relief.
13. *Undertake a study on how the County might use the concept of **transferable development rights** in designated revitalization areas to achieve the purpose of preserving affordable housing.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS REQUIRING CLARIFICATION FROM COMMITTEE

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**#13:** Undertake a study on how the County might use the concept of **transferable development rights** in designated revitalization areas to achieve the purpose of preserving affordable housing.

**ISSUE:** Should we also include **overlay districts**? The recommendation would read:

Undertake a study on how the County might use the concept of **overlay districts or transferable development rights** in designated revitalization areas or other areas as appropriate to achieve the purpose of preserving affordable housing.