Virginia Housing Commission

JUNE NEWSLETTER

Volume One

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COMMISSION UPDATES

The Commission is currently covering a broad range of housing topics and issues for the Commonwealth.

To accomplish this goal the Virginia Housing Commission formed four workgroups to discuss and offer recommendations on proposed legislation for the full Commission's consideration.

The workgroups are: (1) Local Land Use and Community Living, and (2) Landlord Tenant Law, Real Estate Law, and Affordable Housing Solutions. The two temporary workgroups; (3) Short-Term Rental, (3) Real Property, Community Development, and Best Land-Use Practice.

Click here for more information on the 2023 Workgroups and here to view the Bill Matrix

(1) Real Property, Community Development, and Best Land-Use Practice
Commission Chair Delegate Danny Marshall is chairing this temporary workgroup which is discussing methods to increase the supply of affordable and workforce housing in the Commonwealth.

Discussion also includes: inclusionary zoning, industrial development authorities, and affordable and workforce housing supply.

The workgroup's first meeting discussed the creation of affordable housing and development processes and bills HJ 507 (D. Marshall, 2023), HB1413 (D. Marshall, 2023), and HB 2045 (B. Carr, 2023).

Click here for the summary of the first Real Property, Community Development, and Best Land-Use Practice Workgroup meeting.

(2) Short Term Rental
This temporary workgroup, co-chaired by Gubernatorial Appointee Laura Lafayette and Lee Vogler, is discussing the narrow topic of realtor exemptions from short-term rental law (HB 2271, D. Marshall, 2023).

At the workgroup's first meeting presentations were heard on New Insurance Guidelines for Short-Term Rentals and Charlottesville's Experience with Short-Term Rentals.

Click here for the summary of the first Short-Term Rental Workgroup meeting.

(3) Local Land Use and Community Living
The Local Land Use and Community Living Workgroup is chaired by Delegate David Bulova and tasked with discussing a variety of legislative proposals dealing with local land use as well as Common Interest Communities.

The workgroup has heard and discussed affordable dwelling units, vacant and derelict properties SB1111 (G. Hashmi, 2023) and revitalization funds SB1163 (L. Lewis, 2023).

Click here for the summary of the first Local Land Use and Community Living Workgroup Summary.

(4) Landlord Tenant Law, Real Estate Law, and Affordable Housing Solutions
This workgroup, chaired by Delegate Carrie Coyner, is discussing potential solutions to reduce Virginia's eviction rates and exploring other topics to promote affordable housing.

At the workgroup's first meeting bills were introduced and discussed, Writs of Eviction SB 1089 (A. Ebbin, 2023) and Rent Stabilization SB 1278 (J. Boysko, 2023).

Click here for the summary of the first Landlord Tenant Law, Real Estate Law, and Affordable Housing Solutions Workgroup meeting.

VHC is continuing to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of the Eviction Diversion Pilot Program and will produce a final report in November.

View the Eviction Diversion Program Interim Report here. We will continue to research and be responsive to questions raised during Commission meetings.

For more information on the Virginia Housing Commission, visit the website.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Location: House Room 1, The Capitol

July 19 at 1:00pm
Workgroup - Real Property, Community Development and Best Land-Use Practice
August 21 at 10:00am
Workgroup - Landlord and Tenant Law, Real Estate Law, and Affordable Housing Solutions
August 21 at 1:00pm
Workgroup - Local Land Use and Community Living
August 22 at 10:00am
Virginia Housing Commission
August 22 at 1:00pm
Workgroup - Real Property, Community Development and Best Land-Use Practice

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NEW STAFF JOINS COMMISSION

The Virginia Housing Commission recently hired two individuals to join the Commission and support its efforts to provide solutions for housing-based issues in the Commonwealth.

The director Elizabeth Palen stated, "This strong staff will help promote good housing initiatives in the Commonwealth." She commented that their interest and knowledge concerning housing and the political process will greatly strengthen the Commission.

Grace Fischbach joined the VHC as the Executive Assistant. Grace provides administrative assistance and support for the VHC.

Prior to joining the Commission, Grace worked in the House of Delegates Committee Operations as the House Finance Committee Clerk for the 2023 Legislative session. She is a recent Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Goucher College.

Jesseca Hoff is the VHC's new Research and Policy Analyst. Jesseca conducts research and analysis on housing topics that are directed by the Commission.

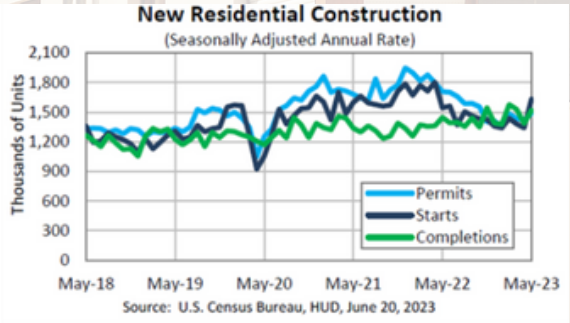
Prior to joining the Commission, Jesseca completed a Master of Public Policy and Administration from the L. Douglas Wilder School of Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University and spent two years conducting policy research alongside VCU staff. After graduation she spent five years at the Broadband Association of Virginia as Assistant Director of Policy and Communications.

U.S. HOUSING STARTS JUMP

Housing starts jumped to 1.631 million in May, the highest level since April 2022 and a 5.7% increase from May 2022. (Source: U.S. Census Bureau, HUD, June 20, 2023)

United States New Privately Owned Housing Starts
(Thousands of Units)

	Total	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
May-22	1,543	128	227	851	337
May-23	**1,631**	**100**	**282**	**908**	**341**
% Change	5.70%	-21.90%	24.20%	6.70%	1.20%



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Senator George Barker
Senator George L. Barker was elected to represent Virginia's 39th district in 2007. In 2013 Senator Barker joined the Virginia Housing Commission (VHC). He currently serves as co-chair of Senate Finance and Appropriations while also serving on the Commerce and Labor, Education and Health, General Laws and Technology, and Rules Committees.

While in office Senator Barker worked as a member of the VHC to create legislative solutions aimed at increasing accessibility and transparency in housing.

Six housing bills recommended by the VHC—for which Senator Barker was the Chief Patron—have been signed into law.

Senate Bill 438 in 2014, clarifying brokerage, was the first bill recommended by the VHC that passed with Senator Barker as Chief Patron.

The VHC studied and later recommended SB 414 in 2016 with Senator Barker as chief patron. SB 414 authorized localities to establish a land bank entity that could address vacant, abandoned, and tax-delinquent properties - providing localities with another method to spur economic development and solve pressing housing issues.

In the 2017 session, SB 1228 established and streamlined the process for persons with disabilities to get assistance animals approved for multi-family housing.

To ensure safety in rental units, in 2018 Senator Barker sponsored SB 391 which passed and standardized the installation of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in rental dwelling units with landlord documented compliance.

As part of the 2019 package of eviction legislation put forth by the VHC, SB 1626 and SB 1627 increased transparency and clarity for defendants in unlawful detainer cases.

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FEATURED NEWS ARTICLES

Chesterfield Zoning Rewrite Would Expand Housing Options (Richmond Times Dispatch)

Chesterfield County's multiyear zoning modernization project aims to increase housing options by simplifying Chesterfield's land use and development rules. County planners are investigating methods to increase housing options, including instituting entirely new categories of zoning focused on mixed-use development. The County's goal is to promote walkable communities with a blend of homes and commerce.

With Housing Shortage, Danville IDA Approves Incentive Programs To Boost Construction

The Danville Industrial Development Authority approved three grant programs in June to spur residential development. The City expects 3,900 new jobs in the Danville market through 2023. Officials hope these new incentives will address the demand for housing and increase Danville's housing supply after the lack of new home construction over the last few years.

With Evictions Fueling Homelessness, Fairfax County Explores Options to Stop Them (FFX Now)

Staff attributed the 10% increase in homelessness within the county to a corresponding surge in evictions throughout the past year, as well as the termination of eviction protections at both the federal and state levels. To address these challenges, Fairfax is investing in housing stability and eviction prevention.

Affordable Housing in Virginia Beach: Zoning Changes, Tax Incentives Could Bring A Boost, Officials Say (Virginia Pilot)

Virginia Beach leaders want to increase the supply of housing in the city, including "missing middle" housing and are exploring solutions to address housing availability. Potential solutions discussed include zoning reform, tax abatements, density bonuses, and grants.

Local Experts Address Affordable Housing Issues In Southwest Virginia (WFXR)

WFXR news conducted interviews with housing professionals in Virginia to look into the root causes of affordability issues. The article outlines many ways localities are addressing the current housing supply crisis - including zoning changes to allow more multi-family development and Accessory Dwelling Units.

18,000 Sign Up For Subsidized Housing In Hampton; List Will Be Narrowed To 5,000 (WAVY)

In just three days, 18,000 people signed up for the Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers waitlist in Hampton. The program experienced an 80% increase in sign ups from the time the application was last opened in 2016.

Permits for New Multifamily Housing Units Slowing Down in Virginia in 2023 (Virginia Realtors)

According to recent data, the pace of issuing multifamily housing permits has decelerated after reaching record highs in 2021. In Virginia multifamily housing permits declined in April 2023 compared to the year before.

COMMISSION STAFF

Elizabeth A. Palen
Executive Director
epalen@vhc.virginia.gov
(804) 967-3992

Jesseca Hoff
Research and Policy Analyst
jhoff@vhc.virginia.gov
(804) 967-3993

Grace Fischbach
Executive Assistant
gfischbach@vhc.virginia.gov
(804) 967-3994

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