

To: Members of the Arlington County Board
CC: Arlington Civic Federation
From: Board of the Claremont Civic Association

On behalf of the Claremont Civic Association we are writing to ask for the County Board to delay consideration of the Accessory Dwelling proposal until the Board has an adequate record on which to base its decision. We are concerned that the County is rushing to judgement based on an incomplete record of comment from the affected Arlington communities.

We understand that there may be valid reasons for continued debate on how best to address affordable housing in the County; however, the issue of Accessory Dwellings continues to elicit very strong opinions on all sides. To that point, we feel that the County cannot reasonably move forward to a vote on this matter based on the current record.

It is not evident that the County has provided appropriate notice to county residents for meaningful comment and engagement on this issue. To our knowledge, the County staff held only one open house for information on this proposal. Further, the community engagement survey was open for only 14 days – clearly an inadequate amount of time to inform the community of the survey, let alone allow for a meaningful collection of responses. In particular, there was no County outreach to civic associations – a fact that the county staff admitted to on pages 14-15 of its report on this proposal.

In addition to a lack of meaningful comment on the record, it is not evident that the County has conducted reliable impact studies on infrastructure or environmental (including the tree canopy) effects, or economic studies on residential property values associated with a potential increase in accessory dwellings.

With a total of only 23 days between the County's advertisement of public hearings and the scheduled vote, combined with a single public hearing that was also combined with a Planning Commission meeting, and lack of any meaningful outreach to civic associations, we cannot understand how the County can legitimately move forward on this issue.

We therefore urge the County Board to postpone its scheduled vote, request additional comment on the Accessory Dwelling proposal, and engage in meaningful outreach to all affected county communities in order to develop a complete record upon which to act.

Respectfully submitted,

Board of the Claremont Civic Association