### ASF | ARLINGTONIANS FOR OUR SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

## Update on Missing Middle Housing February 2020

Anne Bodine, ASF Member Arlington Central Library

## Missing Middle (MM) – Adds density in urban areas to "transition" between high-rise and single-family homes



### MM – "All the Rage" in 2019, But Yet Untested

- Minneapolis rezoned <u>all</u> single-family neighborhoods in 2019 -permitting triplexes in single-family neighborhoods
- Oregon in 2019 required towns over 25,000 residents to upzone for up to fourplexes
- <u>Seattle</u> in 2019 upzoned 27 transit zone hubs, allowing more housing types on 6% of blocks in single-family areas
- <u>California</u> homeowners may build accessory dwelling units (ADU's) on most residential lots, but statewide upzoning bill defeated in 2020
- Arlington county in May 2019 allows ADU's on most residential lots
- Virginia State Delegate Ibrahim Sameerah (D-Loudon) proposed statewide upzoning in Dec 2019; the bill is defeated January 2020

### No Concept in Arlington Beyond the Name

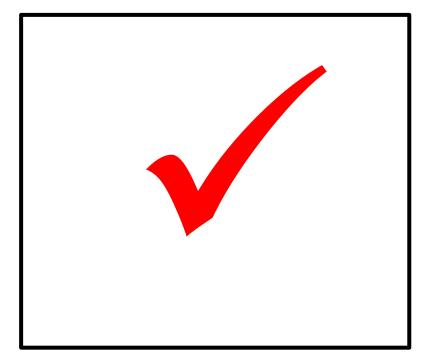
- County leaders say "we are not doing Minneapolis," but have not defined outcomes
- County leaders say either we need a "new **type** of housing" or a type for "**middle incomes.**" They can't say why, where, or what types
- County leaders cannot demonstrate if/how MM promotes affordability
- County leaders have not indicated MM impact on schools, parks, roads, services, taxes

ASF seeks an objective comprehensive study, including no upzoning if merited

## **Arlington's Short Timeline - Irreversible Change**

3 phases – "building understanding, focused study, implementation"

- MM announced Dec 17 board meeting
- Resident survey and county board briefings March 2020
- Kickoff April 2020
- Process through late 2021



Engaging Citizens or Box Checking?

## **County Hints What's Coming Our Way**

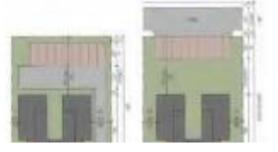
- 1) More density in neighborhoods
- 2) Even shorter setbacks
- 3) More impervious surface
- 4) Taller height limits
- 5) More cars, less parking
- McMansion sized duplexes/triplexes and more











#### **Development Ideas**

- Reduced and/or modified setback requirements
- Maximum driveway widths within the front yard
- Minimum width for landscape strips between edge of property and parking area
- Rear loading scenario (for sites with access to

### Who Says We Need a New "TYPE" of Housing?

Let's inventory "existing middle" housing. Duplex in Ashton Heights







## The County Says: We Are Missing "Middle Income" Housing



16% of Feb 18 Zillow listings were \$400k-600k – affordable for Arlington median income of \$115,000

## The County Says MM Will Provide Affordable Housing – Will It?

- New single family homes cost \$1.7 million in "teardown" 'hoods
- A duplex will likely cost \$2.2 million, a triplex more
- Railroad cottages in Falls Church sold for over \$700,000
- Land prices will rise, pushing out existing homeowners and eroding diversity
- UCLA's Michael Storper has shown trickle-down effects don't apply to our market type





The County says MM helps the environment, but densifying in residential zones lots kills trees, increases runoff/floods



# The County says we must act now, but...

... if planning for schools, transportation, and services came first, might we see the costs push us toward other solutions?

## Pitch in and Ask Arlington County to:

- Explain how missing middle is "affordable" given Arlington's economic/income patterns
- Demonstrate effectiveness of MM programs adopted elsewhere
- Consider affordable housing strategies other than upzoning single-family neighborhoods
- Publish research and solicit meaningful citizen input before promoting options
- Answer any of ASF's questions on Missing Middle posted to our website

Questions? <u>asf.virginia@gmail.org</u> <u>www.asf-virginia.org</u>