

*Remarks by Mary Hughes Hynes, at the 2016 Ellen Bozman Award Celebration*

I'm so honored to have had a part—albeit modest—in strengthening this important public policy commitment in Arlington. AHS got it right when they titled this event *It takes a working group!*

Tonight's a bit like preaching to the choir. While some of us sing low and others high, we all know the song—and it's in the key of passion for affordable housing. We are a small but stalwart band!

But really, why should a community invest in affordable housing? How could we help Arlingtonians who had no reason to care about this issue become comfortable with community investment in affordable housing?

Those are the questions that drove me to advocate for the study in 2012. And the study, grounded in research and broad community conversation, studiously, persistently sought to answer those questions—using all the skills of staff and community to build a consensus that ultimately led to a unanimous vote by the County Board to adopt the Master Plan a little more than 3 years later. While some advocated for moving more quickly, I know it took the RIGHT amount of time and that we have laid a foundation for many more years of community-building work.

In the end I believe that, when we look back at our affordable housing actions between 2012 and 2015, our collective affordable housing comprehensive plan song will be recognized for what it did, braiding three key harmonious lines,

- the soprano (or head) line—affordable housing contributes to a vibrant local economy,
- the tenor (or heart) line—affordable housing strengthens our community and our people, and
- the bass (or wallet) line—affordable housing is a good return on investment as it uses a revolving loan fund and other, wise investment strategies.

We've braided them into a song that will be accessible to all Arlingtonians for years to come.

So choir, we all need to keep singing.

We also need to grow our membership and embrace harmony through diversity; I bet we'll even encounter a bit of scat singing or unexpected variations every now and then and our song might become even more interesting. I know if we continue to teach and practice and refine our song—rooted in our strong master plan—we can't help but produce beautiful music.

Thanks again.