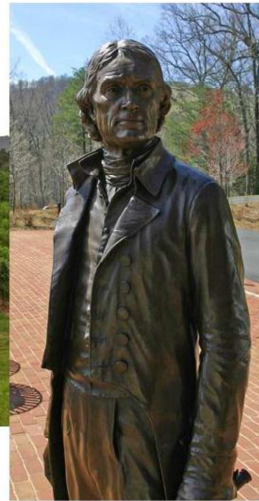


Charlottesville Area Association of REALTORS®



Code of Public Policy

Established September 20, 2012

Reaffirmed By CAAR Board of Directors August 20, 2015

2015 Board of Directors

Anita Dunbar - President
Donna Patton - President Elect
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2015 Code of Public Policy Project Team

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Tim Carson
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Percy Montague
Candice Van Der Linde

Strategic Plan 2015

CAAR Mission: To support our REALTOR® members to be professional, ethical and successful.

CAAR Vision: The REALTOR® is indispensable to every real estate decision.

VALUES

We share these core values. They guide our behavior, our interactions and the work to accomplish our strategic goals:

1. We are open-minded
 - A. We innovate. We value forward and new thinking
 - B. We embrace people and their situation even if not able to give 100% time or participation
 - C. We are flexible to change
 - D. We widen our scope from only members to the public, media and the consumers we serve
2. We are inclusive
 - A. Of all members and their location (in and outside of Charlottesville and Albemarle counties)
 - B. We think about more than homeownership – but property ownership (beyond our residential business)
 - C. We represent diversity in ideas and implementation
3. We are collaborative
 - A. We will engage in healthy debate to make solid decisions – together
 - B. We will respect the decisions of the group
 - C. If we disagree we will bring it up to the group (not among a segment of the group)

STRATEGIC GOALS

CAAR is committed to being relevant and valuable to our membership. These goals and objectives highlight how we intend to channel our resources and attention for 2015-2017. Together CAAR leadership and staff will pursue the following goals:

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive member engagement program.
2. Communicate a clear, simple message of value.
3. Raise awareness of our advocacy and legislative efforts.
4. Promote industry value of the REALTOR® to influence public perception.



Introduction

The Charlottesville Area Association of REALTORS® serves more than 1,000 real estate professionals and affiliate members throughout the City of Charlottesville and the counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson. Widely recognized as the leading voice for real estate in Central Virginia since 1925, CAAR members bring professionalism and high ethical standards to every business transaction. The Association advocates for the protection of private property rights and provides tools and technology for members to achieve expertise in serving the needs of customers and clients. The CAAR membership is committed to enriching the region's neighborhoods by engaging in a variety of educational programs as well as community service events each year.

CAAR is dedicated to protecting the right of individuals to own real property. Political stability and the economic prosperity of the community are dependent upon this ability, and CAAR opposes undue actions that diminish or deny the full and free exercise of this right.

CAAR members believe:

- Homeownership serves as a cornerstone of the democratic republic system of government and that it deserves a preferred place in this country's values system. Homeownership positively impacts community, civic, economic and business responsibilities and contributes to employment stability, family security and personal well-being.

- Prosperity and property rights are inextricably linked. Any restraint on private property rights shifts the balance of power from personal attributes toward impersonal attributes and toward only the behavior that political authorities approve. That is a fundamental reason for preference of a system of strong private property rights: private property rights protect individual liberty.
- Every individual should have the opportunity to live in a safe and vibrant community.
- All persons in the community should have the right to equal-opportunity housing. They should be able to rent or purchase their shelter of choice regardless of race, color, religion, gender, handicap, familial status or national origin.
- Active involvement in political activity is a right and is the responsibility of every citizen. CAAR encourages participation in political, governmental and legislative affairs at the local, state and national level and supports those candidates who, by their actions, pledge to preserve and strengthen the underlying principle of private-property ownership.
- Private property rights include the rights of owners and tenants of commercial properties, rental housing as well as homeowners.
- Agricultural needs and benefits, along with social and economic factors, must be considered when developing land-use policies that will determine the future growth of the city, state and nation. While it is recognized that the demands are not mutually exclusive, a balance must be achieved, however, between agricultural production, environmental conservation, open space, employment opportunities and economic vitality.



Specific Public Policy Positions

CAAR's Public Policy Positions encompass many policy areas and are not exclusive to one political party or viewpoint. Those include: affordable housing, transportation funding, eminent domain, zoning authority, real estate transaction fees, development costs and requirements, private property rights, environmental protection and many others.

Housing – *Advocating for fair, equitable housing policies that provide options for safe and secure shelter.*



As an Association, we reaffirm our commitment to the goal of decent housing and a suitable living environment for every family. We believe that this objective can be served best by a healthy housing market accomplished in an economic environment that fosters an ample supply of affordable housing.

We believe that the real estate industry, non-profit partners (i.e.: Habitat for Humanity, Albemarle Housing Improvement Program and Piedmont Housing Alliance) and the state and local governments all can work together in establishing policies and programs which promote an adequate supply of affordable owner-occupied and rental housing, and which reduce regulatory and other barriers to housing availability and affordability.

Issues of workforce housing and varied consumer choice in housing products are an important part of a healthy housing market. We continue to believe that private property ownership and homeownership are two of the most important pillars to our society.

Government & Political Advocacy – *Advocating for an efficient, effective and transparent representative government.*

We support the fundamental right of every citizen to participate in the governmental process by freely and openly expressing his or her ideas, views or opinions about matters facing government at all levels.

We believe voters should choose their elected officials not the other way around; therefore we support nonpartisan redistricting of political boundaries. We believe in redistricting to create compact and contiguous districts and to meet U.S. Supreme Court standards for equality of population and compliance with the Voting Rights Act. Specifically, districts shall not be drawn to favor any political party, an incumbent legislator or member of Congress, or any other person or group, or for the purpose of augmenting or diluting the voting strength of a language or racial minority group.

We oppose any limits, restrictions or other infringements on the right of a person, whether as an individual or as a member of an organization, to use any and all legal methods in attempting to affect the decisions and the course of government. We believe this is necessary in order to have a representative and responsive government.

Any attempt to reduce the participation of voluntary political action committees undermines a basic political freedom and civic right. Candidates should be encouraged to seek support from many diverse sectors of the electorate to ensure representation of the widest spectrum of viewpoints.

We concur with Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis who coined the phrase: “Sunlight is the best disinfectant” in praise of transparency and honesty in public policy. We encourage sunlight in all aspects of government local, state and federal.

As an Association covering many municipalities, we recognize that some issues are regional in scope and require cooperation between local governments. We encourage such cooperation provided it is completed transparently and in the public view.

We believe economies of scale can be achieved by localities working across jurisdictional boundaries. We encourage localities to consider consolidation of citizen services (police, fire, schools, etc.) where such consolidation results in an improvement of goal attainment and/or economic efficiencies.

Economic Vitality & Quality of Life – *Advocating for expanding economic opportunity and pursuit of happiness.*



We recognize job creation through continued economic development is critical to the financial stability of our regional economy. We support strong economic development programs to include components for workforce training and workforce housing.

We believe broadband access to be a critical part of the 21st century infrastructure and are supportive of market based efforts to expand connectivity opportunity to all.

We believe consumer choice in housing types, and price points, is an integral part of any economic vitality program. A well rounded workforce that can live in the same community where it works builds stronger families, better communities and reduces transportation demands.

We believe governmental economic development initiatives should not focus only on high income employment opportunities but should include attracting industries with career ladder jobs that will allow future generations to have lifelong employment opportunities.

We believe all participants in the marketplace deserve an equal playing field therefore all enterprises, commercial, institutional, and charitable, should be required to follow the same regulations and pay the same fees regardless of their tax status.

Land Use Regulations – *Advocating for reduced regulatory burden that appropriately protects the rights of land owners and balances environmental and community needs with housing and other market demands.*

We support the use of local zoning ordinances as a method of imposing reasonable, flexible guidelines for protecting the safety and well-being of the community.

We encourage local governments to solicit the public, and especially the real estate community, to provide input on zoning and planning matters prior to taking action on such matters. We believe any and all regulations should be administered in a fair and equitable manner. The economic impact of all regulations (on the locality and the end user) should be calculated and considered.

We also encourage local governments to adopt land use and zoning policies that allow developers to meet consumer demands for a variety of residential, commercial, recreational and industrial uses while providing for open spaces and the protection of environmentally sensitive areas. We believe a vibrant market demands more than just one model form of development.

We support and encourage policies that promote redevelopment in urban areas, such as programs that encourage “in-fill” development and redevelopment of brownfield sites.



We encourage local governments to consider how their extensive, time consuming development review process and proffer policies can negatively impact housing affordability, business creation and commercial development.

We believe that many current land use and zoning laws and policies serve as an impediment to innovative planning and development by land owners thus limiting economic advancement. Specifically, we believe cash proffers inhibit rezoning applications generating more by right development, contrary to the community vetted Comprehensive Plan. We encourage cooperative efforts with state and local officials to remove such impediments.

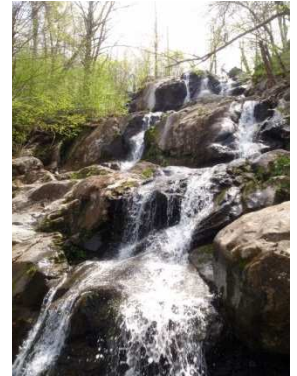
We believe urban growth boundaries (UGBs) have negative impacts on housing affordability by limiting supply. To mitigate this concern, any UGB must include enough

developable land to meet market demands. The UGB should be reviewed, recalculated and revised at least every five years to prevent a scarcity of developable land in any zoning category.

Environment – *Advocating for solid, sensible environmental regulations that strike a proper balance between property owner rights and good stewardship of the environment.*

We believe voluntary programs and flexible incentives generate significantly improved participation over government mandates. In addition, we advocate for flexibility in design regulations to permit, but not require, green building, energy efficiency and aging in place.

We believe consumer access to water is an important property right and should not be used as a growth control tactic. In areas with municipal water systems, users, not taxpayers, should bear the cost of installation, maintenance and repair of such systems.



Education – *Supports a variety of quality educational opportunities - public and private – from the earliest stages of childhood learning through technical and higher education.*

We believe a vibrant, accredited strong public and private school systems are a benefit to the entire community.



We believe our region’s greatest asset is its people. Not only does an educated population provide businesses with a productive workforce, it also serves as a hotbed for economic development through organic entrepreneurship.

As REALTORS®, we realize the importance of quality schools to the local housing market. The quality of education can be a driving force in the economic vitality of our residential and business communities. While we support investment in education, we also believe governments should explore opportunities for efficiencies including consolidation of administrative functions, utilization of alternate tools, such as virtual education, and other unique and innovative methods to reduce educational infrastructure demands and maximize each student’s learning experience.

We believe it is essential that educators work cooperatively with employers to provide programs that support workforce development and prepare students for career ladder employment and impart an understanding of basic economics and encourage good citizenship.

Transportation – *Advocating for a modern, safe, efficient, comprehensive, integrated adequately funded multi modal transportation network.*

We recognize the need to develop a balanced transportation system that can effectively move people and products throughout the region while enhancing the economy and preserving a high quality of life. We believe that our transportation system, provided by the state and in conjunction with local governments, should be funded by broad-based and reliable revenue sources.



We believe the funding of transportation to be a core competency of state government.



We believe the efficient independent operation of both the Charlottesville Albemarle Airport (CHO) and the Charlottesville rail station provides not only convenience for residents but also significant economic benefit and opportunity for the region.

Local transportation infrastructure improvements are essential to the continued economic vitality of the region. Local officials must commit to actionable tasks, beyond additional study, to construct a transportation network that serves the needs of current and future residents and businesses.

Taxation – *Advocating for an equitable multifaceted tax system that recognizes the value of home ownership and good property stewardship to the community.*

We believe excessive taxation of real estate is detrimental to housing affordability and availability, and has a negative impact on the region's overall growth and economic well-being.

We recognize that the property tax is a basic component of the financing of local government services. We pledge our support in the development of proposals to more equitably distribute the burden of paying for government services.

We support the use of tax incentives such as verified land use taxation, historic tax credits and mortgage interest deduction as these programs advance homeownership and good property stewardship.



REALTORS® Political Action Committee (RPAC) of Virginia is a voluntary political action committee whose membership consists of REALTORS® and others interested in actively and effectively protecting the real estate industry and the dream of home ownership by participating in governmental affairs at the local, state and federal levels.

CAAR members independently support RPAC through voluntary contributions.

RPAC of Virginia helps protect the industry by funding those candidates for elective office who best represent the concerns of this industry. In this way, RPAC of Virginia impacts key issues in the General Assembly (like defeating transfer taxes and impact fees and protecting REALTOR® interests). Many other issues of importance to the membership of the Virginia Association of REALTORS® also are affected by RPAC of Virginia's activities.

Thirty percent of RPAC of Virginia funding goes to National Association of REALTORS® who leverages dollars to participate in very costly federal elections; seventy percent stays in Virginia to protect the industry at the state and local levels.

RPAC of Virginia is not affiliated with the Republican or the Democratic Parties and does not support one candidate over the other because of party affiliation. RPAC of Virginia supports only those candidates who have indicated or demonstrated that they are interested in pro-REALTOR® or pro-business issues.

If the candidate is an incumbent, the trustees look at how well the candidate has worked with the local REALTORS® he/she represents, how he/she voted on key issues and worked with VAR lobbyists, what committees he/she serves on and what his/her chances are for re-election. If the candidate is not an incumbent, then the trustees rely heavily on answers to candidate questionnaires and local Association input from candidate interviews.



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Even though our primary focus is limited to our local jurisdiction, CAAR works closely with the **Virginia Association of REALTORS® (VAR)** on state issues. VAR support helps keep our members informed and engaged at the state level. During the early stage of the state legislative sessions, REALTORS® from around Virginia gather in Richmond to discuss proposed legislation.

CAAR members participate in the Public Policy development and weekly Bill Review Conference Call during the legislative session. CAAR members annually attend the VAR “Day on The Hill” Legislative Conference. In addition, CAAR also meets with its legislative representatives on all levels of government regularly to discuss our priorities.





**National Association of
REALTORS®**

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Just as CAAR works closely with the Virginia Association of REALTORS®, the Association has the same connection with the **National Association of REALTORS®** on federal issues. Support from NAR allows CAAR members to stay informed and engaged at the national level. Every May, the National Association of REALTORS® hosts an annual convention in Washington D.C. at which REALTORS® from around the nation to gather to share ideas and discuss a variety of issues. For updates and additional information, visit the National Association of REALTORS® Web site, realtor.org.

