

Letter: One candidate will put community over special interests

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To the editor: Arlington is a remarkable place to call home, and it is understandable why so many want to live here. The reality, however, is that not everyone who wants to live in Arlington will be able to afford it.

It is undeniable that Arlington housing costs are beyond the reach of most county-government employees like teachers, police and firefighters. A reasonable and well-planned solution to this

challenge must be found.

That solution, however, must not be converted into a policy that grants building permits for 6-to-8-unit townhouses to be squeezed onto lots zoned for single-family use. Likewise, churches located in neighborhoods surrounded by one- and two-story homes should not be transformed into 100-unit apartment buildings rising six or seven stories.

Arlington leaders have failed to consider reasonable alternatives to the housing dilemma, such as land swaps, tax incentives for conversion of empty office spaces, or requiring builders seeking rezoning permits to reserve a certain number of new units for county personnel. Instead, the county leadership appears to have responded only to the vocal Missing Middle advocates, who frequently accuse those who disagree as racist or homophobic.

That leads to the upcoming County Board election. Will Arlington elect another board member who will maintain the status quo, or will it choose someone who will force the board to at least consider and discuss reasonable alternatives?

Sadly, this decision will undoubtedly be decided by a very small handful of voters, as it is the only issue on the June 18 Democratic-primary ballot. Every vote will truly count.

Unlike many of the other candidates, Natalie Roy has been clear and unequivocal in stating how she would wrestle with housing and other important challenges. She offers Arlington an alternative that will pull the County Board back to the (missing) middle.

Rodolfo Orjales, Arlington

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