

RESOLUTION NO. MPA 2015-00003

WHEREAS, under the Provisions of Section 9.05 of the City Charter, the Planning Commission may adopt amendments to the Master Plan of the City of Alexandria and submit to the City Council such revisions in said plans as changing conditions may make necessary; and

WHEREAS, an application for amendment to the **Braddock East Master Plan within the Braddock Road Small Area Plan** chapter of the 1992 Master Plan was filed with the Department of Planning and Zoning on **July 20, 2015** for changes in the land use designations to the parcel at **699 N. Patrick Street**; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Zoning has analyzed the proposed revision and presented its recommendations to the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, a duly advertised public hearing on the proposed amendment was held on **February 4, 2016** with all public testimony and written comment considered; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that:

1. The proposed amendment is necessary and desirable to guide and accomplish the coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the **Braddock East Master Plan within the Braddock Road Small Area Plan** section of the City; and
2. The proposed amendment is generally consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the 1992 Master Plan and with the specific goals and objectives set forth in the **Braddock East Master Plan within the Braddock Road Small Area Plan** chapter of the 1992 Master Plan; and
3. The proposed amendment shows the Planning Commission's long-range recommendations for the general development of the **Braddock East Master Plan within the Braddock Road Small Area Plan**; and
4. Based on the foregoing findings and all other facts and circumstances of which the Planning Commission may properly take notice in making and adopting a master plan for the City of Alexandria, adoption of the amendment to the **Braddock East Master Plan within the Braddock Road Small Area Plan** chapter of the 1992 Master Plan will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria that:

1. The following amendments are hereby adopted in its entirety as an amendment to the **Braddock East Master Plan within the Braddock Road Small Area Plan** chapter of the 1992 Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia in accordance with Section 9.05 of the Charter of the City of Alexandria, Virginia:

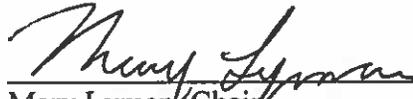
Amend Table 3 / Land Use note that the Ramsey property's recommended zoning is CRMU-M / Commercial Residential Mixed Use – Medium;

A Table 5 / Development Framework to note that the applicable total allowable Development Square Footage is increased to 61,400 square feet, the Range of Housing Units is increased to 60 units and the Maximum FAR is increased to 2.0;

Amend text under Implications for the Future of Braddock East, page 47, to increase the FAR on the Ramsey site from 1.5 to 2.0

2. This resolution shall be signed by the Chairman of the Planning Commission and attested by its secretary, and a true copy of this resolution forwarded and certified to the City Council.

ADOPTED the 4th day of February, 2016.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mary Lyman, Chair  
Alexandria Planning Commission

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Karl Moritz, Secretary

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**From:** Ninette Sadusky via Call.Click.Connect. <CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 18, 2016 10:57 AM  
**To:** CCC PZ PlanComm  
**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #87722: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets Regarding: 02 Feb 2016 Planning Commiss

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
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Dear **Call.Click.Connect.** User

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**Request Details:**

- Name: Ninette Sadusky
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: No Phone
- Email: [ninette.sadusky@gmail.com](mailto:ninette.sadusky@gmail.com)
- Service Type: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets
- Request Description: Regarding: 02 Feb 2016 Planning Commission.

Master Plan Amendment #2015-0003  
Rezoning #2015-0003

Development Special Use Permit #2014-0035  
Transportation Management Plan SUP #2015-0081

699 North Patrick Street - ARHA Ramsey Homes

Public hearing and consideration of requests for: (A) Master Plan Amendment to the Braddock East Master Plan and the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan to amend the land use designation and density table from RB to CRMU-M; (B) Amendment to the official zoning map for 699 N. Patrick Street from RB (townhouse zone) to CRMU-M (mixed-use zone); (C) Development Special Use Permit and Site Plan with modifications to construct 53 multi-family residential units in two buildings, including a special use permit for an increase in FAR to 2.0; (D) Special use permit for a transportation management plan;zoned RB/Townhouse. Applicant: Virginia Housing Development LLC represented by Duncan Blair, Attorney  
MPA2015-0003 Application Material

Dear Planning Commission,

I respectfully request you deny ARHA's application for:

Development Special Use Permit #2014-0035  
Transportation Management Plan SUP #2015-0081

because they do not comply with preservation criteria, zoning codes and the residents of Alexandria have spoken and written City Council Members that ARHA, "caretakers" of public property, should NOT get a free pass from compliance with preservation criteria and/or zoning codes efforts established by the City.

You will note from ARHA's application, that they just RESUBMITTED their July 2015 application. You can tell it is exactly the same application, because it has the July 2015 date stamp on it.

## Additional Materials

ARHA disregarded public input, and your intent that some of these homes should be preserved. ARHA made ZERO changes, despite the lengthy testimony (38 Alexandria residents spoke to PRESERVE this historic military housing and not demolition any of the four Ramsey Homes because they MEET the Cities established criteria for Preservations (as determined unanimously by the PGHD BAR).

For your consideration, I've attached the transcript from the City Council public hearing on September 9, 2015. By overwhelming majority, Alexandria citizens (over 35 in total) spoke in favor of PRESERVATION of ALL the Ramsey Homes and in favor up not waiving any codes especially as they relate to green/open/air space, parking and density.

Only two residents of Parker Gray Historic District spoke in favor of demolition.

Sincerely,  
Ninette Sadusky

Citizen, Alexandria since 1989  
Resident/Homeowner, Parker-Gray Historic District since 1998  
Neighbor, Ramsey Homes - Historic Military Heritage since 1998

## Attachment:

1. Transcript from 9-12-2015 City Council Public Hearing regarding Ramsey Homes
- Expected Response Date: Monday, January 25

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at [the \*\*Call.Click.Connect.\*\* staff interface.](#)

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CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA

ITEM NO. 16

PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER AN APPEAL TO A DECISION  
OF THE BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW - PARKER-GRAY  
DISTRICT, FOR PROPERTY AT 699 N PATRICK STREET.

APPELLANT: ALEXANDRIA REDEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING  
AUTHORITY

Alexandria, Virginia

Saturday, September 12, 2015

1 PARTICIPANTS:

2 City Council:

3 WILLIAM D. EUILLE, Mayor

4 ALLISON SILBERBERG, Vice Mayor

5 JOHN T. CHAPMAN, Councilmember

6 REDELLA S. "DEL" PEPPER, Councilmember

7 PAUL C. SMEDBERG, Councilmember

8 JUSTIN WILSON, Councilmember

9 Staff:

10 CHRISTOPHER SPERA  
Deputy City Attorney

11 CATHERINE MILIARAS  
12 Urban Planner

13 Other Participants:

14 ROY PRIEST  
15 CEO of the Alexandria Redevelopment Housing  
Authority

16 ANNA MOSS  
17 Thunderbird Archeology

18 JOHN BAUM  
19 Board Member, ALIVE, Vice Chair of their  
Affordable Housing Committee

20 ELLIOTT BELL-KRASNER  
21 Vice Chairman, The Historic Alexandria Resource  
Commission

22

1 PARTICIPANTS (CONT'D):

2 KAREN CORRAL  
North Columbus Street Resident  
3 Member, Gadsby's Tavern Museum Society  
Docent, Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary  
4 Museum

5 DINO DRUDI

6 BOB EFIRD  
Representative, Alexandria Commission on  
7 Aging

8 HEIDI FORD  
Representative, West All Town Citizens  
9 Association

10 MICHAEL FORD  
Parker-Gray Resident

11  
12 BILL HENDRICKSON  
Chairman, The Historic Alexandria  
Resources Commission

13  
14 CHRISTOPHER JONES  
Community Member

15 ELIZABETH JONES  
Del Ray Resident

16  
17 CHARLOTTE LANDIS

18 DAVID LAWRENCE  
Neighborhood Resident

19 LILA LEE  
Representative, West All Town Citizens  
20 Association

21 PHILLIP MATTIS  
Historical Town of Alexandria Resident,  
22 Realtor Broker

1 PARTICIPANTS (CONT'D):

2 JANET McDOLE  
3 Member, Commission of Aging  
4 Chair Housing Committee

4 TOWNLEY McELHINEY  
5 Representing Historical Alexandria  
6 Foundation Preservationist and Architectural  
7 Historian  
8 Director, AIA, American Institute of  
9 Architects, Historic Resources Program

7 ELSI MESCUDI  
8 Pendleton Street Resident

9 PHILIP MOFFAT  
10 Member, Parker-Gray Board of Architectural  
11 Review

11 McARTHUR MYERS  
12 Representing, Society for the Preservation  
13 African-American History in Alexandria

13 DEBRA PATTERSON  
14 President, The Board of ALIVE

14 ROBERT POWELL  
15 Parker-Gray Historic District Resident

16 LARA REYES  
17 Pendleton Street Resident

17 GAIL ROTHROCK  
18 Board Member, Trustees of Historic  
19 Alexandria Foundation

19 GLEN ROWE  
20 Pendleton Street Resident, Ramsey Homes  
21 Neighbor

22 NINETTE SADUSKY

1 PARTICIPANTS (CONT'D):

2 BOYD SIPE  
3 Archeologist, Historic Preservation  
4 Professional, Wetlands Studies

4 DAVID SPRINGER  
5 Pendleton Street Resident

5 KATIE SPRINGER  
6 Pendleton Street Resident

7 JOSEPH VALENTI  
8 Chair of the Economic Opportunities  
9 Commission

9 JOHN VON SENDEN  
10 Representing self, Architect with  
11 Perseveration Experience

11 VAN VANFLEET  
12 Ramsey Homes Neighborhood Resident

12 YVONNE WADE-CALLAHAN  
13 President, Old Town Civic Association

14 BOYD WALKER

15 CHARKENIA WALKER  
16 Ramsey Homes Resident

17

18

19 \* \* \* \* \*

20

21

22

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. That takes us  
3 now to Number 16.

4 Clerk: Public hearing to consider an  
5 appeal to a decision of the Board of Architectural  
6 Review - Parker-Gray District for property at 699  
7 North Patrick Street. Appellant: Alexandria  
8 Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

9 MAYOR EUILLE: All right, staff.

10 MS. MILIARAS: Good afternoon again.  
11 I'm Catherine Miliaras, an urban planner in the  
12 Historic Preservation Section of the Department of  
13 Planning and Zoning. Today I'll be presenting the  
14 BAR appeal before you regarding the Ramsey Homes.  
15 For your reference, the Ramsey Homes is comprised  
16 of four two-story masonry buildings located on the  
17 East side of North Patrick Street between Wythe  
18 and Pendleton Streets. It is across the street  
19 from the Charles Houston Rec Center to the north  
20 and beside the Watkins Reading Room and Alexandria  
21 Black History Museum on Wythe Street.

22 On April 22, 2015 the Parker-Gray Board

1 of Architectural Review denied the request for a  
2 permit to demolish by a vote of 5 to 0. Please  
3 note that an earlier version of the report and  
4 presentation incorrectly stated the vote was 7:0.  
5 While it was unanimous, two board members were  
6 absent. The Parker-Gray BAR upon making their  
7 decision found that the existing four buildings  
8 met four of the criteria outlined in the zoning  
9 ordinance. The BAR's decision in this matter is  
10 limited to considering only those six criteria  
11 listed in Section 10-205(B). These broad criteria  
12 help the BAR to identify and consider the  
13 different forms of significance that a building or  
14 structure can possess, any time they consider a  
15 permit to demolish.

16 For example, the criteria relate to  
17 whether a building is of high architectural  
18 significant due to an usual or irreproducible  
19 design, whether a building could function as a  
20 shrine or a museum, as well as whether a building  
21 possesses significance that helps it contribute to  
22 a historic area of the city, or promotes our

1 collective understanding of the city's or the  
2 country's past. The map that you see here on this  
3 slide identifies several important sites related  
4 to African-American history in the neighborhood  
5 including the two Parker-Gray schools, the Robert  
6 Robinson Library and the commercial block on Queen  
7 Street. At the time they were constructed the  
8 Ramsey Homes were located across the street from  
9 the original Parker-Gray school and on the same  
10 block as the library. Wythe Street was designated  
11 many years ago as Parker-Gray Way.

12 The Parker-Gray District, established by  
13 City Council in 1984 was created in large part to  
14 preserve a residential and low scale character at  
15 a time when there was increasing development  
16 pressure due to the arrival of the metro station  
17 both at Braddock Road and King Street. Therefore,  
18 the District, when it was created, includes an  
19 eclectic collection of architectural styles, some  
20 of which would not have been considered historic  
21 at the time that the District was created. Here  
22 you see the range of 19th and 20th century

1 architectural styles and building types, from row  
2 houses to semi-detached dwellings to freestanding  
3 homes that are found throughout the district.

4 Ramsey Homes is comprised of a set of  
5 two-story masonry buildings including three  
6 quadplexes and one triplex. All designed by Delos  
7 H. Smith and constructed between 1941 and 1942  
8 originally for African-American defense workers by  
9 the United States Housing Authority. They were  
10 purchased by the city's housing authority in 1953.  
11 The design of these particular buildings is  
12 strikingly different from the more traditional  
13 colonial revival buildings in red brick that were  
14 typically built in this region as row houses and  
15 garden apartment complexes before, during, and  
16 after World War II.

17 For your reference, here are the six  
18 criteria that the BAR considered when making their  
19 decision to deny the permit to demolish. The  
20 zoning ordinance also limits council's  
21 consideration of the appeal of the BAR's decision  
22 to these same six criteria. The BAR found that 1,

1 4, 5, and 6 were applicable. It should be noted  
2 that the criteria are not necessarily clear-cut  
3 requirements that are either met or not met. But  
4 rather they are considerations that involve a  
5 certain degree of subjectivity on the part of  
6 staff, Council and the BAR. Meeting one or more  
7 of the criteria does not necessarily preclude  
8 approval of a demolition request, but it could  
9 inform how a site may be documented or interpreted  
10 in the future.

11 Staff did not find the buildings to have  
12 such strong architectural significance so as to  
13 warrant the preservation of the physical  
14 buildings, but agrees that there is cultural  
15 significance related to these buildings and the  
16 stories of wartime housing, public housing, and  
17 the larger story of the Parker-Gray neighborhood.  
18 These could all be commemorated and interpreted in  
19 a variety of both conventional and innovative ways  
20 onsite and offsite.

21 MR. SMEDBERG: Mr. Mayor, if I could.  
22 Catherine, just a quick question. So the four

1 examples you gave us on the two prior slides,  
2 examples of architecture around Parker- Gray.

3 MS. MILIARAS: Yes.

4 MR. SMEDBERG: Are those examples of  
5 architecturally significant buildings, in your  
6 view, or in opinion?

7 MS. MILIARAS: All of these buildings  
8 would contribute to the character of Parker-Gray.  
9 So they include --

10 MR. SMEDBERG: So in other words, that  
11 lower left- hand brick row house type cluster  
12 there, that's architecturally significant?

13 MS. MILIARAS: That would be part of the  
14 character of Parker-Gray. And that --

15 MR. SMEDBERG: So you're saying that's  
16 not architecturally significant?

17 MS. MILIARAS: We, in our experience  
18 thus far, again with more time you learn more  
19 about the significance, but those buildings have  
20 more cultural significance rather than specific  
21 architectural significance for these 20th century  
22 buildings such as the row houses.

1 MR. SMEDBERG: Given some of the history  
2 of Ramsey House buildings, they don't have any  
3 historical significance then?

4 MS. MILIARAS: So there's --

5 MR. SMEDBERG: Didn't you just say that?

6 MS. MILIARAS: -- historical or  
7 architectural.

8 MS. SMEDBERG: Architectural,  
9 historical, what makes them different from that  
10 set of brick row houses?

11 MS. MILIARAS: What makes the -- well so  
12 they're architect --

13 MR. SMEDBERG: You said Ramsey Houses  
14 have no significance.

15 MS. MILIARAS: No. No, architectural  
16 significance.

17 MR. SMEDBERG: Okay.

18 MS. MILIARAS: So architectural  
19 significance is a very visual significance,  
20 whereas cultural significance isn't necessarily as  
21 tangible. Cultural significance can refer to who  
22 might have lived here, what are the larger

1 patterns of history that it's telling? But  
2 architectural we would really be looking at such  
3 as, for example, the buildings on the lower right.  
4 We would see those as Victorian buildings, and we  
5 would look at the projecting bay window, the roof,  
6 that type of thing. So that's where we would find  
7 the architectural significance on those.

8 MR. SMEDBERG: I'm not asking, I'm  
9 asking about that lower left.

10 MS. MILIARAS: Right. So that's why  
11 we're saying on the lower left that -- and the BAR  
12 has reviewed this when they updated many of their  
13 policies, saying that those types of buildings,  
14 those constructed after 1931, they contribute to  
15 the District, but not necessarily for their  
16 architectural significance, because they have mass  
17 produced materials, they've been altered. But how  
18 they fit in more, the cultural significance as far  
19 as explaining the growth of Alexandria during and  
20 after World War II and that type of thing.

21 MR. SMEDBERG: Okay. So Ramsey Homes  
22 has no cultural significance either then, in your

1 view?

2 MS. MILIARAS: No, we find that there is  
3 cultural significance, but not architectural  
4 significance.

5 MR. SMEDBERG: Okay. All right. Thank  
6 you.

7 MS. MILIARAS: Sure.

8 MR. SMEDBERG: Just wanted to  
9 understand.

10 MS. MILIARAS: Sure. So to pick up  
11 where we left off, just that the cultural  
12 significance could be interpreted in a variety of  
13 innovative and creative, but also more  
14 conventional ways both on and off this site.

15 Therefore, staff recommends that you  
16 reverse the BAR's denial of a permit to demolish  
17 and approve the request for the permit to  
18 demolish.

19 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. Before we  
20 proceed with discussion on this, I'm going to go  
21 back to the city attorney and ask him to do  
22 accordingly, like he did with the last docket

1 item.

2 MR. SPERA: Again, Mr. Mayor, much the  
3 same. Staff was kind enough to include in their  
4 report the enumerated factors that's, despite some  
5 commentary on the prior matter to the contrary,  
6 that's the law. And whatever opinion others might  
7 have about how important the future development  
8 project is, this is a property right  
9 consideration. Somebody owns this. And their  
10 property rights are being constrained. And we've  
11 got some rules about how they can be constrained.  
12 And these are the factors by which the Board of  
13 Architectural Review and this Council can  
14 constrain the property owner, not things outside  
15 of these factors.

16 It would be a little bit bizarre if the  
17 law were, well if we like this thing you're gonna  
18 build, there's no historic significance. But if  
19 we don't like the thing you're gonna build then it  
20 is historically significant and you can't knock it  
21 down. This has to stand on its own. It has to  
22 stand on its own. And that's what the zoning

1 ordinance does.

2 And, once again, your scenarios are you  
3 can affirm the decision below, you can reverse the  
4 decision below, or you can modify the decision  
5 below. But you must decide.

6 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. And thank  
7 you. Just to set the tone for this, the prior  
8 action was an appeal of a BAR, Old Town BAR  
9 albeit, but for demolition of what supposedly  
10 could be described as a historic piece of  
11 property. And questions were raised in terms of  
12 well, why don't you wait until you know what  
13 you're going to have there, what you want to  
14 build, and then make that decision. And we were  
15 told by the city attorney that doesn't apply. And  
16 so now we're similarly with the Parker-Gray appeal  
17 for the Parker-Gray BAR, the same parameters and  
18 guidelines in terms of our, this body's,  
19 consideration and action to take is limited to  
20 those six criteria. However, what makes it  
21 different is that are the community, and we are  
22 cognizant of the fact that of some options, things

1 that are being considered to go in this site.

2 But whatever knowledge we have, that's

3 not applicable today. That's not part of the

4 discussion today on the part of this body.

5 However, speakers can very well offer and say

6 whatever they want in their three-minute

7 presentation for any of the options that they may

8 have knowledge of. Am I correct?

9 MR. SPERA: You are correct.

10 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. Just want to

11 make sure folks and understand that.

12 MR. WILSON: Mr. Mayor?

13 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Wilson.

14 MR. WILSON: If I can ask a question

15 maybe to Karl, maybe to the assistant city

16 attorney to clarify. So it seems like one of the

17 challenges in both of these and the common thread

18 between both the items, the one we just heard and

19 the one we're about to hear, is that you have at

20 least a perception of a conflict between the

21 master plan and the historic preservation

22 ordinance. In the case of the previous one, we

1 had a historical preservation claim on a property  
2 that the master plan, the waterfront master plan  
3 called for to be something else. And in the case  
4 here you have a perceived conflict between a  
5 preservation claim on a property that the master  
6 plan, in this case the Braddock East Plan, at  
7 least optionally presupposes something else.

8 So how does staff and then perhaps the  
9 city attorney could educate as well, how does  
10 staff handle when there is that, at least a  
11 perception of a conflict?

12 Karl Moritz: Well I think that as we  
13 look at the six criteria it is certainly helpful  
14 to look at the history of how others have viewed  
15 the same site and the same set of issues whether  
16 or not they were explicitly thinking about the six  
17 criteria or not, say in the Braddock East Plan  
18 thinking about the scale of the neighborhood and  
19 what was important about the scale of the  
20 neighborhood, does inform our decision today about  
21 whether or not the criteria about the scale of the  
22 neighborhood would be preserved.

1           At the same level, in the waterfront  
2     planning effort, the fact that there were  
3     extensive discussions about the historic  
4     importance of the property on this strand,  
5     reviewing that history gives us a broader sense or  
6     even a more comprehensive understanding of whether  
7     or not these six criteria are being met. And  
8     that's how I view it as being relevant as we're  
9     thinking about the six criteria, the fact that  
10    others have already looked at it, or we have  
11    looked at it ourselves previously. I don't know,  
12    does that answer your question?

13           MR. WILSON: Yeah. And I guess maybe to  
14    the city attorney, so obviously these are two  
15    different sections of the zoning ordinance. I  
16    don't perceive that either of them has a greater  
17    weight than the other.

18           MR. SPERA: And I guess in response I  
19    would say I don't perceive them to be in as direct  
20    a conflict as you seem to think they are. The way  
21    that I have always viewed --

22           MR. WILSON: Ask me again in a couple of

1 hours.

2 MR. SPERA: Yeah. After you have a few  
3 more fruit snacks. The way I have always  
4 perceived this, and I think that our staff, I say  
5 our staff I mean Joanna Anderson, but our staff  
6 works very closely with Karl's staff to be sure  
7 that when we are going through the process of  
8 refinement, and I think as you go from a small  
9 area plan to a DSUP, to something that's site or  
10 building specific, it's a process of refinement.  
11 And what we try and do is make sure that when  
12 we're out there at the broader perspective, the  
13 small area plan say, or the master plan, that's  
14 always subject to whatever else might apply.

15 So, for example, here's the plan, the  
16 small area plan for this big piece of land, this  
17 district of the city, this region of the city.  
18 But anything that happens within that is still  
19 subject to the greater degree of refinement. So  
20 for example, if it's within one of the two  
21 historic districts, you've got to get your  
22 certificate of appropriateness. Whether it's a by

1 right use, or a use with a permit, you're going  
2 through the SUP process. So the way I look at it  
3 is, as you sort of drill down to the property  
4 specific approvals you get more and more specific.  
5 But I think when we write the plans, the small  
6 area plans, or the master plans, it's always  
7 subject to this type of review. So you can say  
8 well here's sort of the concept that we want, but  
9 when you get to the site specific analysis,  
10 nothing that we do in that broader planning  
11 process preempts the site specific approvals you  
12 have to get. So if you have to get a BAR  
13 approval, if you have to get a development special  
14 use permit, those aren't being thrown away, you  
15 still have to go through them. The broader  
16 planning process is subject to, as you sort of  
17 drill down to the site specific review.

18 So that's how I look at it. I think  
19 that's how our office looks at it. And I don't  
20 really think that there's a conflict. I think  
21 that there are some unique properties where maybe  
22 these are those, where that decision becomes more

1 difficult as you get down to the site specific  
2 decision. But that's why you were elected.

3 (Laughter) This is a policy  
4 decision by you.

5 MR. WILSON: Sure.

6 MR. SPERA: It isn't staff, we get paid  
7 to give you our professional opinion and you have  
8 that. But you guys got elected (laughter) so  
9 there you go.

10 MR. WILSON: It would be helpful if you  
11 just tell us, exactly how to (laughter) it might  
12 make everything a little bit easier.

13 MR. SPERA: And when I can, I do.

14 MR. WILSON: Thank you. One final  
15 question, mindful that we do have a lot of  
16 speakers. And this is a question for Catherine  
17 now, so late last night I was reading this great  
18 piece that was written by someone, I believe  
19 Catherine wrote it, about the history of the  
20 Parker-Gray District, and the creation of it. And  
21 it did have some fundamental differences obviously  
22 from the Old and Historic District, in how it was

1 created. And we handle a lot of appeals from the  
2 Old and Historic District, but not many from  
3 Parker-Gray. I can't think of a single demolition  
4 one I've handled. I know some other ones that  
5 I've handled, but not demolition. So this is not  
6 a common thing for us. It seemed like there was  
7 subtle nuance in some of the language differences,  
8 certainly in the preamble and the purpose of the  
9 district, before we get to the speakers, can you  
10 help educate me a little bit about at least how  
11 staff views those differences particularly as it  
12 relates to, and I think this is building on  
13 Councilman Smedberg's question a couple minutes  
14 ago, particularly as it relates to architectural  
15 significances verse cultural significance verse  
16 historic use and the significance of that historic  
17 use? That's not a complicated enough question.

18 MS. MILIARAS: I'm gonna try to answer  
19 that. I think there were a lot of parts to it.  
20 So feel free to ask me more questions. So just as  
21 everybody knows, the Old and Historic District was  
22 created in 1946 and its boundaries changed and

1 expanded over the years. In the 1970s and early  
2 1980s there was a consideration to again expand  
3 the Old and Historic District into what is now the  
4 Parker-Gray District. At that time, there was a  
5 lot of staff's perspective this is all Old Town.  
6 There is not a distinct difference as soon as you  
7 cross one street to another, you know, as we all  
8 know the boundaries the way the boundaries are.  
9 So there was a perception though at the time that  
10 the districts were created, too, that the  
11 Parker-Gray District was different. And part of  
12 that is because parts of it have a very different  
13 cultural history than other parts of the Old and  
14 Historic District. A lot of it's related to the  
15 20th century.

16 But when the Parker-Gray District was  
17 created it was a historic district obviously, and  
18 under local review, but it was very much a  
19 neighborhood and a conservation district. So that  
20 you weren't preserving just the physical  
21 structures, that was part of it, but also this  
22 scale what had been there, the people who lived

1       there, you were preserving it for the people who  
2       lived there. So the mentality was very different,  
3       that's why you'll notice that actually the zoning  
4       ordinance criteria about considering a permit to  
5       demolish are slightly different from the Old and  
6       Historic District to the Parker-Gray District.  
7       And that's why one of the criteria is to consider  
8       maintaining the scale and character of the  
9       neighborhood, because whereas in the Old and  
10      Historic District a lot of it was this range of  
11      architectural styles. You know you had the 18th  
12      century and the 19th century, it came to be  
13      realized that the Parker-Gray District, while it  
14      certainly has just as extensive as a history, a  
15      lot of its significance and history comes from the  
16      later 19th century into the 20th century as well.

17               MR. WILSON: Thank you. That helps me.  
18      Thank you Mr. Mayor.

19               Ms. Pepper: Well then explain how.

20               MR. WILSON: Come back in a couple  
21      hours.

22               MAYOR EUILLE: You're finished staff, so

1 we'll go to the speakers and we have many, at  
2 least 40. Again, we ask that you limit your  
3 comments to three minutes, and with that the Mr.  
4 Blair, I see you standing up first. You're not  
5 listed first, do you want to go first?

6 MR. BLAIR: Since we are the ones who  
7 filed the appeal of the decision, what I'd like to  
8 hope to do, as we've talked earlier, is I would  
9 like to make a brief presentation.

10 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. Let --

11 MR. BLAIR: Mr. Priest, as the owner of  
12 the property. And then our architectural  
13 consultants would like to make an architectural  
14 presentation. Save some time at the end, and I  
15 think the Chairman would like to talk to the Board  
16 also.

17 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. Let me just  
18 get the speakers lined up after.

19 MR. BLAIR: I will be very brief.

20 MAYOR EUILLE: Yeah, but hold on. Bob  
21 Eiffert, Stuart Schwartz, Joe Valentti, Janet  
22 McDole. Okay.

1                   MR. BLAIR: Mayor Euille, Members of  
2                   Council, I'm Duncan Blaire, Land, Carroll & Blair,  
3                   here today on behalf of the Alexandria  
4                   Redevelopment Housing Authority, on behalf of  
5                   their appeal the decision of the Parker-Gray BAR.  
6                   I've been involved in many appeals over a long  
7                   period of time, and this one is one of the more  
8                   interesting appeals. And I think Mr. Priest is  
9                   going to present what I will call the homeowner's  
10                  viewpoint of why this appeal is important to the  
11                  homeowner. Generally you hear the person saying,  
12                  "I need a new kitchen," or "I need a room for my  
13                  mother," or "The rear of our house doesn't have  
14                  plumbing," and we need to make these changes so we  
15                  can do these things.

16                  The Housing Authority is a body politic  
17                  with responsibilities to the community. And part  
18                  of what we're doing through this project is to  
19                  fulfill those obligations. So in a few moments  
20                  Mr. Priest will explain why he needs a new  
21                  kitchen. You also have our historic consultant  
22                  team here, Anna Mayes who's going to make a

1 presentation reiterating in many ways what the  
2 staff has already determined. And this finding in  
3 the criteria that while there may be some cultural  
4 significance, I'm not diminishing that in any way,  
5 there is very little, if any, architectural merit  
6 to these buildings as they exist today. That  
7 these buildings do not harken or recall the  
8 cultural significance, and we believe that that  
9 cultural consistence can be memorialized  
10 elsewhere. And that the legacy of this property  
11 will be fulfilled as continuing to provide much  
12 needed affordable housing to the residents of the  
13 City of Alexandria.

14 With that, Roy, will you explain why you  
15 need a new kitchen?

16 MR. PRIEST: Good evening, Chairmen,  
17 Vice chairman member of the Board of City Council.  
18 I'm Roy Priest, I'm the CEO of the Alexandria  
19 Redevelopment Housing Authority. First of all,  
20 let me say to you that it's the first time you've  
21 ever seen me casually dressed come before the  
22 Council. It happens that we are also having our

1 picnic today, and so you're in-between ribs and  
2 chicken and everything else. So I am casually  
3 dressed today, so thank you all for being patient  
4 with this.

5 We are here because ARHA's strategic  
6 plan includes a commitment for us to house our  
7 residents in sanitary, healthy and modern  
8 conditions. As such we hired a team of design and  
9 construction professionals to study this property,  
10 as it relates to life safety, accessibility,  
11 functionality, and their work indicated that in  
12 order to rehabilitate the units and bring them up  
13 to code providing modest modern amenities, the  
14 rehab costs would exceed 90% of the cost of a new  
15 construction.

16 This property does not meet HUD's  
17 minimum property standards. Therefore, we are at  
18 risk of losing operating subsidies. Per the  
19 project architect, even with substantial  
20 rehabilitation the existing units cannot meet HUD  
21 504 accessible codes. In a 1946 article where the  
22 city announced that they had opportunity to

1 purchase this war housing, even at that time the  
2 mayor indicated that these emergency homes did not  
3 conform with city building codes.

4 In order for us to compete for  
5 comparative tax credit funding, these units must  
6 not be obsolete, must offer current amenities such  
7 as washers, dryers, and dishwashers, and must be  
8 competitive with comparable properties in order to  
9 attract investors to purchase these tax credits.  
10 For more than a year the ARHA Board and the staff  
11 have given considerable and deliberate attention  
12 to several options for this site including  
13 rehabilitation. ARHA's expended resources to  
14 study different rehabilitation and new  
15 construction models. We engaged a firm of Wetland  
16 Studies one of the most respected historic and  
17 archeological consulting firms in the region, with  
18 extensive experience in Alexandria, to perform  
19 exhaustive study of the history. A rehabilitation  
20 to bring the structure up to current codes would  
21 result in the loss of all exterior walls,  
22 modification of the roof structures, which expand

1 the building footprint, potentially making the  
2 properties ineligible for even consideration for  
3 tax credit funding, or for tax credit funding from  
4 the low income housing tax credit program.

5 With respect to funding options for  
6 rehabilitation efforts, ARHA conferred with an  
7 attorney, who routinely uses tax credits in his  
8 practice. The combination of high cost to  
9 rehabilitate, along with the small size of the  
10 transaction, and the tax exempt issues would make  
11 this a very difficult transaction to close. In  
12 the words of our attorney, as much as we might  
13 wish smaller deals were easier to do than larger  
14 deals, the tax credit in deal issues are the same.  
15 Just in a smaller package. The Board has  
16 concluded that the only viable, sustainable option  
17 is demolition and redevelopment.

18 I was going to go through and explain to  
19 you a little bit about the current structure of  
20 our buildings that reflect what was going on at  
21 the time when these were constructed. These were  
22 very spartan homes that were designed and the

1 characteristic of them were individual unit  
2 included only kitchens, living rooms, and  
3 bathrooms. Room sizes were minimal, and the  
4 shapes were generally regular. Walls were most  
5 often painted concreated block, or plastered  
6 partitions. Floors typically were made of  
7 asphalt, tile, or linoleum over concrete with the  
8 occasional use of wood parquet where costs and  
9 availability permitted it. There were very few  
10 modern amenities.

11 I've shown before in the past some  
12 pictures of the interiors of the current Ramsey  
13 property, only to show that these were the types  
14 of properties that were being built at that time  
15 and what was in fact the conditions of the  
16 properties that you could see from the kitchen to  
17 the utility areas, they were open to the kitchen.  
18 So the fact that they were wall hung lavatories,  
19 inadequate heating was built into those units at  
20 that time. Closets are only two-inches in width,  
21 with no doors. And so I provide some photos of  
22 the homes that are there.

1           The buildings and landscape are out of  
2     scale in the neighborhood. The identity,  
3     setbacks, massing design and entrances mostly face  
4     each other, rather than Patrick Street, and are  
5     incongruent with their neighbors. There's a slide  
6     that I have in there that shows you that  
7     situation. And post 1931 Ramsey Homes are  
8     background later buildings and are not compatible  
9     with, and distract from neighboring pre 1932 early  
10    buildings. Most of the homes on Pendleton and  
11    Patrick are considered early buildings. The  
12    buildings and landscapes are out of scale in the  
13    neighborhood. The entity, setbacks, massing  
14    design and entrances, which mostly face each other  
15    are incongruent with their neighbors.

16           Within a 5500 foot radius of Ramsey,  
17    open spaces located at the Henry, the Asher,  
18    Belfry, Charles Houston Recreational Center and  
19    public parks in the Old Town area. If we are  
20    denied the ability to demolish these properties,  
21    HUD is unlikely to continue to approve operating  
22    subsidies for this property, it's not financial

1 feasible. ARHA would be faces with the  
2 possibility of relocating the residents and  
3 discontinuing the use of this property as  
4 subsidized rental housing. We have worked very  
5 closely with our residents on this property at  
6 Ramsey. And they submitted to you all, for your  
7 consideration, a request for the demolision. And  
8 what they said in the petition signed by 85% of  
9 the residents who live at Ramsey, was that we  
10 don't believe our homes are historic. We are  
11 workers, taxpayers, friends, voters and neighbors.  
12 We want what every parent, and citizen of  
13 Alexandria wants, self-sufficiency, respect and  
14 opportunity for our children. We simply want the  
15 same amenities afforded to us as our neighbors at  
16 the Berg and James Bland.

17 I will conclude my comments because  
18 other things will be taken up. And I'll answer  
19 any questions. But I want to provide opportunity  
20 I think at this point in time for our historian to  
21 come up and give you really some good background,  
22 which I think will answer a number of the

1 questions that I've already heard who you  
2 proposing.

3 MR. SMEDBERG: Mr. Mayor?

4 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Smedberg.

5 MR. SMEDBERG: Mr. Priest, you opened  
6 your comments by saying that sanitary conditions  
7 and the condition overall would not meet HUD  
8 standards. So I guess that sort of begs the  
9 question why has ARHA allowed this properties to  
10 get to that level of condition anyway? (Applause)

11 MR. PRIEST: We didn't allow them to get  
12 to that condition, Mr. Smedberg. The property  
13 conditions that we inherited when the properties  
14 were bought, at that time even you find by city  
15 leadership at that time, were substandard. We  
16 have in fact continued to invest money far in  
17 excess of the monies we receive on a regular basis  
18 on a monthly basis for income from our rents from  
19 our tenants. We expend more money for our capital  
20 investment, ARHA receives one allocation of  
21 capital funding a year that we must use to  
22 allocate to all 23 of the properties that are

1 designated as public housing. We allocated a  
2 distortional amount of that money goes to Ramsey.  
3 We spent 4% of our capital funds every year.

4 We undertook improving that property  
5 approximately about ten years ago, we put on new  
6 roofs. We restuccoed the building. We repainted  
7 the property. So we have in fact, we changed the  
8 fencing. We put up new fencing. So have  
9 continued to maintain that property despite the  
10 fact that it has never proven to be economically  
11 viable because the incomes are too low to  
12 substantiate the operating costs of the property.  
13 So we have not consciously neglected to invest  
14 dollars at Ramsey.

15 MR. SMEDBERG: Yeah. But you  
16 specifically talked about sanitary conditions, and  
17 we've heard from numerous folks that the  
18 conditions inside the building are definitely  
19 substandard.

20 MR. PRIEST: The conditions inside the  
21 building are substandard because the fact that the  
22 size of the --

1           MR. SMEDBERG: Okay. I'm talking about  
2     the sanitary conditions, and sort of the inner  
3     workings of the building itself. I mean yes they  
4     were painted. Yes, they were upgraded some  
5     degree, but yet the overall condition as you said,  
6     wouldn't meet a HUD standard now, so.

7           MR. PRIEST: Mr. Smedberg I'm talking  
8     about architecturally it does not meet that, it's  
9     substandard. In terms of the size of the units,  
10    the size of the rooms, the openings to closets and  
11    things like that, that is in fact substandard. I  
12    am not talking about housekeeping, or conditions  
13    like that. I'm not speaking to that.

14          MR. SMEDBERG: Okay. I thought you said  
15    sanitary, but okay.

16          MAYOR EUILLE: Okay. Thank you.

17          VICE MAYOR SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

18          MAYOR EUILLE: Vice Mayor.

19          VICE MAYOR SILBERBERG: So to Mr.  
20    Smedberg's point, Mr. Priest, if I might. Just a  
21    quick question to follow up with Councilman  
22    Smedberg's point, so it's true though that you all

1 didn't maintain the properties as well as you  
2 could have, is that what you're?

3 MR. PRIEST: That's not true. And I've  
4 heard that --

5 VICE MAYOR SILBERBERG: I'm asking.

6 MR. PRIEST: I've heard that comment  
7 over and over again, and I do not accept that. We  
8 in fact receive work orders from those properties  
9 and we do those work orders just consistently as  
10 we do for any property that we have. We have gone  
11 in and we do regular -- we inspect the properties  
12 on an annual basis. And we make improvements  
13 consistent with our findings on that. HUD comes  
14 out on a regular basis and reviews what's called a  
15 React Inspection all of our properties. Any  
16 things that are found at our, in fact, compliant  
17 with health and safety violations, we'd have to  
18 complete within 24 hours. We have not been cited  
19 by HUD for those kind of conditions on any  
20 inspection since I have been in this authority.  
21 So the idea that we have consciously neglected the  
22 maintenance of Ramsey or any of our properties, I

1 do not accept.

2 VICE MAYOR SILBERBERG: Yeah, Mr.  
3 Priest, I'm not saying that you consciously  
4 perpetrated anything. I'm just asking a general  
5 question, because this precedes my role on the  
6 Council, and I was unaware if there were  
7 conditions that required more help. I know that,  
8 for example, the property I live in, dates back to  
9 just about the same time as the property of these  
10 Ramsey Homes. Now the various property renters,  
11 and then the owners, now I'm an owner there in  
12 Park Fairfax, but it's basically it's a totally  
13 different situation, but it was built around the  
14 same time as post, in this case my place 1945,  
15 y'all's 1942, but it's all about maintaining the  
16 property as you go. I mean I notice, what was  
17 nice, when I visited the Ramsey Homes, is that  
18 they have these new windows, so that's good that  
19 you all did that. So I was just asking, because  
20 we did hear from a number of folks that things  
21 weren't as well maintained as they could have  
22 been, which in case would have led to the

1 situation that we find ourselves in that they're  
2 so dilapidated that -- I mean they need some  
3 renovation obviously. But I just thought I'd let  
4 you answer that. And I don't mean to put you on  
5 the defensive, at all, I'm just trying to share  
6 this and air it out, because it has come up. And  
7 I didn't think that we had a chance to discuss it  
8 publically, nor did you. And so this is a good  
9 opportunity.

10 MR. PRIEST: The only source of dollars  
11 that are provided to the public housing authority  
12 to maintain our inventory comes from two sources.  
13 One comes from rental income that's paid by the  
14 residents. And the second one comes from a  
15 subsidy that's provided by HUD. And the third we  
16 do get capital funding on an annual basis for all  
17 of our properties. We are not like private  
18 owners. If a condition existed and I was a  
19 private market situation, I would simply raise my  
20 rents in order to compensate for investing more in  
21 my property.

22 VICE MAYOR SILBERBERG: Okay.

1                   MR. PRIEST: That's normally what would  
2 happen. We don't have the ability to do that,  
3 because we cannot raise the rents, because they  
4 are set by statute for what we charge residents to  
5 pay. So I can't go out and say, "Well we've got a  
6 condition in this property that's going to require  
7 us to spend X amount of dollars." When we have,  
8 for example, a major system breakdown that would  
9 occur in that property, or any property, we have  
10 to then reallocate funding we have because we  
11 don't have major capital dollars to make major  
12 capital investments in properties, as though we're  
13 a private landlord. We just don't have those  
14 kinds of resources. So we make strategic  
15 decisions about how we allocate it based upon the  
16 fact of our physical needs assessments, studies,  
17 that we do on a regular basis. Our annual  
18 inspections, and we determine where to best use  
19 our money to keep our properties and provide  
20 decent, safe, and sanitary housing.

21                   VICE MAYOR SILBERBERG: Well and to that  
22 point, I can only speak for myself, but as a

1 property owner, I do what I can as things require  
2 my attention. But if it can wait, and it's not  
3 mission critical, maybe I'll wait a year or two  
4 and then handle it, or maybe five years. So I can  
5 understand what you're saying, but in essence are  
6 you actually also saying that perhaps some things  
7 because of the fiscal constraints that you weren't  
8 able to, is that what you're saying that because  
9 of the fiscal constraints, you weren't able to  
10 maintain it as you would, as if it were your own  
11 home?

12 MR. PRIEST: No, it's not maintained,  
13 it's simply provide current amenities in the  
14 property. I mean we could not go into those  
15 properties, for example, and rehabilitate them and  
16 put in current amenities in those properties,  
17 because one they don't have the capacity to put in  
18 the equipment that we would need to put in for a  
19 dishwasher, for a washer and dryer. Those spaces  
20 are so constrained, that you can't do that. To  
21 put in a modern up-to-date air-conditioning  
22 system, that building is not configured to be able

1 to do that.

2 VICE MAYOR SILBERBERG: Right. Okay,  
3 well thank you.

4 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. Let's --

5 MR. SMEDBERG: Mr. Mayor.

6 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Smedberg.

7 MR. SMEDBERG: Mr. Priest, just a  
8 comment. You know I understand that you might be  
9 a little upset by some of these questions, and  
10 they might be tough, and on some level you might  
11 be offended, but yet quite honestly if we had  
12 heard from you and had the opportunity maybe to  
13 sit down with you before this knowing all the  
14 controversy, and all the discussion going on about  
15 this, it would have been helpful.

16 VICE MAYOR SILBERBERG: I concur.

17 MS. PEPPER: Mr. Mayor, what are we  
18 seeing?

19 MAYOR EUILLE: They're just getting  
20 their slide presentation lined up.

21 MS. PEPPER: They're calling this a  
22 kitchen.

1                   MAYOR EUILLE: Yeah, but they're just  
2 getting their slide presentation set up.

3                   MS. PEPPER: Oh, okay. And somebody'd  
4 going to give us a discussion?

5                   MAYOR EUILLE: Yeah.

6                   MS. PEPPER: I thought it was in  
7 reference to what he --

8                   MR. PRIEST: No, those are slides that  
9 were a part of my presentation, and they're just  
10 popping up on the screen now.

11                   MS. PEPPER: Okay.

12                   MR. PRIEST: So that's all.

13                   MS. PEPPER: Then let me ask you,  
14 there's a kitchen table in the kitchen, I see.

15                   MAYOR EUILLE: Ms. Pepper, please this  
16 has nothing to do with what we're.

17                   MS. PEPPER: He claimed this was part of  
18 his presentation and I am asking him, he had said  
19 that there would be slides that would discuss what  
20 he was talking about. And these are the slides  
21 and I want to ask him a question.

22                   MR. CHAPMAN: Mr. Mayor?

1                   MAYOR EUILLE:   Mr. Chapman.

2                   MR. CHAPMAN:   So the focus of the appeal  
3                   today really boils down to what this young lady is  
4                   about to tell us in terms of the historical  
5                   significance here, the cultural significance,  
6                   that's what we're here for today.  I certainly  
7                   understand and respect the views of my colleagues  
8                   and there are some questions and conversations  
9                   that do need to be had, I think everyone knows  
10                  that.  But the focus of this appeal why folks from  
11                  BAR are here, why staff is here, why ARHA is here  
12                  and hopefully more of your comments will focus to  
13                  this, not to other things, is the focus of this  
14                  appeal.  Why is this something we should keep?  Or  
15                  why is this something that we should let be  
16                  demolished?  Let's focus on that.  We have folks  
17                  that are here to speak.  Hopefully they're gonna  
18                  focus on that, too.  Let's get to that.  I know  
19                  there are other questions here.  I know folks have  
20                  talked to residents.  They have talked to  
21                  neighbors, they've talked to community members  
22                  about ARHA now, ARHA past, but let's focus on what

1 we're here to talk about.

2 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Priest, are you  
3 finished with your presentation?

4 MR. PRIEST: Yes, I am.

5 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Blair mentioned that  
6 the architect or somebody.

7 MR. BLAIR: Yes.

8 MR. PRIEST: She's right there.

9 MAYOR EUILLE: All right.

10 MR. BLAIR: You're at that PowerPoint  
11 now.

12 MS. MOSS: Good afternoon. I'm Anna  
13 Moss. I'm with Thunderbird Archeology, which is a  
14 division of Wetland Studies. We have over 30  
15 years of experience in Northern Virginia including  
16 at least 30 projects in Alexandria. And our  
17 project manager and principle archeologist, Boyd  
18 Sipe, is the 2013 recipient of the Brenman Award  
19 for Outstanding Archeologist in the city. His  
20 studies have focused on slavery in the Chesapeake.  
21 I have a Master's in urban and environmental  
22 planning from UVA. I have a Bachelor's degree of

1 architectural history for UVA. I'm certified with  
2 the Virginia Association of Zoning Officials, and  
3 I've done quite a bit of work on recent past  
4 initiatives and African-American sites including  
5 award-winning projects from the APA.

6 So we began by researching. We found  
7 quite a bit more since the BAR hearing,  
8 particularly fruitful was the records of the  
9 federal works agency and the public housing  
10 administration at the National Archives in College  
11 Park, Maryland. Also the records of the American  
12 Institute of Architect regarding Delos H. Smith,  
13 and his associates. We also spoke with a member  
14 of the Jackie Robinson family who said that he  
15 never lived in Alexandria and we looked at records  
16 from the housing authorities in the '30s, '40s,  
17 '50s, information about the black communities that  
18 are on record with Tuskegee University.

19 The results of our research found that  
20 the only constant of this property is change. An  
21 evolution with an interesting pattern, that's not  
22 readily apparent without interpretation. Vacant

1 land, to military housing for the Union Army, to  
2 affordable housing for European emigrants, to  
3 vacant land, to military housing, to affordable  
4 housing. And this project was planned and  
5 constructed quickly. Smith, Billings, and Warner  
6 designed at least 440 other units valued at \$2  
7 million for U.S. Housing Authority.

8 MAYOR EUILLE: May I interrupt you just  
9 for a second. This is your presentation, do we  
10 have that? Or have we seen that in print?

11 MS. MOSS: No.

12 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay. I was just curious  
13 if we had it in a packet of something here.

14 MR. SMEDBERG: And Mr. Mayor?

15 MAYOR EUILLE: Yes.

16 MR. SMEDBERG: Are you done?

17 MAYOR EUILLE: Well, the other question I  
18 was going to ask -- no, no, go ahead, Mr.  
19 Smedberg.

20 MR. SMEDBERG: Just to do this now, you  
21 just mentioned you added a bunch of material after  
22 the BAR hearing?

1 MS. MOSS: Correct.

2 MR. SMEDBERG: So how did you miss all  
3 that in your initial review? You touted all your  
4 credentials, but you missed all that information  
5 in your initial review for this report?

6 MS. MOSS: The consultant was fired from  
7 the BAR. I'm not that person.

8 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay.

9 MS. MOSS: And all of this is in the  
10 report that was provided to you. So the history  
11 is, is that the first set of plans that Smith,  
12 Billings, Warner submitted occurred in July '41.  
13 They were subsequently value engineered and they  
14 removed specifications for weatherboard siding,  
15 and brick, and large copulas, spray basins, all  
16 sorts of nice features that had to be value  
17 engineered out. So then they submitted the second  
18 set of plans in '41, which was approved by the  
19 U.S. Housing Authority. The construction  
20 contract was awarded the next month and within  
21 seven months the project was 95% complete. By  
22 October of '42 it was 99% complete at a cost of

1       \$79,940.00. And the units were partially occupied  
2       the following month.

3                   And as you know, ARHA purchased this in  
4       '53. We studied a lot of aerials and historical  
5       aerials and documentation and found that the  
6       stucco and walled patios were added by the '70s.  
7       Actual window placement was removed so some of the  
8       walls on the east and west side are not original.  
9       And that it has an elaborate landscape plan where  
10      original trees, plants, playground, fences, and  
11      clotheslines were removed. And windows and doors  
12      were replaced.

13                   I'm gonna just breeze through this,  
14      because you've gotten some of this background from  
15      the planning staff of how the Parker-Gray District  
16      was established. But my point with this slide was  
17      that it was established to celebrate the 19th  
18      century and the early 20th century which ends with  
19      1931. And while the preservation movement has  
20      come to appreciate later things, midcentury  
21      modern, even in 2012 when the Parker-Gray BAR  
22      revisited their guidelines, they still focused on

1 1931, buildings constructed after 1931 are  
2 considered later buildings and will have more  
3 limited BAR review.

4 So here's just a brief comparison of the  
5 local district and the national district. Because  
6 I know some people use them interchangeably. And  
7 the point of this is that the BAR and the  
8 Council's power over this district is enabled by  
9 local zoning. And the local zoning district ends  
10 at significance, as I mentioned, ends at 1931.

11 So straight to the criteria. We've had  
12 an architect go do habs drawings of the buildings.  
13 The bottom one is by Encore Architects, they did  
14 that for us. And then the top 1942 is our  
15 technicians traced the original drawings we found  
16 at the National Archives, so that you could see  
17 them more clearly. So criterion one is the  
18 building or structure of such architectural or  
19 historical interest that it's removal would be to  
20 the detriment of the public interest. The  
21 buildings are not of such architectural or  
22 historic interest that their removal would be a

1     detriment, because the buildings and garden  
2     apartment landscape were altered so dramatically  
3     by the 1970s, that they do not reflect their  
4     period of significance of when they were built,  
5     1941 to '42.

6             The modernist economy with which they  
7     were built or for what they were built. The  
8     buildings and the landscape design have lost  
9     integrity of design, setting, feeling, and  
10    association due to the alteration of style and  
11    landscape. In 1942, three four-unit modernist  
12    four squares and a three-unit L-shaped building  
13    within a complex landscape had the following:  
14    There were minimalistic design elements. This was  
15    all exposed concrete block exterior walls. You  
16    can see the first and second story was flush. Now  
17    there's this lip here. There were concrete block  
18    pieces framing the entrance. There were coal  
19    chutes that were visible on these walls here that  
20    they put coal into the furnace. The windows are  
21    coupled. When they did a lot of the renovations  
22    in the '70s and '90s, these windows were actually

1 moved when they were replaced. We have small  
2 entry stoops on the north and south elevations.  
3 And obviously flat roofs. Skylights over the  
4 bathrooms, which are now access to the attic. And  
5 there was in the landscape, which you can't see  
6 here, there was a paved playground in the L of the  
7 triplex. Hexagonal clothes lines, which I'm not  
8 sure zoning would even allow, and chain linked  
9 fences, which are now protected by the BAR, but  
10 the BAR approved their removal in the '90s.  
11 English Ivy, and evergreens, and hardwood trees  
12 between the buildings, which you can see in  
13 historic aerials. So the entrances faced each  
14 other and had trees in-between them. Now you have  
15 trees that are under 30 years old along the  
16 sidewalk.

17 Criterion two, is the building or  
18 structure of such interest that it could be made  
19 into a historic shrine? The buildings do not  
20 merit becoming a shrine, because again they've  
21 lost so much integrity of design and don't reflect  
22 that period of significance that is essential in

1 listing a property to the National Register. Nor  
2 do they convey the original purpose as wartime  
3 housing. This is not an exceptional design and  
4 not reflective of its era or function.

5 So the previous slide I talked a little  
6 bit about what was removed, this one I'll focus on  
7 what was added. In the '70s here's the hip roof.  
8 And the stucco was applied, and again that lip was  
9 added. These walled patios were created, that  
10 bump out quite a bit more than what the -- it was  
11 just an entrance before, and now it's this big  
12 walled patio. The shed roofs were added over the  
13 doors. The doors and windows were replaced.  
14 These shutters that are not operable were added as  
15 a little colonial revival touch. And the metal  
16 picket fence was added, and open grassy lawns.  
17 The plantings around the units are generally  
18 nursery grade plantings installed by occupants.  
19 And the trees again along the sidewalk are less  
20 than 30 years old.

21 Criterion three is the building or  
22 structure of such old and usual or uncommon design

1 texture and material, that it could not be  
2 reproduced or be reproduced only with great  
3 difficulty? The foursquare with prairie features,  
4 and is ubiquitous in American cities from the  
5 1910s through the 1940s. Adapted to this style by  
6 the 1970s, this is a very late and poor example,  
7 not original to the site. The buildings are not  
8 so old or unusual or uncommon that they could not  
9 be easily reproduced. They are constructed of  
10 mass produce materials and measured drawings and  
11 specifications are available, if ever they were to  
12 be reproduced.

13 Criterion four, would retention of the  
14 building or structure help preserve and protect a  
15 historic place or area of historic interest in the  
16 city? Retention of the property does not protect  
17 a historic place as defined by the local zoning  
18 ordinance and Parker-Gray BAR, because the period  
19 of significance of the Parker-Gray District is  
20 1800 to 1931. And the Ramsey Homes were  
21 constructed in 1941 to 1942 with an appearance  
22 dating to around the '70s. Thus they are

1 background later buildings, and merit limited BAR  
2 review according to amendments made to the design  
3 guidelines in 2012.

4 I've mentioned that the BAR and Council  
5 should really base their decisions on the local  
6 zoning ordinance and guidelines, not federal  
7 regulations. Thus, the decision should be made  
8 based on planning considerations, such as the  
9 housing and master plans, and the local period of  
10 significance rather than the national period of  
11 significance.

12 You can see the difference of the  
13 boundaries of the local and national. The local  
14 boundaries are much smaller and based on the  
15 distribution pattern of historic resources and  
16 other preservation and community planning  
17 considerations. The national boundaries are based  
18 on the distribution pattern of historic properties  
19 and uniformed national criteria and procedures.

20 In consideration of the national  
21 district, their retention is not essential to the  
22 viability of the district's listing. Because they

1 represent 7 of 984 contributing resources, or less  
2 than 1%. Additionally, the nomination form  
3 erroneously states the architectural significance  
4 is related to the prairie style, which is not  
5 original, and which is not listed in the list of  
6 significant styles under the architectural  
7 classification section of the nomination form on  
8 Page 2.

9 Criterion five, would retention of the  
10 building or structure promote the general welfare  
11 by maintaining and increasing real estate values,  
12 generating business, creating new positions,  
13 attracting tourists, students, writers,  
14 historians, artist and artisans, attracting new  
15 residents, encouraging study and interest in  
16 American history, stimulating interest in study  
17 and architecture and design, educating citizens in  
18 American culture and heritage, and making the city  
19 a more attractive and desirable place? Retention  
20 of the buildings will not promote general welfare,  
21 because its declining condition may decrease  
22 neighboring real estate values, and the resident's

1 quality of life. The removal will result in a  
2 more attractive block, more desirable place to  
3 live, and a higher quality of life for current  
4 residents.

5 The lack of density also contributes to,  
6 as scholar and urbanist Jane Jacobs notes,  
7 increased density and entrances orient towards  
8 Patrick Street, which will put more eyes on the  
9 street and a greater connection to the community.

10 Retention will generate less business,  
11 because there will be fewer residents to patronize  
12 local venues and learn, live, and work in the  
13 area. The buildings do not convey what they were,  
14 or offer inherent or visual educational  
15 opportunities to nonprofessional historians. The  
16 introduction of more housing units in the vicinity  
17 of the local museums and community center will  
18 expose more residents to local American history.

19 Criterion six, would retention of the  
20 building or structure help maintain the scale and  
21 character of the neighborhood? And this is where  
22 I really disagree with the BAR. I know that

1       there're two stories tall like the surrounding  
2       area, but I don't feel that's everything there is  
3       to scale. The post 1931 Ramsey Homes, again, are  
4       background buildings and tend to detract from the  
5       neighborhood, which you can see here are two  
6       buildings facing each other, rather than their  
7       neighbors across Patrick Street. And in-between  
8       these two buildings there's one, two, three, four,  
9       five buildings that fit right in-between them. So  
10      they feel out of scale in density, in setback,  
11      massing, designs, and their orientation of their  
12      entrances.

13                 Their demolition would allow for  
14      buildings in keeping with their neighbors.

15                 And I ask you to think about these other  
16      considerations in addition to your criteria  
17      questions. Can an uninformed person walking or  
18      driving by Ramsey Homes figure out their history?  
19      What their function was? For whom they were  
20      built? Can they tell what these buildings and the  
21      landscape looked like before changes in the last  
22      '60s, early '70s? Do they reflect their existence

1 in 1942 or even the '50s and '60s? Can they tell  
2 who designed them for what federal agencies, and  
3 the names of those who lived there? Does looking  
4 at them teach them about the architect, the  
5 builders, the occupants, or what those agencies  
6 accomplished?

7 We submit the answer is no, therefore a  
8 permit to demolish should be granted so that the  
9 site can continue its historic use as affordable  
10 housing.

11 Since settlement, the project area's  
12 land use has constantly evolved, as I mentioned,  
13 from vacant land, to farm land, to the military  
14 housing during the civil war, to the emigrant  
15 tenant housing, to vacant land, and to military  
16 housing during World War II for African-Americans,  
17 and finally to affordable housing for the public.  
18 Appropriate commemoration of Ramsey Homes is  
19 continuing the legacy of public housing with the  
20 introduction of more units within this block.  
21 Preservation of this resource is not absolutely  
22 necessary as there is ample opportunity for public

1 interpretation. In our opinion the addition of  
2 more housing in this vital neighborhood in concert  
3 with an interpretation would be appropriate  
4 mitigation for loss of the resource.

5 The possibilities for such mitigation  
6 are broad, the retention of the Ramsey Homes'  
7 buildings offer fewer opportunities to celebrate  
8 and inform the public about the social history of  
9 this property from its settlement through the  
10 construction of the Ramsey Homes and what it was  
11 like during wartime and segregation in the city.  
12 The social history is not fostered by the  
13 retention of the buildings and structures.

14 Here's just a few examples of  
15 interpretation projects in the city. This was  
16 funded by ARHA and several other entities and is  
17 available to the public in the Charles Houston  
18 Recreation Center nearby. Here's an example of a  
19 project our firm worked on with the city  
20 interpreting the contraband in Freedmen Cemetery  
21 Memorial Historic Site. And here is mitigation  
22 for demolition of the Frederick Douglas Elementary

1 School in Loudoun County where part of the  
2 mitigation included the students getting involved  
3 in doing oral history with older residents to  
4 create this.

5 So there's a broad opportunity. It's  
6 not just a DHR plaque that you pass by on the side  
7 of the road. Thank you.

8 MR. SMEDBERG: Mr. Mayor?

9 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Mr. Smedberg.

10 MR. SMEDBERG: If the changing of your  
11 -- from one firm to another to do this report is  
12 in the City Report, I missed it, and if so, if it  
13 is in there, I apologize, but if not, again,  
14 directing this to ARHA, if we had an opportunity  
15 to have a chance to meet prior to this, it would  
16 have been great to have this information and know  
17 this. And it would also be interesting to know  
18 this, and it would also be interesting to know  
19 what BAR would have done if they had this report.  
20 So, again, process issues here, a real concern.

21 MR. WILSON: Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor?

22 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Wilson.

1           MR. WILSON:  If someone could actually  
2     email us this presentation like right now that  
3     will be helpful.  Can we go back to the slide, the  
4     one where you were talking about some of the  
5     concerns you had with the way Ramsay was reflected  
6     in the National Registry, the architectural -- I  
7     think you had that --

8           Ms. Moss:  The boundary slide?  This  
9     one?

10          MR. WILSON:  Yes.  There we are.  Okay,  
11     so the bold- faced language, can I dig into that  
12     for a little bit?  So you talked about the -- you  
13     said the nomination form erroneously states that  
14     the architectural significance is related to  
15     Prairie style which is not original to the  
16     building, which is not listed in the significant  
17     styles.  Explain to me what I'm trying to  
18     understand here, because I'm looking at the  
19     National Registry description of Ramsay as well,  
20     and it talks about the -- which is designed as a  
21     whole, as an enlarged version of an American  
22     Foursquare Prairie style prototype.

1           So, you are saying that's not an  
2 accurate description, or that architecture that  
3 they are describing in the registry is not the  
4 historically significant -- it's not historically  
5 significant, and it was not original. Is that  
6 what you are

7           MS. MOSS: Right. It's not original.  
8 They just did a reconnaissance survey, walking  
9 down the street, and checked off, oh, that's  
10 Prairie style, and kept moving. They did not do  
11 an intensive survey. So they are describing  
12 something that is not accurate, the history is not  
13 accurate. But also I find that the nomination  
14 form itself was flawed, in that if they felt that  
15 the Prairie style was significant, why was it not  
16 listed in their list of significant styles? You  
17 are too -- In the beginning of a nomination form,  
18 include all relevant builders, all relevant  
19 styles, all relevant materials and the form had  
20 other flaws in it.

21           MR. WILSON: So, I guess then, to our  
22 Staff, so we do that, right? That was something

1 that we hired someone to prepare the nomination?

2 MS. MILIARAS: We did. We had hired  
3 John Milner and Associates to produce the National  
4 Registe Nomination. I will say, the follow up on  
5 Ms. Moss' point. A lot of times when you are  
6 doing the building inventory, it's called a  
7 Windshield Survey, and so you really aren't  
8 digging into any of this. Maybe they are looking  
9 at sand-borne maps but a lot of it is just  
10 fieldwork, so it is possible that you could  
11 mistakenly identify a building type.

12 Regarding the use of the Prairie style,  
13 that's actually something that Staff has always  
14 been uncomfortable with, that choice of words in  
15 the national register nomination. So, again, I  
16 think we would have -- are in concurrence with  
17 that, that it was really a modern style building  
18 that was modified. So the use of the term Prairie  
19 style probably isn't appropriated for this  
20 building.

21 MR. WILSON: So, it would seem to me  
22 that, kind of, to Councilman Chapman's earlier

1 about kind of the focus of this discussion, this  
2 is kind of a threshold issue here for the decision  
3 we have to make. And I think ARHA is pointing to  
4 this analysis that this was not significant and  
5 then others are pointing to the registry  
6 nomination and kind of the information that's in  
7 there related to the contributing structures in  
8 the district.

9           And then we have two separate periods of  
10 significance too, we have the period of  
11 significance that we refer to in the district that  
12 we just revised, this Council, and revised  
13 unanimously a couple years ago. And then we have  
14 the period of significance that's in the  
15 registration which is a much broader period of  
16 significance. So, I guess, and maybe this is a  
17 question for Mr. Spera but the Council relies on  
18 the local ordinance, right, and what we locally  
19 enact to make these decisions. Is that the way  
20 Staff understands it, interprets, it?

21           MS. MILIARAS: Yes, but I will say, that  
22 the national register typically, they offer them

1 as general period of significance, because the  
2 national register really has a lot of incentives  
3 with it, so by having a longer period of  
4 significance to 1959, which is what the  
5 Parker-Gray District is. More people --  
6 homeowners are eligible for tax credits, property  
7 owners can use these preservation incentives.

8 So that's why that number -- that date  
9 is what it is, so the National Register generally  
10 uses, if something is more than 50 years old, and  
11 it retains its, you know, integrity to the time  
12 that it was built, then it would fall within that  
13 general period of significance; the period of  
14 significance that the Parker-Gray BAR adopted, and  
15 used as well with the 1931, really refers a lot to  
16 the materials, and refers to what the significance  
17 of those buildings are locally.

18 Mr. Wilson: I appreciate that. Thank  
19 you, Ms. Miliaras.

20 MS. MILIARAS: I hope that clarifies it.

21 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. I think it's  
22 time to get to the speakers, and we'll do just

1 that; and we have as many as I indicated earlier;  
2 two mics on both sides; the first speakers, Bob  
3 Efird; Stuart Schwartz, Joe Valenti, Janet  
4 McDowell.

5 MR. EFIRD: Good afternoon, Mayor  
6 Euille, and Members of the City Council. I'm Bob  
7 Efird, and I live at 1418 Juliana Place, in  
8 Alexandria, and I'm here today representing the  
9 Alexandria Commission on Aging. The Commission's  
10 Executive Committee voted to support the position  
11 of the Housing Affordable Advisory Committee, and  
12 signed the letter prepared by that Committee's  
13 Chair, Katharine Dixon.

14 The letter urges City Council to reverse  
15 the decision of the Parker-Gray Board of  
16 Architectural Review, and to approve the  
17 demolition of Ramsey Homes as Planning and Zoning  
18 Staff recommends. The Strategic Plan on Aging  
19 adopted by City Council in 2012 endorses the  
20 development of affordable and accessible housing  
21 for older Alexandrians. With the overwhelming  
22 loss of market rate of affordable housing in the

1 city, we agree that it is imperative to seize  
2 every opportunity to add affordable and accessible  
3 housing units, wherever and whenever possible.

4 We urge City Council also to work with  
5 ARHA and affected community groups to find  
6 appropriate ways to commemorate and memorialize  
7 the legacy and footprint of Alexandria's  
8 African-Americans. We ask that you reverse the  
9 BAR decision and approve demolition. And thank  
10 you for the opportunity to speak today.

11 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Stuart  
12 Schwartz, Joe Valenti, Janet McDole, Duncan Blair  
13 -- Well, Mr. Blair has already spoken -- Anna  
14 Moss.

15 SPEAKER: Stuart left.

16 MAYOR EUILLE: Stuart left, all right.  
17 Joe Valenti, Janet McDole, Anna Moss, Heidi Ford,  
18 Debra Patterson.

19 MR. VALENTI: Good afternoon Mayor  
20 Euille, Vice Mayor Silberberg and Members of the  
21 Council. My name is Joe Valenti. I'm the Chair  
22 of the Economic Opportunities Commission, I'm also

1 a homeowner in the Braddock Road Metro Area.  
2 While we are not experts on the historicity of the  
3 site, the EOC supports the demolition of Ramsey  
4 Homes, as proposed by ARHA, on both housing  
5 affordability grounds, and fiscal grounds, and  
6 encourages alternative means to recognize and  
7 interpret the site's history.

8           The shortage of affordable housing units  
9 in this City is well recognized by the Council and  
10 noted in the Housing Master Plan. And the effects  
11 of housing unaffordability and instability,  
12 unemployment, healthy and self sufficiency ripple  
13 through our various social service agencies and  
14 nonprofits. The Ramsey Homes Proposal is a rare  
15 opportunity to provide net new affordable units in  
16 an opportunity location close to jobs and transit.  
17 In an environment where market rate or affordable  
18 units are rapidly disappearing, and even  
19 preserving existing affordability is a major  
20 challenge, it does not make sense to turn away  
21 such opportunities.

22           That's why we are one of five

1 commissions that all liaise with the Department of  
2 Community and Human Services, that all express  
3 support for this development. Additionally, as  
4 ARHA has noted, the maintenance of these 15 units  
5 consumes 4 percent of the Agency budget for only 2  
6 percent of the housing units. Fiscally it makes  
7 no sense to expect continued maintenance of a  
8 small number of units that fail to meet city code  
9 even seven decades ago, especially given broader  
10 concerns about ARHA's ability to sustain  
11 affordable units with declining Federal funding.

12 The Council has also repeatedly  
13 acknowledged the city dollars for housing must  
14 compete with many other budget priorities. In  
15 addition to supporting demolition we have two  
16 recommendations for the Council. First, we  
17 encourage that any new, affordable units reach,  
18 not just housing affordability up to 60 percent of  
19 area median income, as is proposed, but also  
20 includes some units at deeper affordability  
21 levels. We also encourage any development to  
22 incorporate the site's heritage through the

1 creative use of existing design elements, or even  
2 portions of the buildings themselves.

3 Historic preservation is indeed part of  
4 the air we breathe in this city, and an integral  
5 part of who we are. But there are many paths to  
6 foster greater recognition of our history, and we  
7 have tackled this creatively before. Just to name  
8 one of many examples that I pass by frequently,  
9 there is an interpretive display with  
10 archaeological artifacts at the New Bell Pre  
11 Building, there is certainly many other approaches  
12 to achieve this historic preservation goal. Thank  
13 you.

14 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Janet McDole,  
15 Heidi Ford, Debra Pattern, Glen Rowe.

16 MS. McDOLE: Good afternoon. My name is  
17 Jan McDole, and I am residing at 501 Slater's  
18 Lane, Alexandria, and I'm a Member of the  
19 Commission of Aging, and I also Chair their  
20 Housing Committee. Bob Efird has already given  
21 you our formal voted-on position, supporting the  
22 demolition of the Ramsey Homes. We did this with

1 heavy heart. We have a strategic plan that was  
2 adopted in 2012 by this group, and that endorses  
3 the development of affordable, accessible housing  
4 for all ages, and the overwhelming loss, however,  
5 of affordable housing is our issue.

6 We had to pay attention to that, and  
7 that is what drove our decision, and we are  
8 extremely concerned about the overall affordable  
9 housing situation in Alexandria, and look forward  
10 to action by our City on this issue.

11 There are two other issues though, that  
12 I will personally comment on here as a member of  
13 the Council but not as a representative of the  
14 Council, but of the Commission; and then as Chair  
15 of the Commission's Housing Committee.

16 We talked to cultural significance  
17 today, as opposed to historic significance of or  
18 property, and there are more situations coming up  
19 in our City, where the cultural issues become part  
20 of the decision-making quagmire with the desire to  
21 make decisions about a piece of property, if it's  
22 architecturally appropriate, or culturally

1 appropriate, and I think the thing that will help  
2 many of us in this community, is where do we take  
3 those discussions, and how do those, or do those  
4 become part of our decision-making process. So  
5 that's one thing that I think our overall  
6 Commission was very concerned about, in this case  
7 with regard to the cultural footprint of our  
8 African-American community.

9           The last area that I would bring up as a  
10 Member and Chair of our Housing Committee of the  
11 Commission on Aging, we understand ARHA's  
12 challenges to their financial situation. They  
13 have certain constraint with regard to expenses,  
14 and with regard to income. And the question  
15 becomes, how do they move forward? This is one  
16 example of several decisions that they will be  
17 making, and the question is, how do we keep our  
18 housing affordable for people in our community  
19 particularly lower income? Thank you.

20           MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. The next  
21 speaker is Heidi Ford, Debra Patterson, Glen Rowe,  
22 Lila Lee.

1 MS. FORD: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor,  
2 Vice Mayor Silberberg, and Members of the Council.  
3 My name is Heidi Ford. I'm here today  
4 representing the West All Town Citizens  
5 Association. I will kindly request five minutes  
6 as I'm representing the Local Civic Association.

7 MAYOR EUILLE: You are the President?

8 MS. FORD: I'm the Secretary; I was Past  
9 President, last year.

10 MAYOR EUILLE: Our policy states only  
11 Presidents can get five minutes, but I'll give you  
12 three-and-a-half.

13 MS. FORD: All right. Thank you. Okay,  
14 I'll speak quickly. The bottom line is, we  
15 support the BAR's unanimous decision, and ask you  
16 to deny ARHA's appeal. Ramsey Home contributes to  
17 the scale, character and livability of the  
18 neighborhood and should be preserved, and  
19 definitely rehabilitated to provide amenities for  
20 the residents. The Parker-Gray local historic  
21 district was created specifically to protect  
22 neighborhood housing from the pressures of

1 development.

2 We find that in the statements of City  
3 Officials in 1984, that sentiment holds equally  
4 true today. I attended all of the meetings to  
5 develop the Braddock Metro neighborhood small area  
6 plan. And what I can tell you is that during all  
7 of those meetings, there was never any -- you  
8 know, there was emphasis given to protecting the  
9 scale and the character of the neighborhood,  
10 particularly the historic district. The community  
11 agreed that development was okay in the city --  
12 the Northwest Quadrant, near the railroad tracks,  
13 but it also acknowledges that the historic  
14 district needed to be treated differently, and  
15 obviously Ramsey falls within the Historic  
16 District.

17 I can give you quotes on what the plans  
18 state about the -- you know, protecting low scale  
19 and historic character -- architecture of the  
20 Parker-Gray District, reinforces the  
21 neighborhood's livability. That the historic  
22 architecture and the mature trees contribute to a

1 powerful sense of place. The Braddock plan also  
2 talks about the need, that there was a sense that  
3 this vital neighborhood, what Parker-Gray is, its  
4 rich history, its charming residential streets,  
5 are just going to become an anonymous part of  
6 Alexandria's urban expanse or an afterthought to  
7 Old Town, unless specific measures are taken to  
8 preserve that character.

9           And Ramsey Homes is one of those sites,  
10 the key sites that contribute to what makes  
11 Parker-Gray unique. You know, it remains the only  
12 international style of 1940s era public housing  
13 complex in the city. And we do find that  
14 architecture unique. I mean if the city adopts  
15 this stance that the only buildings that are  
16 worthy of preservation, are 18th and 19th Century,  
17 then what we are going to have is a city of 18th,  
18 19th Century house, and 21st Century buildings.

19           We are basically going to lose the  
20 architectural significance of the 20th Century,  
21 and for Parker-Gray that is significant. You  
22 know, the plan, the Braddock Plan, I'll admit,

1 acknowledges Ramsey as a site for potential  
2 redevelopment, but what I would argue in place of  
3 that, is that today we know much more about Ramsey  
4 than we did at that time. In all the neighborhood  
5 meetings for the Braddock Plan, there was never an  
6 in-depth discussion of the architecture of Ramsey  
7 Homes, it's history, the local architect who  
8 developed it, why it was developed.

9 And we know that today, and I would say  
10 that that tips the balance in favor of  
11 preservation over what was proposed in the plan.  
12 And I also want to correct something that was said  
13 earlier, and make it very clear that the Braddock  
14 East Metro Plan does propose, does recommend  
15 rehabilitation as one of the potential options, so  
16 you should simply not throw that all the table.

17 Mr. Priest has argued today that  
18 redevelopment is simply too costly, but ARHA has  
19 owned this property for over 60 years. If there  
20 has not been maintenance -- if there have not been  
21 upgrades, if they have not upgraded the  
22 electrical, et cetera, to provide these amenities,

1 that is solely on ARHA's shoulders. I'm also  
2 going to point out that the cost for  
3 rehabilitation that ARHA has proposing, in some  
4 cases actually defies belief. In one case they  
5 are proposing \$36,000 to replace door hardware.

6 So I went this week to Home depot,  
7 online, I can give you the sheet if you want. You  
8 can purchase seven interior doors, one exterior  
9 door which is what you would need for each door,  
10 which is what you would need for each unit. Plus  
11 all of the door knobs and hinges you need for a  
12 total, for all 15 units, \$6,391.85, and that is  
13 far short of the \$36,000 that ARHA says it needs  
14 for that.

15 Moreover, it's unclear to me how an  
16 organization that last November purchased new  
17 office space at 401 Wythe Street for 4.8 million  
18 using, "in-hand dollars". Furthermore, the  
19 Alexandria News Organization said that they were  
20 using "unrestricted reserved funds" can now say it  
21 can't afford rehabilitation. One can ask a couple  
22 of questions. You know, why didn't ARHA use it

1 unrestrictive reserve funds to provide mediation  
2 for Ramsey? Why didn't put office space in less  
3 expensive areas of the neighborhood and use the  
4 excess reserve funds to rehabilitate Ramsey?  
5 Moreover, it appears that the office space -- that  
6 we are now debt-free, so there's potential to  
7 leverage that to actually provide the  
8 rehabilitation at Ramsey.

9           MAYOR EUILLE: You have 30 seconds to do  
10 that.

11           MS. FORD: All right. So, you know, in  
12 short, we are skeptical of ARHA's claim that  
13 demolition is the only road ahead. This is what  
14 ARHA has consistently argued, while the  
15 neighborhood has actively explored other  
16 possibilities, you know, and I believe that even  
17 the BAR, and somebody can perhaps correct me,  
18 suggested this back as far as February, that ARHA  
19 explore rehabilitation.

20           You know, I'm just going to close by  
21 saying that if Ramsey does -- The BAR decided that  
22 Ramsey met four of six criteria. If that is not

1 enough for historic preservation there is not a  
2 single building in the Parker-Gray District that  
3 you could not make the case for demolition. And  
4 so I think that we stand on a very slippery slope.  
5 You know, there simple can't be one standard for  
6 ARHA and developers, and another standard for the  
7 single family community owners.

8 So I'm going to leave you with a  
9 question, if you grant ARHA's appeal, are you  
10 prepared to grant the private homeowners in the  
11 district the same latitude to tear down their  
12 historic homes when they find it financially  
13 beneficial to do so? Thank you.

14 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. The next  
15 speaker is Debra Patterson, followed by Glen Rowe,  
16 Leila Lee, Karen Corral and Gail Rothrock.

17 MR. MOFFAT: Mr. Mayor, I apologize.  
18 I'd like to just interrupt for a moment. My name  
19 is Philip Moffat, I'm a Member of Parker-Gray  
20 Board of Architectural Review, I'm here to speak  
21 today, unfortunately I have a very sick child at  
22 home, at my wife is texting me say, we might

1       headed to Inova Fairfax, it's a stomach flu. So,  
2       if you don't me line-jumping here just for a  
3       moment, I think you might, maybe appreciate my  
4       input before I --

5                   MAYOR EUILLE: Are you representing the  
6       BAR?

7                   MR. MOFFAT: Yes, sir. I am.

8                   MAYOR EUILLE: All right. I'll let you  
9       do that.

10                  MR. MOFFAT: And I do apologize to the  
11       members of the public, but family matters are  
12       paramount.

13                  MAYOR EUILLE: No problem. So, Philip  
14       Moffat.

15                  MR. MOFFAT: Thank you very much. My  
16       name is Philip Moffat, I'm a Member of Parker-Gray  
17       Board of Architectural Review. I've been a Member  
18       of the Board for about 10 years now. I think  
19       among the present composition of the Board, I'm  
20       probably the longest-serving member. I'm not a  
21       design professional, I'm not an architect, I'm not  
22       a historic preservationist, I'm just a member of

1 the community who has decided to dedicate his time  
2 to help preserve what we find unique about this  
3 neighborhood, and in particular Parker-Gray  
4 District.

5 Up until a month ago we owned property  
6 about three blocks from this house, um this  
7 project. We moved over Rosecrest, having expanded  
8 our family, and needed a little more room et  
9 cetera, but we let go of the house quite  
10 reluctantly, and we did it largely because the  
11 economic arguments were compelling, you couldn't  
12 ignore the rising property values, the concerns  
13 about not maintaining property values, just don't  
14 hold for me, and my recent experience in the  
15 market, just don't bear that out.

16 I don't envy your particular position  
17 today, because I'm sure it feels at some level,  
18 like you are having pitch as high between public  
19 housing and affordable public housing and historic  
20 preservation.

21 SPEAKER: (inaudible) is it?

22 MR. MOFFAT: I understand that. Yeah, I

1 think we all empathize with that. The decision is  
2 not ultimately about that though. The decision is  
3 simply about whether a proposal that's been  
4 offered by one body meets six criteria. If you  
5 confine your decision to that, as the City  
6 Attorney has suggested, your decision will be  
7 largely defensible should be challenged on appeal.

8 Our Board is not anti-development by any  
9 means; in fact we are the only Board that's  
10 actually proposed to revise the design guidelines  
11 to make them more friendly to development. To  
12 reduce the burden and the threshold for making  
13 many changes to your houses, this isn't just home  
14 -- private homeowners, it's anyone who works  
15 within the district. We simply want development  
16 that is in scale and character of the  
17 neighborhood. We look at this particular proposal  
18 and we have found that it does not meet that, and  
19 I'll go through the criteria in just a moment.

20 You might be asking yourself, why don't  
21 we have a compromised proposal here? We've asked  
22 ourselves the same question, we've asked the

1 applicant the same question multiple times, and  
2 what we've been told is, total demolition is the  
3 only options.

4 We disagree. But we must decide based  
5 on the six criteria, so let me walk you through  
6 how we evaluate them, as least as how I understand  
7 it. We were unanimous in our decision, and that's  
8 important to note because including among our  
9 decision-makers, we have one staunch Private  
10 Property Rights advocate who voted with us to deny  
11 this permit. The six criteria, I think you've  
12 heard this, we have six criteria and we've got to  
13 make our decision, four of them were in  
14 contention, I think, and those are the ones I'd  
15 like to focus on.

16 Is the building or structure of such  
17 architectural or historical interest that its  
18 removal would be to the detriment of the public  
19 interest? And we answered that with resounding,  
20 yes. We answered that with a yes, because we  
21 think that this structure, these series of  
22 structures, these buildings, help us understand

1 and interpret public housing in the United States,  
2 the role of Federal Government beginning The New  
3 Deal of the 1930s, the reinvigoration and interest  
4 in public housing, again, as it was expanded with  
5 the wartime effort in the 1940s, and the need to  
6 house wartime workers.

7 This was more of a mixed-income  
8 development in the '40s with the need to do --  
9 wartime workers with the simple low-income  
10 housing, as it would have been in the '30s with a  
11 public housing emphasis. We think it also helps  
12 to explain the history of African-Americans  
13 participating in the wartime effort despite, and  
14 doing their civic duty despite laboring under  
15 segregation and generally a forced with inferior  
16 accommodations.

17 The next criterion -- and I would say  
18 that there are some changes in the structure, and  
19 has been pointed out, but if Staff Report points  
20 out, and I think the Board also focused on.  
21 Number three, page 12, this is the April 12  
22 decision, and we've heard a lot about other

1 aspects of the buildings being dilapidated, not  
2 maintained, et cetera. The condition of a  
3 building does not justify demolition, period.  
4 Changes can be reversed. I don't think either  
5 changes that have made to this structure, from  
6 what I've seen in the record, are irreversible.

7           Second criteria in here, so we can  
8 change this back, we are losing much of the  
9 examples of the Mid-20th Century public housing in  
10 this area. Many of those examples are fairly  
11 repetitious, streamlined various basic Colonial  
12 revival, we found it around the area, James Bland,  
13 Madden, you can find it throughout D.C. This was  
14 unique, it's very different than any -- and even  
15 today, in its somewhat evolved form, it's very  
16 different than what you'll find elsewhere, but  
17 somewhat consistent with the fairly quirky  
18 character that we have, and the rhythm that we  
19 have in Parker-Gray.

20           So the next criterion, number four; will  
21 retention of the building or structure help  
22 preserve and protect an area -- a historic place

1 or area, for historic interest to the city? Yes.  
2 It's not just about public housing; this is about  
3 Parker-Gray. We designated the area for a number  
4 of reasons; you've heard that -- you've heard that  
5 explained to you. We have lost, if you remember  
6 the map that was shown, we have lost most of the  
7 civic buildings that are part of that community,  
8 Parker-Gray High School, gone; Parker-Gray School,  
9 gone.

10 We almost lost the Carver Nursery. It  
11 took a Civil Rights lawsuit to bring that to a  
12 stop. Why was that? Because we took the same  
13 criteria and we weighed, historic and cultural  
14 significance much less. That's the way they had  
15 treated these buildings for 20 or 30 years, that's  
16 why we have so few of them now. The community had  
17 an outcry; you have many here who are going to  
18 also express similar sentiment. We had an outcry,  
19 what was the point? We are at a tipping pint if  
20 you think that you need tangible examples of the  
21 buildings from this period of time, our  
22 African-Americans and Parker- Gray civic

1 buildings, and the commercial buildings that you  
2 must stop razing them to the ground, you must have  
3 them.

4 If you are of a different mind, and  
5 there are plenty in the audience who say; you  
6 don't need tangible examples, you can interpret  
7 the African-American history and Mid-20th Century  
8 Alexandria with a website; with some plaques up on  
9 the building, and the wall behind Plexiglas in the  
10 community center. With some plaques you can drive  
11 by and see on the street. If that's your opinion,  
12 if you think that's adequate to interpret the  
13 experience of African-Americans in the 20th  
14 Century, fine. You can do that.

15 You can put less emphasis on the  
16 historic and cultural significance that we  
17 interpreted. We are applying, as the Board, more  
18 weight to those characteristics, based in large  
19 part, to our experience with Ramsey, and as your  
20 appointees, and you are the representative of the  
21 community, we think that you, too, would want to  
22 be more responsive to what the community thinks

1 about making sure we have tangible examples of the  
2 buildings from this period.

3 Number five; this is the fifth criteria  
4 and the third one that's in contention. Would  
5 retention of the building or structure promote the  
6 general welfare by maintaining -- a number of  
7 factors here -- maintaining and increasing real  
8 estate values, attracting tourists, students,  
9 writers, historians? Encouraging the study and  
10 interest in American history, stimulating interest  
11 in studying architecture and design, educating  
12 citizens in American culture and heritage -- and I  
13 would put in parentheses -- including Alexandria's  
14 heritage? And we answer that question, yes.

15 We answer that question, yes, in large  
16 part because we think that the existing -- the  
17 scale of this structure is generally consistent,  
18 with what you find in the surrounding area, it's  
19 largely, the adjacent buildings are largely two  
20 story, most of Parker-Gray is two story, there are  
21 some variations, and because of that it doesn't  
22 threaten the surrounding properties and

1 potentially have them forced to live whatever  
2 might come next, we've set that aside for a  
3 minute. And the canyon -- or the shadow of later  
4 more intense development.

5 So, right now these structures are  
6 harmonious and consistent with what they have,  
7 they do nothing to threaten, in our opinion, the  
8 real estate values. Will they also stimulate the  
9 study that I mentioned a minute ago? Yes, I would  
10 say so for all the reasons aforementioned in  
11 regard to historic interest and cultural  
12 significance.

13 Lastly, would retention of the building  
14 and the structure help maintain the scale and  
15 character of the neighborhood? We answer that,  
16 yes, for the obvious reasons that it is largely a  
17 two-story, diminutive community. We agree with  
18 that. Most of the Parker-Gray areas have  
19 setbacks, side yards, et cetera, and again it's a  
20 collection of styles but it has a little bit of a  
21 funky rhythm to it, and we think that it fits  
22 right in. And if it were refurbished back to

1 original minimalist modern style, Mid-Century, we  
2 think that would be quite welcome. So, thank you,  
3 for your time. I do appreciate it. I'm happy to  
4 answer any questions, and I do apologize for line  
5 jumping, just that's the way it is.

6 MAYOR EUILLE: Hold on one second, Phil.  
7 Mr. Wilson?

8 MR. WILSON: Well, first of all you have  
9 to go. I've gotten those text messages before, so  
10 I understand.

11 MR. MOFFAT: I apologize.

12 MR. WILSON: I just don't want to get  
13 you trouble.

14 MR. MOFFAT: Right. Thank you.

15 MR. WILSON: So, can you hang with us  
16 here for a second?

17 MR. MOFFAT: Yes, sir.

18 MR. WILSON: Okay. Thank you. So, a  
19 couple questions; you said at the beginning that  
20 you guys did not find this proposal consistent --

21 MR. MOFFAT: Correct.

22 MR. WILSON: -- with the district. So

1       isn't that now what we are talking about here? We  
2       are talking about the demolition, right?

3               MR. MOFFAT: Maybe we've had a  
4       misunderstanding. We think that demolition is not  
5       consistent with the governing ordinance, the six  
6       criteria.

7               MR. WILSON: Okay. Because you said --  
8       you said, we would have liked to have seen a  
9       compromise, with partial demolitions or anything  
10      like, it seems like that's irrelevant, right? The  
11      question is whether the demolition of this  
12      property is appropriate or not, period. Right?

13              MR. MOFFAT: No. No, sir. I disagree  
14      with that, let me explain, and it's a good  
15      question, by the way.

16              MR. WILSON: Please.

17              MR. MOFFAT: I don't believe, at least I  
18      don't, and I can't speak for the entirety of the  
19      Board, but we haven't had the opportunity to  
20      discuss this, that you necessarily need to  
21      preserve all four buildings, to have a tangible  
22      example of the architecture from this period to be

1 able to help interpret the history of this  
2 community. So you could -- I'm sorry, go ahead.

3 MR. WILSON: Your feeling is, the BAR  
4 could find a place where they would find it okay  
5 to issue a permit to demolish a portion of these  
6 properties, but not the other portion of the  
7 property. So, are you deeming some of them not  
8 historically significant, or there's enough of an  
9 example with the other ones? Is that what you are  
10 saying?

11 MR. MOFFAT: I'm saying that it's not a  
12 question of whether or not there's cultural that  
13 warrants preservation. I'm saying, because I  
14 think the answer is, yes, we all agree with that,  
15 it's a matter of how do you mitigate. And I think  
16 you could potentially mitigate by allowing a  
17 permit to demolish some of the structures and  
18 maintaining the others. One of the original  
19 proposals to be submitted, when the structures  
20 that were first built, had two Foursquare on the  
21 end, and then it had a strip -- more of a string  
22 of apartments in the center. You could perhaps do

1 something like that today, a new building in the  
2 middle, more of a --

3 MR. WILSON: Because that's kind of a --  
4 and I don't want to design a new building, but  
5 that's kind of different take on, kind of my role  
6 and your role, and then I kind of understood which  
7 is that we can -- it's okay to issue a permit to  
8 demolish if we have a good way to mitigate it, and  
9 I guess -- I don't know if that's something that  
10 maybe the City Attorney can issue with -- or weigh  
11 in on, because I didn't kind of understand that to  
12 be my responsibility.

13 MR. MOFFAT: I'm not sure I understand  
14 the question. I apologize.

15 MR. WILSON: You said that the  
16 mitigation of the loss of historical fabric is  
17 kind of a factor as opposed to just whether -- the  
18 threshold test of whether the property meets the  
19 criteria for preservation or not.

20 MR. MOFFAT: What I'm trying to  
21 demonstrate is I think, we haven't had an  
22 opportunity to consider this. If there were other

1 options presented to us, for example, perhaps not  
2 a total demolition; that might meet an approval,  
3 the criteria might be weighed in favor of allowing  
4 on that project to go forward, and the proposal to  
5 be approved. I don't think it's an all or  
6 nothing, I think it's a very context dependent,  
7 very sight dependent, and we have to weigh all the  
8 factors in the context of what's actually being  
9 proposed.

10 Right now we have an all or nothing, and  
11 we are saying that's not approvable. If something  
12 else was offered, it might be. I'm speculating on  
13 my own without having had the benefit of  
14 deliberation in my Board to say that perhaps  
15 something that was a partial demolition might be  
16 something that could be approved. I haven't seen  
17 the plans.

18 MR. WILSON: I guess I'm just -- I'm not  
19 understanding how I would take two permits to  
20 demolish, because essentially, if you divided up  
21 the property, you would be saying, for two of the  
22 buildings, I'm going to reach a different

1 conclusion on the exact same criteria, on the same  
2 buildings, than I would on the other two buildings  
3 for the exact same criteria in the exact same  
4 buildings.

5 MR. MOFFAT: I think I would analyze it  
6 a little differently, I don't think it's again,  
7 it's the --

8 Vice Mayor Silberberg: Mr. Mayor?

9 MR. MOFFAT: -- it's the proposal for a  
10 permit to demolish two structures on one site,  
11 versus four structures on one site. One proposal  
12 was to totally raise all of the buildings from the  
13 site, the other is to preserve two buildings on  
14 the site, demolish two others. How you might  
15 weight that proposal in light of those six  
16 criteria might differ from how you might weigh --  
17 evaluate a proposal for total demolition in light  
18 of the six criteria. I would submit that it  
19 would, based on my experience for 10 years, but I  
20 don't know how the rest of the Board would  
21 evaluate it.

22 MR. WILSON: So let me ask you one other

1 question, and then I'll let you go, so you don't  
2 get in trouble. So, you mentioned that you've  
3 been on the Board for a while, and I appreciate --

4 MR. MOFFAT: Yes, sir.

5 MR. WILSON: -- your long service on the  
6 Board. You were on the Board when Bland came up  
7 for demolition.

8 MR. MOFFAT: That's correct.

9 MR. WILSON: So how did -- and I don't  
10 know -- I didn't look up how you voted or anything  
11 like that, but -- you know, the permit was issued.  
12 How do we differentiate the two as far as the  
13 permit to They are both in the District, both  
14 similar time period, a lot of similar cultural  
15 significance. How did you kind of parry the  
16 difference between the two? And I know I'm asking  
17 you to revisit a decision that was almost ten  
18 years ago.

19 MR. MOFFAT: That's okay. That's a very  
20 good question as well. I'm actually going to  
21 start off by saying, I voted against it. I was  
22 the one member that -- Mr. Cox reminded me earlier

1 that voted against it. It was a similar analysis,  
2 and just because you are in the minority doesn't  
3 mean you are wrong.

4 MR. WILSON: No. No.

5 MR. MOFFAT: And if you disagree with  
6 that, just remember -- talking about upcoming  
7 Presidential Election, and you quit watching TV  
8 because of the campaign ads, the dissent for the  
9 disarray in Citizens United, they probably thought  
10 they were right too. Anyway, how do it do it -- I  
11 mean, a couple of things, I think one of the  
12 decisions, the factors that weighed heavily, this  
13 is resurrecting some old history, is that it's not  
14 the last example we have of this particular  
15 architectural form for public housing. Directly  
16 across the street, you have two blocks with Samuel  
17 Madden. You have that type of structure repeated  
18 throughout the area. This you don't.

19 MR. WILSON: Given our discussion  
20 earlier, which form, which architectural form?

21 MR. MOFFAT: I think you can interpret  
22 the history better if it were returned, but even

1 without returning it, just rehabilitating it in  
2 the Prairie form, I still think you can do a  
3 better job of explaining to people what was here,  
4 and the conditions under which they lived, and the  
5 structure, by actually having a tangible example  
6 than not.

7 MR. WILSON: So the Prairie form is --

8 MR. MOFFAT: Yes. So I would certainly  
9 prefer the Mid-Century, the modernist style, the  
10 international style, I that's what people referred  
11 to it too, with the monitor and the flat roof, et  
12 cetera.

13 MR. WILSON: I appreciate the answer.

14 MR. MOFFAT: Absolutely!

15 MR. WILSON: Thank you.

16 MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

17 MAYOR EUILLE: Ms. Silberberg? Hold on.

18 MR. MOFFAT: Sure. Absolutely!

19 MS. SILBERBERG: First of all, we only  
20 hope that your --

21 MR. MOFFAT: Thank you.

22 MS. SILBERBERG: -- son or daughter

1 makes a full and speedy recover, and thank you for  
2 coming out on such a day, given that. So, to  
3 Councilman Wilson's point, and it's really your  
4 explanation, so you do see a distinction, I mean,  
5 there is uphold Parker-Gray or deny it. But then  
6 there is this third option, or sometimes called  
7 option B, or the hybrid, or compromise, whatever  
8 you want to call it. And so you are saying that  
9 it would -- if you had two out of four saved, and  
10 two demolished, at least that would retain some of  
11 the character, and give someone a sense of it.

12 Is that what you are saying? And then  
13 the space where the other two were, that it would  
14 enable for some of that affordable housing to be  
15 redone and to be increased a little bit. Is that  
16 what -- I mean, because I'm just trying to  
17 interpret that.

18 MR. MOFFAT: That's correct. That's  
19 correct.

20 MS. SILBERBERG: Is that something that  
21 we've been discussing -- you know, there's been a  
22 memo last night from the Staff about how much that

1 would cost. I don't think it's -- I don't know --  
2 MR. MOFFAT: It wasn't part of our  
3 decision. Our decision was, you know, take it or  
4 leave it. It's all or nothing. But I don't think  
5 that you could have -- you could accomplish,  
6 perhaps, everyone's objective with sort of a  
7 compromised position, but it's not really part of  
8 our decision, and something that needs additional  
9 commentary.

10 And, you know, another point to Mr.  
11 Wilson's question about Bland, we were at a point  
12 then where I had reservations; other members had  
13 reservations. They ultimately went along for some  
14 of the reasons -- I recall some of the reasons  
15 that I articulated a minute ago but, you know, you  
16 reach -- if you believe that you need physical  
17 examples, tangible examples of the architecture,  
18 and you keep taking the buildings down, and  
19 removing them, and removing them, at some point  
20 you reach a tipping point, where you need to stop,  
21 and one structure prior to that may not have the  
22 same value, the rarity increases, the consequences

1 of the loss are more severe. Much like species,  
2 if you go to endangered species, you get to a  
3 point, you take one more, and you threaten the  
4 viability of the population.

5 And so it really comes down today, I  
6 think in my opinion, for your decision is, how  
7 best do we interpret and aid the interpretation of  
8 public housing, the history of public housing in  
9 the United States, and the City of Alexandria,  
10 wartime housing and public housing in the Parker-  
11 Gray District, do we need tangible examples of the  
12 architecture, and whatever condition we find it  
13 now, or do we not? I would submit to you, given  
14 the recent history and community involvement with  
15 respect to Carver Nursery, for example, that  
16 answer from the constituents is, yes. And we try  
17 to be responsive to that, and place greater  
18 emphasis on the social and cultural history, and  
19 we hope that you'll do the same.

20 Thank you.

21 MS. SILBERBERG: Thank you.

22 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. Mr. Chapman,

1 and then Mr. Smedberg.

2 MR. CHAPMAN: Mr. Moffat, I promise this  
3 will be 30 seconds.

4 MR. MOFFAT: I apologize. Go ahead.

5 MR. CHAPMAN: No. No. No. You're  
6 fine. Thank you for coming in and being here for  
7 the discussion. One of the things that caught me  
8 from Ms. Moss' presentation, and this is something  
9 I was thinking about the other day, is kind of a  
10 history of public housing throughout the nation,  
11 and how it is, you know, that kind of often  
12 upheaval and redevelopment of property, you know,  
13 as the time goes on, or the decades go by. You  
14 know, was there any consideration or thought about  
15 that piece of -- or that type of history?

16 Separate from -- and I guess I separate that from  
17 specific Alexandria, or locational history, but  
18 kind of the process of public housing.

19 MR. MOFFAT: In the sense of how we've  
20 moved from Federal Government involvement with the  
21 New Deal to greater standardization, and very  
22 simplified architectural styles; a higher mandate

1 from the Federal Government, I mean I'm trying to  
2 understand the question --

3 MR. CHAPMAN: Yeah. Yeah.

4 MR. MOFFAT: I don't recall -- our  
5 docket is not as crowded as yours by any means,  
6 right, but we still have a fairly limited amount  
7 of time to make decisions. The discussion, I  
8 think -- and I'm not saying that isn't critical, I  
9 think we try to encapsulate in a very short period  
10 of time, the history of public housing, this is  
11 the role this one plays in both the larger debate  
12 and the evolution.

13 SPEAKER: Exactly.

14 MR. MOFFAT: I think there was some  
15 discussion about the transition, I'll have to go  
16 back over the tape, between the New Deal, and of  
17 1930s type housing done primarily for the poor, in  
18 the 1940s there was a reinvigoration and interest  
19 in the evolution of public housing, Federal  
20 Government, public housing to achieve more of a  
21 mixed income housing solution for people who are  
22 working for -- in the war effort.

1           And obviously we still had segregation,  
2       so there's an additional layer there, and that was  
3       certainly brought home, and also -- it's somewhat  
4       repetitious here, but many members who were  
5       concerned about Parker-Gray history, and the loss  
6       of the institutional buildings, and this building  
7       sat along with, essentially the institutional  
8       Corridor in Parker- Gray. You have the commercial  
9       center more -- I mean, this is sort of gross  
10      generalization, but bear with me for a moment.

11           MR. CHAPMAN: Okay.

12           MR. MOFFAT: At the commercial center  
13      along Queen Street, they had an institutional  
14      center along Wythe, and this structure sat along  
15      -- like I said the Parker-Gray School, the  
16      Robinson Library, several prominent churches, if  
17      some of those sound unfamiliar, it's because they  
18      are gone now, right. So this is one of those  
19      opportunities that remains, it's a decision of  
20      whether or not that's necessary to interpret our  
21      history.

22           Okay. Thank you for the question. I

1 certainly appreciate your time. And thank you me  
2 line jump, I do apologize.

3 MAYOR EUILLE: No problem. We'll pick  
4 up -- back up with Mr. Smedberg. I'm sorry.

5 MR. SMEDBERG: If I can just make a  
6 comment.

7 MAYOR EUILLE: All right.

8 MR. SMEDBERG: It's interesting Mr.  
9 Moffat raises this whole consequence of loss,  
10 because we had an architecture symposium, gosh,  
11 how many months, now, three months ago, four  
12 months ago, it seems like forever ago, but it  
13 wasn't all that long ago. And I'm not sure if it  
14 was at the symposium itself, or the forum you had  
15 at the Masonic Temple, but the woman there, from  
16 the historic trust, pointed out that along  
17 Washington Street, the town motel or hotel, and  
18 again, the sort of fuzzy, grey area of the 20th  
19 Century, and how, you know, in her opinion, and  
20 she does this for a living throughout the country,  
21 and for them. It was a loss.

22 Now, one could argue either, whether or

1 not it was, but in her opinion, you know, at the  
2 end of the day, given everything else that's going  
3 on, the loss of that would forever change sort of  
4 the landscape of Washington Street, because it was  
5 the last sort of example of something like that;  
6 so, interesting point.

7 MAYOR EUILLE: All right.

8 MR. MOFFAT: Thank you for your time. I  
9 do appreciate you hearing my comments.

10 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. Debra  
11 Patterson, Glen Rowe, Leila Lee, Karen Corral.

12 MS. PATTERSON: Good afternoon, Council  
13 and Mayor. I want to say that, to start off,  
14 there's been a lot of talk about housing, and I  
15 think we need to talk about people and housing.  
16 We've lost over 12,000 units of affordable housing  
17 in Alexandria in the last 10 years, and it's  
18 something that we need to look into. I should  
19 have introduced myself a little bit better I  
20 guess. I'm President of the Board of ALIVE, and  
21 represent the 42 congregations, that belong to  
22 ALIVE.

1                   And I wanted to bring in an actual  
2 person into this conversation, and not just talk  
3 about architecture. This is a young woman, Ms.  
4 Walker, who lives in the houses, and she will talk  
5 to you about it.

6                   MS. WALKER: Thank you. Good afternoon,  
7 Councilmen and Women. My name Charkenya Walker,  
8 and I am a resident of the dwellings in question.  
9 It's an emotional time because I've lived there  
10 for over, almost 10 years, but I've heard many  
11 different opinions from my neighbors, who have  
12 come up to speak very passionately as well as  
13 about the buildings in question, but there are  
14 several issues that remain intact, but I don't  
15 think people are actually focusing on. To me it  
16 seems that it's more of conversation of how it  
17 will benefit the neighborhood financially, about  
18 property values, and things of that nature.

19                   Unfortunately, I'm not a property owner  
20 in the City of Alexandria, but I am a  
21 participating member of our community. I work  
22 every day, I rushed from work to come here to say

1 my piece because it is important for me to provide  
2 stable housing for myself and for my son. There  
3 are people mention things like, livability of the  
4 community, you know, and evidence of historical  
5 reference and things of that nature, and these  
6 things are all important.

7           There's conversation about doors and why  
8 we are replacing them would be more expensive.  
9 The doors are narrow than the average door, that  
10 you only have to enter your home, so that's maybe  
11 a reason why it is more expensive to have that  
12 work done. But more importantly the structures of  
13 these units, in my opinion, have lived their  
14 useful life. I, of course, like anyone else when  
15 I first walked in, heard different things, and  
16 gave me things to add on for my conversation, for  
17 points that I wanted to make.

18           But as you are standing here and you get  
19 it all in, some things go out the door, some have  
20 less relevance than others when you are on a time  
21 crunch, but it's important to understand that in  
22 the 1940s, these units were built with the purpose

1 that they served. They housed the working class,  
2 the military people, people who were very, very  
3 much useful parts of the community. In 2015 they  
4 served working families. I don't know a neighbor  
5 who lives over there that doesn't every day like I  
6 do. Although our incomes may not be the same as  
7 our neighbors who live across the street, we do  
8 the same thing every day.

9 It is interesting to think that  
10 neighbors want those units to remain there,  
11 because they are -- they raise curiosity, but the  
12 same neighbors aren't coming into the community  
13 and saying, well, how can we help? How can we  
14 preserve these units, share a piece of history  
15 with the community as a whole, that it serves and  
16 come up with the -- a solution that helps the  
17 residents that live there.

18 The last gentleman who spoke who I  
19 remember seeing when I came and spoke the night  
20 that we were before the BAR brings up an awesome  
21 idea. What if we could preserve a part of it?  
22 This young woman here who her slide show, and

1 showing different -- and I'm sorry, I'm going  
2 over, but who had different ideas of how to  
3 preserve and show historic references and  
4 relevance in the area, and still change it. Those  
5 are awesome ideas.

6 It's hard to think that the idea of  
7 historical relevance and significance outweighs  
8 the idea of -- just a standard of living in 2015.  
9 When I come home from work and my house is 89  
10 degrees because of lack of H-Vac system when there  
11 are window units in my house, when I come home,  
12 and you know, I could go on and on and on and you  
13 all would be here for hours more, trust me but --

14 MS. SILBERBERG: If you could --

15 MS. WALKER: I see that you have a  
16 question, if you want to cut off, so I can --

17 MS. SILBERBERG: Well, no. I just was  
18 going to as if you've got 30 seconds to a minute,  
19 if you could just -- But take your time, you are  
20 doing well.

21 MS. WALKER: No, no. Yeah, fine.

22 MS. SILBERBERG: There is a time limit,

1 but go ahead. But if you could wrap it up in  
2 about 30 seconds to a minute?

3 MS. WALKER: No problem.

4 MS. SILBERBERG: No, no, no. I didn't  
5 hear the -- Was it on timer? Okay. Thank you.

6 MS. WALKER: I'm sorry. Was that  
7 another -- Yeah the timer --

8 MS. SILBERBERG: I know it is  
9 disconcerting I agree, I agree.

10 MS. WALKER: It did go off. You know,  
11 again --

12 MS. SILBERBERG: We appreciate your  
13 being here.

14 MS. WALKER: Thanks. My son texting me  
15 as well, but he's old enough to kind of fend for  
16 himself for a few minutes. I just want neighbors  
17 to understand that the construction of new units  
18 will benefit the community as a whole. There are  
19 working-class citizens who cannot afford to live  
20 in the neighborhood in which they've grown, me  
21 included.

22 I'm from this area, and the idea of

1 thinking that I would have to give up my home  
2 because there are residents here who do not agree  
3 with the idea of providing more affordable housing  
4 for their neighbors to thrive the same way that  
5 they may be in the process of doing, and so shield  
6 that with saying that it has something to do with  
7 historical references, and wanting to preserve  
8 those things.

9 Let's be clear about the facts. A lot  
10 of this has to do with not wanting to have  
11 multiple families -- more families, more  
12 affordable housing in these communities, and it's  
13 unfortunate. So, with that being said, I'm going  
14 to wrap up.

15 MS. SILBERBERG: Don't go -- First I  
16 just want to -- first of all thank you for coming.

17 MS. WALKER: No problem.

18 MS. SILBERBERG: And second, did you  
19 fill out a speaker form?

20 MS. WALKER: I did.

21 MS. SILBERBERG: You did?

22 MS. WALKER: Yes.

1 MS. SILBERBERG: Okay. Thank you.

2 MS. WALKER: I just bumped the line with  
3 an introduction. Yeah.

4 MS. SILBERBERG: Oh, I see.

5 MS. WALKER: I definitely am not new to  
6 the rodeo, so.

7 MS. SILBERBERG: Okay. I didn't realize  
8 that -- Okay. We don't use -- All right. Thank  
9 you very much.

10 MS. WALKER: I'm not disrespectful  
11 (crosstalk) --

12 MS. SILBERBERG: No, no, no. No, no,  
13 no. Thank you very much, for coming out.

14 MS. WALKER: Thank you. You have a good  
15 one all of you.

16 MS. SILBERBERG: Hang on, please. The  
17 next speaker is Glen Rowe, to be followed by Lila  
18 Lee, followed by Karen Corral, followed Anna Moss,  
19 Gail Rothrock and Townley McElhiney. Mr. Rowe?

20 MR. ROWE: Thank you. Good afternoon,  
21 Mr. Mayor, Madam Vice Mayor, and City Council.  
22 I'm Glen Rowe, I live 920 Pendleton Street, across

1 the street from Ramsey Homes with my wife Lila.  
2 And I'm here today because I oppose the demolition  
3 of Ramsey Homes. I will briefly touch the  
4 questions before Council today, as many have said,  
5 it should stand on the criteria that the BAR  
6 should (inaudible) demolition request on.  
7 Unfortunately ARHA has presented arguments that  
8 exceed those boundaries, and are based on false  
9 assumptions and misinformation. And so I'm here  
10 today to go through those and offer my points of  
11 view.

12 ARHA claims that 5 of the 15 units need  
13 to be 504 compliant; HUD's site says that one  
14 unit, if that, must be 504 compliant. Thunderbird  
15 gave a list of all the references that they  
16 checked for their historical fact checking. I  
17 live four doors down from a neighbor who has lived  
18 in her home since the 1950s, who could provide an  
19 oral history, and that person was not contacted.

20 ARHA argues that criteria number six  
21 does not apply. That Ramsey Homes are not in  
22 keeping with the neighborhood. Of the 108

1 structures in the immediate neighborhood we  
2 counted, there are no more than 15 that are  
3 three-story, and all but one of those was  
4 constructed post-1977. A property that has stood  
5 for 75 years in and of itself, makes the character  
6 of the neighborhood.

7 ARHA claims that property values will be  
8 declined -- will decline if Ramsey is kept in its  
9 current condition. This is proven untrue over the  
10 last 60 years as property values have increased  
11 and ARHA has seen the maintenance of their  
12 properties slack. In fact it's the loss of green  
13 space that will result in thousands of dollars, if  
14 not hundreds of thousands of dollars of loss value  
15 for neighbors and a detriment to the wellbeing of  
16 residents.

17 Mr. Priest, until today, claimed that  
18 all Ramsey residents supported demolition this is  
19 a gross untruth if not an outright lie, put before  
20 the community and Members of the Council. I have  
21 spoken to multiple members -- multiple residents  
22 of Ramsey, my neighbors, and they would prefer

1 rehabilitation over demolition.

2 ARHA also claims that it is not  
3 financially feasible to keep Ramsey; ARHA is  
4 actually choosing to not make it financially  
5 feasible. Ramsey could be paired with another  
6 development such as Atkins, if they were to turn  
7 into a hotel, and use those proceeds to support  
8 Ramsey rehab. ARHA will claim that those RFPs  
9 have already been issued, 401 Wythe could easily  
10 be redeveloped into multi use. They've got that  
11 equity there in a \$4.8-million building that was  
12 purchased with unrestricted funds, and Mr. Priest  
13 claims it's worth 6 million.

14 Imagine if I stood before you today, and  
15 I said that I could afford to rehabilitate my home  
16 but I have two accounts. I have one bank account  
17 with \$1,000 and another one with \$100,000, but I  
18 only want to pull from account with \$1,000 and  
19 therefore I need to tear down my home (buzzer).  
20 I'm wrapping up. Likely the City Council, you  
21 would tell me that I cannot demolish my home, and  
22 you would tell me this because historic

1 preservation, it's not about yesterday, it's not  
2 even about today, it's about tomorrow.

3 Thankfully, our city leaders,  
4 generations ago, had the foresight to save  
5 buildings that today, we consider historic. How  
6 sad it will be for future generations, if we today  
7 lack that same foresight, and Ramsey Homes, nearly  
8 75 years old, are bulldozed and hauled off to a  
9 landfill. Thank you for your time and, again, I  
10 support upholding the BAR's decision. Thank you.

11 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you.

12 MS. LEE: Good afternoon, Mayor Euille,  
13 Vice Mayor Silberberg, honorable Members of City  
14 Council, and City Manager Jinks. Thanks for the  
15 opportunity to present before you today. I'm Lila  
16 Lee, and I live with my husband Glen Rowe, the  
17 prior speaker, across from Ramsey Homes, at 920  
18 Pendleton.

19 I'm in here to strongly oppose ARHA's  
20 appeal of the BAR's unanimous decision. As you  
21 make your decision today, I hope you consider the  
22 impact that green space has on the mental, fiscal,

1 and communal wellbeing of the Parker- Gray  
2 District and its residents. ARHA previously has  
3 claimed its proposed development will increase the  
4 sense of community of the Ramsey Homes residents,  
5 and therefore their wellbeing. However, this  
6 argument lacks basis and fact. ARHA's proposed  
7 development will reduce green space by over 15,000  
8 square feet, or 238 percent reduction, and  
9 numerous studies have shown direct, positive  
10 effect of green space on health, wellbeing, and  
11 stress reduction.

12 Furthermore, demolition of the Ramsey  
13 Homes and the corresponding loss of green space  
14 will continue a pattern of environmental injustice  
15 against the low-income population that ARHA  
16 serves. A 2014 article by Wolch, Burn and Newell  
17 found that access to green space is often highly  
18 stratified including based on income. As you can  
19 see from the map, the one right before you, and  
20 the map that I have before me, the green blocks  
21 highlight the already-limited green space in the  
22 Parker-Gray District, and 2 of the 10 green space

1 areas at the Samuel Madden homes, are already  
2 slated to be redeveloped in the future.

3 Today you'll also be making a fiscal  
4 decision, on criteria number five, about whether  
5 preservation of Ramsey Homes, "Promotes the  
6 general welfare by maintaining and increasing real  
7 estate values." And I again urge you to consider  
8 the impact that green space has on property  
9 values. A 2002 statistical study by Delores  
10 Conway, an older region in Central L.A., found an  
11 11 percent increase in green space, translates to  
12 a 1.5 percent increase in property values of  
13 surrounding homes within a 2 to 500-foot radius.

14 In the context of Ramsey Homes, the  
15 cumulative assessed value of properties within 2  
16 to 500 feet of Ramsey, which are the 900 blocks of  
17 Pendleton and Wythe, and the 600 block of North  
18 Patrick, currently is over \$21 million together.  
19 So ARHA's proposed 238 percent reduction in green  
20 space would be equivalent to a minimum \$327,000  
21 loss to these property values, of the surrounding  
22 properties.

1           Finally, as you make your decision  
2           today, I implore you to consider the impact that  
3           green space has on the communal wellbeing of the  
4           Parker-Gray District and its residents. The green  
5           space at Ramsey Homes, contributes to the social  
6           fabric of the community and allows Ramsey  
7           residents, and surrounding neighbors to form more  
8           meaningful friendships and relationships. Porches  
9           and lawns lead to organic bonds, whereas apartment  
10          buildings do not. If Ramsey is demolished I will  
11          miss seeing my neighbors on a daily basis.

12           In closing, I strongly urge you to deny  
13          ARHA's appeal based on criteria number five, and  
14          the impact that green space has on property  
15          values. Thank you very much for your time.

16           MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. The next  
17          speaker is Karen Corral, Gail Rothrock, Townley  
18          McElhiney, Michael Ford.

19           MS. CORRAL: Good afternoon. I'm Karen  
20          Corral, and I live at 507 North Columbus Street.  
21          I am perhaps equally passionate about historic  
22          preservation and affordable housing. I am a

1 longtime member of the Gadsby's Tavern Museum  
2 Society, I'm a Docent at the Stabler-Leadbeater  
3 Apothecary Museum. I have put a lot of resources,  
4 personal, into the restoration and preservation of  
5 my home built in 1880, and I adore every single,  
6 unique, historic structure, and the cultural  
7 significance of our community, and those things  
8 are very, very important to me.

9           So, this particular issue, because it is  
10 in my neighborhood, it's very significant, and I  
11 think -- and after taking a really close look at  
12 the six criteria that must be evaluated for  
13 evaluation of a permit to demolish, and I, too,  
14 come to the agreement of the Staff Report, in that  
15 the value is cultural, tremendous cultural value,  
16 and we need to do a better job of preserving that,  
17 interpreting that, and making that truly, truly,  
18 meaningful and educational to the vast number of  
19 people -- I love history, I mean, I'm just an  
20 architect geek, but walking by the Ramsey Homes  
21 structures doesn't, for me, bring to life the  
22 social history of that period.

1                   What I think is of far greater  
2           importance to the general welfare in our community  
3           is the fact that we are going to have the 15 units  
4           in our residents that are currently there now in  
5           low-income housing, be able to return to units  
6           that just meet standard of amenities for today,  
7           plus we are going to add 38 additional units of  
8           workforce housing, a really critical need in our  
9           community.

10                   I think it's a shame that young  
11           firefighters, police officers, teachers and health  
12           care workers can't afford to live in the community  
13           that they serve. So, with that, I support the  
14           proposal to demolish to make way for what will  
15           then come. Thank you.

16                   MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Gail  
17           Rothrock, Townley McElhiney, Michael Ford, Ninette  
18           Sadusky, Hal Hardaway.

19                   MS. ROTHROCK: Good afternoon, Mayor  
20           Euille, Members of the City Council. Gail  
21           Rothrock, I serve on the Board of Trustees of  
22           Historic Alexandria Foundation, and I and my

1 colleague, Townley McElhiney, will be representing  
2 Historical Alexandria Foundation tonight -- this  
3 afternoon, late afternoon.

4 I have submitted to you on September 2nd  
5 a letter that went into your files regarding the  
6 consultant's report and our complete disagreement  
7 with the conclusions of the Thunderbird  
8 consultant. And I'm not going to read that this  
9 afternoon because, hopefully, you've had a chance  
10 to look at it, but we also, once again, disagree  
11 with the Staff Report, and we believe that  
12 retaining this historic complex, and the historic  
13 use of this property is essential to the character  
14 of the Parker-Gray Historic District; and that  
15 four of the six criteria are met.

16 And I'll go over them quickly. Criteria  
17 one, removal of the buildings would be to the  
18 detriment of the public interest. We agree  
19 because they are significant and the only  
20 remaining example, as you've heard, of the Federal  
21 Government's effort to provide housing for  
22 African-Americans war workers in Alexandria,

1 through the Lanham Act. They are the oldest  
2 remaining public housing units in the city, and  
3 they were designed to be permanent housing.

4 They were of course, were designed by a  
5 prominent local architect, Delos Smith, who  
6 designed the Prayer Room of the capital, and the  
7 previous alterations that have occurred to the  
8 modernist design vocabulary that are used, can  
9 easily be remedied with rehabilitation.

10 Criteria four, retention of the  
11 buildings would preserve and protect the historic  
12 area of the city. Yes, indeed, because first they  
13 are a key part of the cultural footprint, a term I  
14 heard this afternoon that is very appropriate the  
15 Institutional Center for African-Americans in  
16 Parker-Gray, the Historic Center, and you've heard  
17 about the losses to that center.

18 Second, their presence helps us better  
19 understand both the history of segregation and the  
20 contributions of African-Americans to the war  
21 effort when discrimination in the public and  
22 private sector occurred all over the country.

1 Third, it is almost 75 years since these buildings  
2 were constructed; we have a different perspective  
3 now, than when the National Registry Nomination  
4 was developed, and even when in 2012, the City  
5 Staff developed their 1931 cutoff of significance.  
6 I think we've learned, we've all learned a lot  
7 more about the significance of these buildings and  
8 the World War II effort. I have just a little  
9 more.

10 Criteria five, retention of the  
11 buildings to promote the general welfare by  
12 maintaining and increasing property values, and  
13 educating citizens; yes, certainly, once  
14 rehabilitated they will maintain and increase  
15 property values and they will become part of the  
16 City's promotion of African- American heritage,  
17 and this can be done both by Visit Alexandria, by  
18 the Office of Historic Alexandria in many ways,  
19 but the first way will be for rehabilitation for  
20 them to look the way they looked originally.

21 I think the Carver School's  
22 rehabilitation success, which we all did not

1 expect to happen is a very good example of  
2 partnerships and creative thinking.

3 Criteria six, retention of the buildings  
4 would maintain the scale and character of the  
5 neighborhood. Yes, the neighborhood predominantly  
6 is still comprised two-story buildings in open  
7 settings, as you've heard, and the buildings are  
8 essential part of the African-American core of the  
9 historic district.

10 So this must not be left to  
11 interpretation, and to signage, and to plaques,  
12 this must be left that we have the physical  
13 buildings themselves. So I ask the Council to  
14 send ARHA back to the drawing board to pursue the  
15 options that they have not really studied,  
16 rehabilitation of affordable housing, using a  
17 qualified historic preservation architect. Thank  
18 you.

19 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. The next  
20 speaker is Townley McElhiney, Michael Ford,  
21 Ninette Sandusky (sic), Hal Hardaway, McArthur  
22 Myers.

1 MS. McELHINEY: Do I push the talk  
2 button?

3 MAYOR EUILLE: You don't need to do  
4 anything. Just pull your mic.

5 MS. McELHINEY: All right. There we go.  
6 Good afternoon, Mayor Euille, and City Council  
7 Members. I'm Townley McElhiney, and I'm  
8 tag-teaming with Gail from HAF. I have over 35  
9 years of experience as a Preservationist and  
10 Architectural Historian, including at being at the  
11 AIA, American Institute of Architects, the  
12 Director of their Historic Resources Program. I  
13 have sat on a Bar for four years, and a State  
14 Historic Preservation Officer's Committee on the  
15 register for five.

16 I'm here to advocate for the  
17 rehabilitation of Ramsey Homes, and to ask you not  
18 to grant ARHA a permit to demolish; this  
19 architecturally, yes, architecturally and  
20 historically-significant complex. The Ramsey  
21 Homes with its 1940s Mid-Century modern style, and  
22 open asset as a whole, could be listed in the

1 National Register of Historic Place on its own  
2 merits, meeting three of those four criteria.  
3 Ramsey Homes with Carver Nursery, and historic --  
4 and the Robinson Library -- excuse me -- is a  
5 culturally-important hub in the fabric of the  
6 Parker-Gray Historic District, in the City of  
7 Alexandria as a whole.

8 It is a three-dimensional property  
9 which, once destroyed, the significant  
10 contributions to the city's African-American  
11 heritage will be gone forever. And we will loose  
12 these unique buildings critical to understanding  
13 the city's continuum of history through the  
14 centuries. Plaques and exhibits will not do.

15 I hope I'm answering the residents'  
16 former talk, because I'm here mainly to support  
17 rehabilitation. And that means the preservation  
18 to the extent possible of the exterior of the  
19 building combined with the modernization, the  
20 complete overhaul of its interior. I think that's  
21 what we are looking for. As the National Park  
22 Service says, "Rehabilitation acknowledges the

1 need to alter, to add to a local historic property  
2 to meet continuing or changing uses, while  
3 retaining the property's historic character."

4 So, this city can save this district,  
5 and can upgrade the living space, code and ADA  
6 issues can be resolved. One idea for the duplex  
7 is to be rearranged into one-story apartments-- a  
8 little wrap up. These horizontal first and  
9 second-floor apartments will meet ADA and other  
10 accessible requirements.

11 Financing is an issue, we've been on the  
12 phone with HUD, the National Park Service and  
13 Virginia State Park Preservation Office, and there  
14 are many, many ways to package financially the use  
15 of HUD low-income housing tax credits, along with  
16 Federal and State historic tax credits.

17 Arlington County has done this, to  
18 rehabilitate Buckingham Village, which contains  
19 affordable housing. We just need to look to our  
20 neighbors. This rehabilitation can work and we at  
21 HAF can assist this to be a positive,  
22 collaborative effort. If the Council upholds the

1 BAR's decision, and denies ARHA a permit to  
2 demolish, we believe the Ramsey Homes can become a  
3 successful model for rehabilitating affordable  
4 housing. Thank you.

5 I also wanted to add a note that Mr.  
6 Wilson forwarded me comments from ARHA, which I  
7 answered this morning, and I would like those to  
8 become part of the record, that email, please.  
9 Thank you.

10 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. The next  
11 speaker is Michael Ford, Ninette Sandusky --  
12 excuse me -- Ninette Sadusky, I apologize; Hal  
13 Hardaway, McArthur Myers, David Lawrence.

14 MR. FORD: Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor  
15 Silberberg, and Members of the City Council.  
16 Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name  
17 is Michael Ford, and I live in the Parker-Gray  
18 Historic District. I fully support the BAR's  
19 decision to deny ARHA's demolition request, and  
20 ask that you endorse that decision and enable the  
21 history buildings to be preserved.

22 Ramsey Homes meets preservation criteria

1 one, four, five and six, and but my remarks will  
2 focus on criteria four and five. Preservation of  
3 these homes will both help and preserve and  
4 protect the Parker-Gray Historic District and  
5 could help promote heritage tourism. Ramsey Homes  
6 were designed by a local architect, Delos Smith,  
7 who was one of the original members of the  
8 Alexandria BAR, and also did work on the U.S.  
9 Capital.

10 As a Veteran, I think it is important to  
11 note that they built this permanent housing for  
12 African-American defense workers during World War  
13 II. The housing of the African- American Junior  
14 Officers marked one milestone on the path to the  
15 Army's desegregation in 1948. Even more  
16 interesting is the fact that those names of the  
17 defense workers, who lived at Ramsey during World  
18 War II, were concealed, first, from census data  
19 for security reasons, which strongly suggests that  
20 such workers were involved in sensitive war work.

21 After all, there's not much reason to  
22 hide the identity of the average soldier. Who is

1 to say what stories will be uncovered as records  
2 are declassified? What unknown hero stories will  
3 be revealed? Given the overall growth in heritage  
4 tourism, there is a potential to promote Ramsey  
5 along with the nearby Black history museum to  
6 serve as a focal point for heritage tourism to do  
7 educate citizens about segregation, the role of  
8 Alexandria's African-American community in the war  
9 effort, and the Parker-Gray community at the time.

10 I'm aware there are those who say that  
11 Ramsey Homes are too modest to merit their  
12 preservation, however I've been in Iraq three  
13 times and Afghanistan three times, the last thing  
14 earlier this year. I've seen the destruction that  
15 results when one group, does not value the story  
16 or the culture of others. ISIS, the Taliban and  
17 al-Qaeda have destroyed countless of buildings and  
18 sites, because they did not value the history that  
19 those structures represent. I daresay we would  
20 all disagree with that view.

21 Ramsey tells an important chapter in the  
22 history of Parker-Gray neighborhood and an

1 important chapter of the American soldier, and I  
2 ask you to support this preservation. Thank you.

3 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Ninette  
4 Sadusky, Hal Hardaway, McArthur Myers, David  
5 Lawrence, and Vin VanFleet.

6 MS. SADUSKY: Hi. Good afternoon.  
7 Ninette Sadusky. I'm here asking you to oppose  
8 ARHA's appeal, and to affirm in whole the BAR's  
9 decision to preserve -- excuse me -- the BAR's  
10 decision not to demolish any of the Ramsey Homes.  
11 You know, I've sat here, we've all been sitting  
12 here this afternoon, and I was trying to think of  
13 whether or not I was going to give my written  
14 remarks, or whether I was going to try to offer  
15 something fresh that you might not have  
16 considered.

17 You've heard from, and you'll continue  
18 to hear this evening from advocates for Historic  
19 Preservation, the green space, equality and  
20 governance, which I do want to get a little more  
21 into, social military history, ethnic heritage,  
22 African-American heritage, architecture. One of

1 the things I say, when I look across the street,  
2 now that I'm better informed about the long  
3 history of this property is how nice it was to  
4 tell my father about the Civil War Union Troops  
5 that actually camp there, the hospitals, the  
6 stables, the barracks that's in your report, and  
7 we have the names of them, and how interesting it  
8 would be some day to find out who from World War  
9 II defense workers were in those homes.

10 How proud I am to be associated with a  
11 neighborhood with a long history of standing up  
12 for what's right. Whether what's right across the  
13 ocean or what's right here at home, and how we  
14 treat ourselves, what we value. When it comes to  
15 governance, I wrote an article that was in The  
16 Times and The Gazette, and I shared it, focused on  
17 governance. I believe this is a watershed moment  
18 for historic preservation, but more so in terms of  
19 governance, I believe that the individual property  
20 owners should have the same standards as  
21 developers and other entities.

22 And I really, seriously, fear for our

1 historic district. If you say one house is good  
2 enough and the other three can go. I live in a  
3 house, the Italian Renaissance from 1880, there  
4 are lots of examples of those in Alexandria and  
5 Parker-Gray. Does that mean I could come in the  
6 day after the decision and say, well, I'll go  
7 ahead and raise my home, because look how many of  
8 them there are, and nobody famous camped on my  
9 land. I wasn't part of any significant effort.

10 So, anyway, I just ask you, historic  
11 district should mean something, and how we define  
12 them as historic, we have set about the guidelines  
13 that we are trying to follow. So I appreciate  
14 your vote today and affirm in whole the decision  
15 that was by the BAR. Thank you.

16 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Hal Hardaway,  
17 McArthur Myers, David Lawrence, Van VanFleet,  
18 Elliott Bell-Krasner -- I apologize. All right,  
19 we don't have Hal. McArthur Myers, David  
20 Lawrence, Van VanFleet, Elliott Bell-Krasner,  
21 Elizabeth Jones.

22 MR. MYERS: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor,

1 Madam Vice Mayor, Members of the Council, Mr.  
2 Jinks and Ms. Baker. Councilman Smedberg, unlike  
3 you, I was able to read the whole historical  
4 document and found it interesting, and also found  
5 some flaws and some faults in it, but I did read  
6 it. My name is McArthur Myers, I'm here to  
7 represent the Society for the Preservation  
8 African-American History in Alexandria. So I will  
9 set my personal comments aside and for another  
10 day. So, within the timeframe I'll just go ahead  
11 and read this.

12 "To the Mayor and City Council, the  
13 Alexandria Society for the Preservation of Black  
14 Heritage is writing to express his concern about  
15 the proposed demolition of the Ramsey Homes,  
16 founded in 1980 to preserve and educate the  
17 overall Alexandria community of its lustrous Black  
18 heritage. The society opposes measures that will  
19 fail to preserve structures that represent vibrant  
20 landscape, as in this example at the Parker-Gray  
21 Historical District.

22 We express our support for the denial or

1 the Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority  
2 request to demolish the Ramsey Homes.  
3 Additionally, we implore to evaluate the strong  
4 interest of the community and residents to  
5 maintain this historical landmark, and to examine  
6 other solutions for consideration.

7 To Council we are sure, you have paid  
8 attention to Section 7, page 2, in the Summation  
9 of the Lanham Act, relating to the building of a  
10 Negro housing. Unfortunately, you inherited  
11 Federal Law at the time about the separation of  
12 the military and the war; page 10 speaks on the  
13 integrity of the neighborhoods, and the reasons  
14 for the application, and your application here in  
15 my hand, requesting that area for historical  
16 designation.

17 Page 12 specifically speak for, and on  
18 the Ramsey Homes, page 13 talk about the  
19 historical significance in the institution that  
20 was in Parker-Gray and attributed to affirm the  
21 justification for your application which also  
22 states historical styles and structure. And we'll

1 say by the City Historical District because of  
2 your ordinance, and the nomination package. Pages  
3 196, 197, 198 also state the Council and ARHA, and  
4 the Planning Commission as to nominating  
5 participants for the application.

6 Finally, on page 47 of this updated  
7 historical report contradicts this recommendation.  
8 I really think that they, now I am going to leave  
9 my And also mentioned the intelligence of  
10 inhabitants and residents that live in that  
11 community which another gentleman alluded to just  
12 before me; and I'll say this -- we say this, thank  
13 you--" I'll be finished -- We say this, thank  
14 goodness for Mr. Robert Dobson'son our Wall of  
15 Fame Committee for what they have done to preserve  
16 the history of the Parker-Gray community. And  
17 I'll let you now add the Ramsey Homes to the  
18 exhibit."

19 And when you saw me moving back and  
20 forth, that's because I was on the cell phone  
21 because Mr. Baker, who is the President, couldn't  
22 be here, and he asked me to put this out here.

1 "Asking ARHA to consider the Society participation  
2 on the history, significance to Plan B, which many  
3 of you have spoke today on. The City's support,  
4 and affirm an expression of the history and  
5 significance of the homes; to develop a long -- we  
6 will be willing to work with ARHA in developing  
7 the contents of the history and make some monetary  
8 -- And they were asking that they make some  
9 monetary contribution to the Black History Museum  
10 or to the building expansion, and also consider  
11 making some funding to the Wall of Fame Project.  
12 As they've said in the report here, that the Wall  
13 of Fame is a great interpreter, but that's not a  
14 permanent housing of up at Charles Houston  
15 recreation center." So, thank you, kindly. And  
16 I'm open for any questions.

17 MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Myers, first of  
18 all, thank you very much.

19 MR. MYERS: Yes, ma'am.

20 MS. SILBERBERG: Do we have a copy of  
21 the additional sentence in the record?

22 MR. MYERS: I was doing this as I was

1 going but believe, yes.

2 MS. SILBERBERG: So, I don't know -- it  
3 might help, Ms. Anderson. Thank you, Mr. Myers.  
4 Okay. The next speaker, David Lawrence, to be  
5 followed by Van VanFleet, to be followed by Elliot  
6 Bell-Krasner --

7 BELL-KRASNER: Bell-Krasner.

8 MS. SILBERBERG: Bell-Krasner? Sorry.  
9 And will be followed by Elizabeth Jones. Okay.  
10 Mr. Lawrence, welcome.

11 MR. LAWRENCE: Thank you. Good evening,  
12 and I've never been here but I have a new-found  
13 respect for what you all do, because it's been a  
14 long day, and these are hard issues. So, thank  
15 you.

16 MS. SILBERBERG: Thank you.

17 MR. LAWRENCE: My wife and I bought one  
18 of the two homes just across the alley from Ramsey  
19 Homes, about a-year- and-a-half ago now, and we  
20 just love it there. We love our neighborhood, we  
21 like having Ramsey Homes in the backyards, and we  
22 are really concerned that the proposed demolition

1 and especially the new development ARHA has  
2 proposed would ruin the neighborhood we love.

3 Ramsey Homes can and should be renovate  
4 instead. The BAR has looked at this, and other  
5 people know more about historic preservation, but  
6 the buildings are plainly historic. And I think  
7 ARHA's demolition plan evades the Historic  
8 District Rules that are a large part of why my  
9 wife and I bought here. We understood when we  
10 bought that the BAR Rules would stop us from doing  
11 a lot of the renovations and upgrades we would  
12 like. But we felt protected by the fact that the  
13 same rules apply to our neighbors.

14 We bought into a compact in this  
15 community to preserve it for generations to come,  
16 and we liked that. ARHA should be held to the  
17 compact we all share to sustain Parker- Gray. I  
18 support public housing, and I have an open mind,  
19 but I don't understand ARHA's reasoning. They've  
20 allowed the homes to fall in disrepair, they don't  
21 have adequate modern amenities, and they say that  
22 should excuse them from the Historic District

1 Rules.

2 ARHA admits it has run up this  
3 maintenance debt, failing the public and the  
4 residents who support it, yet they present that  
5 failure as a sword, that could cut through the  
6 Historic District Rules. Two wrongs don't make a  
7 right. Make no mistake though, that is the key  
8 question here, should the public cover ARHA's  
9 debts by trading in the historic character of  
10 Parker-Gray? The answer is no. The answer is no,  
11 because ARHA's proposal hurts the residents and  
12 visitors of today, and those of the future as  
13 well. Please think about that.

14 Whereas ARHA could renovate Ramsey with  
15 an amount on the order of an old town commons town  
16 home, trading in history instead would affect  
17 generations of Alexandrians at incalculable cost  
18 across time. I concede it is tempting and easy to  
19 ignore the cost our decisions impose on the  
20 future, but it's bad public policy.

21 And finally, I know time is short. I  
22 don't want it to get lost here that my wife and I

1 support public housing, we really like the Ramsey  
2 Homes. We aren't the stereotypical residents  
3 saying, not in my backyard, it's already there,  
4 and we are saying keep it in our backyard. That's  
5 because Ramsey Homes and its residents are a great  
6 part of a wonderful community. Please support the  
7 BAR decision to keep it that way. Thanks.

8 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Van VanFleet,  
9 to be followed by Elliot Bell-Krasner, Elizabeth  
10 Jones, Katie Spangler.

11 MR. VANFLEET: Mr. Mayor, Members of the  
12 Council. I'm Van VanFleet. I live on Wolf Street  
13 in the Old Historic District, and most of the time  
14 you've heard me speak about historic preservation  
15 in the Old and Historic District, it ends up that  
16 my campaign headquarters happens to be in 900  
17 block of Pendleton, right across the street from  
18 the Ramsey development.

19 The current Ramsey public housing area  
20 reflects another chapter of our history within our  
21 historic city, we constantly refer to our  
22 revolutionary and Civil War roots, but little is

1 said about our World War II roots. A war that  
2 ended some 70 years ago, most of you weren't  
3 around then, I was. You are all aware the four  
4 buildings were erected in the 1941- '42 timeframe,  
5 to house Afro-Americans employed by the  
6 government. Although maybe not architecturally  
7 significant, it is indeed culturally and  
8 historically significant and needs to be  
9 preserved.

10 Mr. Mayor, if this were Charleston, Joe  
11 Riley would never, ever pass up the opportunity to  
12 invoke the use of apt, adaptive reuse restoration  
13 on this project, in order to retain that cultural  
14 and historical significance. The mass and scale  
15 of this current Ramsey housing area fits in and is  
16 very compatible with the historic neighborhood.  
17 Conversely the 52- unit proposed replacement does  
18 not.

19 Respectfully, I request that you vote to  
20 use adaptive reuse restoration on this project and  
21 deny any request to overturn the BAR's decision to  
22 not demolish this public housing area. One final

1 plea; don't tear down the Ramsey houses. Thank  
2 you.

3 MAYOR EUILLE: Next speaker is Elliot  
4 Bell-Krasner, and I apologize --

5 SPEAKER: That's all right.

6 MAYOR EUILLE: Elizabeth Jones, Katie  
7 Springer, David Springer, Dino Drudi.

8 MR. BELL-KRASNER: Good afternoon, Mr.  
9 Mayor, Madam Vice Mayor, and Members of the City  
10 Council. My name is Elliot Bell-Krasner, and I'm  
11 the Vice Chairman of the Historic Alexandria  
12 Resources Commission. I apologize for my  
13 handwriting. I blame it on my father, he's a  
14 physician, you know, so that's probably where I  
15 get it from.

16 Many people have come up here and talked  
17 about the historic significance, the cultural  
18 significance, the green space. I'm not going to  
19 rehash a lot of what has been said. The Historic  
20 Alexandria Resources Commission unanimously voted  
21 a few months ago to oppose the demolition of the  
22 Ramsey Homes, and we very strongly support the

1 BAR's decision, and we hope that you will deny  
2 their appeal, and we also do support the idea of  
3 rehabilitation. We are not indifferent to the  
4 idea of public housing; we are not indifferent to  
5 the problems that are being faced by the Ramsey  
6 Homes residents.

7 This attempt to sort of separate the  
8 idea of historic preservation and public housing,  
9 to pit historic preservation against the residents  
10 of Ramsey is not really right in my view, and it's  
11 not fair because in one way, they are not mutually  
12 exclusive, there are ways to preserve these homes  
13 properly using proper archaeological and historic  
14 resources, using a proper use of the process.

15 And I think Councilman Smedberg alluded  
16 to it. You know, that some parts of this, you  
17 know, proposal, the idea that this evidence was  
18 found after the BAR had already made its decision,  
19 it just, you know, underscores the lack of  
20 transparency in this process. You've heard others  
21 bring up the financial concerns, the fact that  
22 ARHA says that the rehabilitation is going to cost

1 90 percent to redevelop, and you've heard the  
2 reasons why we believe that not to be the case.

3 You know, my favorite Dr. Seuss book, is  
4 The Lorax, and it teaches us not only about social  
5 activism and the idea of preservation, but the  
6 idea that the little guy should not be ignored,  
7 the little guy in this case seems to be historic  
8 preservation, and The Lorax stands up very loudly,  
9 and he says, "I speak for the trees." Well, I  
10 speak for historic preservation, and so do the  
11 members of the Commission on which I sit.

12 The bottom line is that these arguments  
13 have been made time and again, and the historic  
14 aspects of things seem to have been brushed aside.  
15 There seems to be an indifference to the historic  
16 community, and that's not what Alexandria is  
17 about. The city's history dates back hundreds of  
18 years, and we cannot and should not ignore that.  
19 Again, the fact that this is permanent public  
20 housing that was established for World War II  
21 workers during segregation, is significant in and  
22 of itself (buzzer).

1 I'd like to just kind of close, I know  
2 I'm running out of time here, with the words of  
3 Jackie Kennedy when she was talking about the idea  
4 of preserving Grand Central Terminal, which I  
5 realize is on a different scale, and she said, "Is  
6 it not cruel to let our city die by degrees,  
7 stripped of all her proud monuments until there  
8 will be nothing left of our history and beauty to  
9 inspire our children? If they are not inspired  
10 about the past of our city, where will they have  
11 the strength to fight for her future? If  
12 Americans care about their past but for the short-  
13 term gain, and tear down everything that matters,  
14 maybe this time it is time to take a stand, to  
15 reverse the tide, so we all won't end up in a  
16 uniformed world of steel and glass boxes and live  
17 in a glass and steel nightmare."

18 I urge you to take a stand to send ARHA  
19 back to the BAR to consider rehabilitation and to  
20 deny this appeal. Thank you very much.

21 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Elizabeth  
22 Jones, Katie Springer, David Springer, Dino Drudi,

1 Bill Hendrickson.

2 MS. JONES: Good afternoon. My name is  
3 Elizabeth Jones, and I live in the Del Ray  
4 neighborhood; delighted to see you all here so  
5 late this afternoon. The previous speakers have  
6 made numerous salient points which I will not  
7 repeat, but I agree with all of the ones who are  
8 in favor of saving the Ramsey Homes.

9 The ARHA Agency has practiced what is  
10 known in historic preservation parlance as  
11 demolition by neglect. It's a very simple term,  
12 and they have done rehabilitation, but the fact  
13 that they are saying the buildings are not able to  
14 be rehabilitated, et cetera, shows the neglect  
15 that has happened there. The Council should deny  
16 this item, and have ARHA revisit and recalculate  
17 the numbers they have proposed for rehab. I think  
18 an independent contractor and architect should be  
19 hired to evaluate their numbers and design.

20 The video that you saw, which I hope you  
21 all did see, showed the scale of the Ramsey Homes  
22 in the neighborhood and how unique they are

1 architecturally and historically important to  
2 Parker-Gray, and to Alexandria as a whole. And I  
3 hope that you will consider looking at the  
4 experts, which the Board, which of course the  
5 Council appointed. The BAR for Parker-Gray and  
6 you will make the right decision and support them.  
7 Thank you. The answer is not to tear them down,  
8 but to rehabilitate them.

9           MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Katie  
10 Springer, David Springer, Dino Drudi, Bill  
11 Hendrickson, Yvonne Weight-Callaghan.

12           MS. SPRINGER: Distinguished Members of  
13 the City Council, thank you for the opportunity to  
14 speak to you today. My name is Katie Springer,  
15 and I live at the corner of Pendleton and Alfred,  
16 just on the other side of the Ramsey Homes. I can  
17 see the Ramsey Homes from my backyard. I'm here  
18 to ask you to support the Parker-Gray Board of  
19 Architectural Review's decision to deny the  
20 demolition of the Ramsey Homes.

21           ARHA has argued that it's more cost  
22 effective to tear the Ramsey Homes down, rather

1 pursue options for rehabilitation. Further, the  
2 unacceptable conditions of the homes should not be  
3 an argument for demolition, but rather a mandate  
4 for this to be fixed. As a private homeowner  
5 living in the Historic Parker-Gray District, we  
6 accept and embrace that repairs are more expensive  
7 and cumbersome at times, but that is the cost of  
8 preserving history, and the architectural  
9 integrity of the neighborhood that makes us  
10 unique, and in this, this is the value that makes  
11 us richer, as a community.

12 In the City of Alexandria, and more  
13 specifically, the Parker-Gray District, we have  
14 demonstrated our commitment to respecting and  
15 preserving buildings that contribute to the  
16 history and culture of our neighborhoods. And  
17 it's through that commitment that we have  
18 testament to the history and stories of those who  
19 have lived here before us. The Ramsey Homes  
20 absolutely contribute to the historic nature of  
21 our neighborhood as well as tell the important  
22 stories of the homes for which these individuals

1 originally were built.

2           The authority of the Parker-Gray BAR, of  
3 which three members are architects --  
4 preservationist architects by profession, is  
5 endowed by the city, by you, the City Council, to  
6 decide the future of the Parker-Gray District.  
7 This authority must exist for everyone, from  
8 private homeowner to ARHA, or should exist for  
9 none. It's cheaper for me to tear down my home,  
10 as others have mentioned, and build the 3-storey  
11 expanded version of my dreams, which I may be  
12 coming back to you for, and say it will now be of  
13 similar height, of what is proposed to be built,  
14 maybe you'll overturn decisions for me as well.

15           I understood when I moved there though  
16 that I must follow the rules of the BAR, so I'm  
17 asking the City Council to overturn the unanimous  
18 -- to uphold the unanimous decision by the BAR  
19 that the Ramsey Homes meet the criteria for  
20 preservation. ARHA is telling the City, that us  
21 as resident, that they are above us as residents  
22 and the authority of the BAR in asking that they

1 be treated differently than we are as private  
2 homeowners. This is really a situation of  
3 fairness and authority. Either we are the  
4 Historic District for all who fall within the  
5 boundaries of Parker-Gray, including organizations  
6 like ARHA, or we are entirely not a historic  
7 district.

8 If the City Council votes to overturn  
9 the unanimous decision of the BAR, there will be  
10 little legitimate reasons for others to follow the  
11 regulations for private homeowners, some of which  
12 are significantly -- my house is two decades older  
13 than the Ramsey Homes, I have to follow rules that  
14 they are saying that they don't have to follow.  
15 The fact remains we cannot tolerate one set of  
16 rules for ARHA, and another for single family  
17 homeowners. If you vote today to overthrow the  
18 rules of the unanimous finding of Parker-Gray BAR,  
19 that the Ramsey Homes met four of six criteria for  
20 preservation, what future authority will the BAR  
21 uphold? Thank you for your time today.

22 MAYOR EUILLE: David Springer, Dino

1 Drudi, Bill Hendrickson, Yvonne Weight-Callaghan,  
2 Charles Trokso.

3 MR. SPRINGER: Well she's difficult to  
4 follow, which is why I married her. I have  
5 several prepared comments here, but I'd like to  
6 freshen it up a little bit as well. I've heard a  
7 lot of things today, I feel like some of it smoke  
8 and mirrors, we were told at the beginning this is  
9 about historic preservation, and architecture.  
10 And then we hear about subsidies and dollars and  
11 size and space and neglect. I want to focus back  
12 on architecture, historic preservation in telling  
13 a story.

14 Where else in Alexandria can you find  
15 1920 style Prairie homes, with beautiful green  
16 yards where the kids play, families are outside  
17 barbecuing? I can't find it anywhere else. It is  
18 a unique part of Parker-Gray. I love the Ramsey  
19 Homes. It is special, it's unique to the  
20 community, we are truly all neighbors and I would  
21 be devastated to see that disappear.

22 My favorite quote, my new favorite quote

1 over the last two months researching this, William  
2 Shakespeare, "What is the past is prologue," made  
3 more famous by Jacqueline Kennedy-Onassis in her  
4 preservation work where she said, "The past is  
5 prologue." And I truly believe that. Are we  
6 really ready to tear something down and put up a  
7 plaque? There is historic significance. ARHA and  
8 others would not recommend, well, let's interpret  
9 it this way, we'll put a small exhibit in the  
10 Black History Museum, or we'll put up a plaque so  
11 people can drive by and see what Alexandria used  
12 to look like.

13 People don't visit the Washington, D.C.,  
14 metro region, come to Old Town to come see  
15 plaques. Sure, not everyone is going to come with  
16 Ramsey Homes on their agenda, or walking through  
17 the neighborhoods looking at the homes, perhaps  
18 you question why those were there, and what's the  
19 history behind it? So, I just implore the  
20 Committee, and the City Council to uphold the  
21 decision, and not tearing down the Ramsey Homes.  
22 Thank you for your time.

1                   MAYOR EUILLE:   Dino Drudi, Bill  
2   Hendrickson, Yvonne Weight-Callaghan, Charles  
3   Trokso, John von Senden.

4                   MR. DRUDI:   Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I'm  
5   going to raise the concern that others have  
6   touched on, it's the same concern I raised with  
7   the Parker-Gray BAR on the Jefferson-Houston  
8   School. I said, is there one set of rules that  
9   apply to everyone in the Historic District, or are  
10  there two sets of rules: One for the citizens when  
11  the citizens want to do something, and a different  
12  one, a more lax one, a more generous one for when  
13  the government wants to do something?

14                  And the import of that was that to have  
15  a more generous, more lax set of rules when the  
16  government wants to do something, sets a bad  
17  example and is an abuse. And the answer I got,  
18  was a surprising one, one of the BAR members said  
19  to me, no, no, Mr. Drudi, historic preservation is  
20  an important public policy of the City. The  
21  government should be held to a higher and more  
22  stringent standard for historic preservation, than

1 we would hold a private property owner.

2 So this is the question. Is there one  
3 set of rules, the same set of rules that apply to  
4 everyone, whether you are a private resident, or  
5 an institution of the government? Or, does the  
6 government get special privileges, and special  
7 dispensations, and special preferences, from the  
8 very rules that it imposes on the rest of us?

9 Or, is the government going to in the  
10 words of the Parker-Gray Board Member, going to  
11 set an example of historic preservation, by being  
12 more stringent, by hoping to set an example for  
13 homeowners and private property owners, that maybe  
14 they should do more than the minimum requires?  
15 That's the question, because some of us see giving  
16 the government a more -- holding the government to  
17 a more lax standard, letting it do things it would  
18 never think of letting a private property owner  
19 do, is an abuse. Thank you.

20 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Bill  
21 Hendrickson, Yvonne Weight-Callaghan, Charles  
22 Trokso, John von Senden, Charlotte Landis.

1                   MR. HENDRICKSON: Good afternoon. My  
2 name is Bill Hendrickson, and I Chair the Historic  
3 Alexandria Resources Commission, and I'm not going  
4 to quote from Jackie Kennedy. But as my  
5 colleague, Elliott pointed out that 26 people on  
6 HARC voted unanimously to oppose demolition of the  
7 Ramsey Homes. The historical facts are clear, and  
8 you've heard some of them today, but the Ramsey  
9 Homes were developed to house African-American war  
10 workers, they were intended to be permanent, and  
11 perhaps most importantly, I think the Ramsey Homes  
12 became a key component of an exceptionally  
13 important African-American community in  
14 Alexandria.

15                   And, ironically of course, this  
16 community existed largely because of the loathsome  
17 practice of racial segregation. Those are the  
18 facts, it's how we value those facts, and the  
19 degree to which we should put the needs of the  
20 present ahead of considerations of the past that  
21 are at issue today. I mean, to be sure, and  
22 you've heard this a number of times this

1       afternoon, there are other ways than buildings to  
2       tell the story of African-American life and  
3       segregation in Alexandria.

4               However, as the City Staff Report points  
5       out, although museums, photographs, oral  
6       histories, music and folklore, are means by which  
7       intangible aspects of cultural heritage can be  
8       preserved, and I quote directly now from the Staff  
9       Report, "They do not have the same physical and  
10      visual presence as actual buildings."

11              ARHA's proposal to demolish Ramsey Homes  
12      and build a new, modern housing complex would fit  
13      in well with the shiny, happy, new buildings that  
14      are being built in this area, but would be a great  
15      loss. We would lose these humble buildings that  
16      say so much about African-American life in  
17      Alexandria, and the shameful period of racial  
18      segregation. Thank you.

19              MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Yvonne  
20      Weight-Callaghan, Charles Trokso, John von Senden,  
21      Charlotte Landis, Boyd Sipe.

22              MS. Weight-CALLAGHAN: Good afternoon,

1 Mr. Mayor, Members of Council. My name is Yvonne  
2 Weight-Callaghan, I'm President of Old Town Civic  
3 Association, but I don't think I'll take the full  
4 five minutes. Our Board of Directors has voted  
5 unanimately to urge you to uphold the decision of  
6 the Parker-Gray Board.

7 In the past, I guess a fairly distant  
8 past, the City itself, that is to say, your  
9 predecessors, saw fit to include Ramsey Homes as a  
10 contributing resource to be considered for the  
11 placement of Parker-Gray in the National Historic  
12 Register. Your predecessors, in office, proudly  
13 noted that, "While they are modest, the Ramsey  
14 Homes were attractive models of the craftsman and  
15 Prairie style architecture."

16 Now, today, the consultant, I assumed  
17 paid by ARHA is trashing them, but they are  
18 neat-looking homes, you go by them, they look  
19 nice. I do have to say as an aside, maybe I'm a  
20 little more sympathetically inclined because I am  
21 privilege to live in-house that Delos Smith bought  
22 and renovated. And he was a prominent church

1 architect, he was planning to build -- to write  
2 magnus opus on Colonial architecture, church  
3 Colonial architecture, but he just became a  
4 regular working architect and never had time to do  
5 it, but his daughter, Misa Smith, whom a lot of  
6 you know, has donated all of his records to  
7 William and Mary, and they are going through them  
8 with the eye to publishing some of his records.

9 As we've heard, the Ramsey Homes do tell  
10 a story of a portion of Alexandria's history that  
11 has been all too often forgotten. Time after  
12 time, we've been here before you talking about  
13 some magnificent house on Captain's Row, and how  
14 it should be preserved, and how architectural  
15 unique it is, and how it would be just so awful to  
16 tear it down. These homes, too, deserve the same  
17 respect and the same consideration.

18 You know, to just think that these homes  
19 were built for people who had suffered  
20 segregation, nevertheless did everything they  
21 could to support the war effort even though --  
22 even then, not only housing, but all the armed

1 forces were segregated, nevertheless they served,  
2 and these residences tell that story as well. And  
3 yes, this is a perfectly marvelous example of this  
4 demolition by neglect, and that phrase was coined  
5 by Michael Hobbs, I think he should be proud of  
6 it.

7 ARHA has long known of the historic  
8 nature of the Parker-Gray District and of these  
9 residences. It therefore has a fiduciary duty,  
10 the same as anybody else does in the Old Town of  
11 Parker-Gray to preserve what it has for future  
12 generations. And as far as the money is  
13 concerned, or other affordable housing is  
14 concerned, let me remind you, ARHA is all but  
15 having a yard sale. Every single property they've  
16 put up for sale, including their headquarters.  
17 There is a lot of opportunity to look at a lot of  
18 those pocket purchase, and find, I think, very  
19 good opportunities to find some -- the money  
20 that's necessary.

21 All of us who've renovated houses; and  
22 Delos Smith just got barely off to a start, and I

1 had to do a lot to finish it, all of us who've  
2 renovated houses know that there can be a heavy  
3 cost involved. I would always question whether  
4 renovation is more expensive than brand new  
5 housing, but at least it is what one should do.  
6 Thank you.

7 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Charles  
8 Trokso, John von Senden, Charlotte Landis, Boyd  
9 Sipe, John Baum. All right. Chuck left, you are  
10 up, but John Von Senden, Charlotte Landis, Boyd  
11 Sipe, John Baum, Christopher Jones.

12 MR. VON SENDEN: Hello, again. I'm John  
13 von Senden. This time I'm representing myself  
14 only, as an architect with 30 years experience,  
15 most of which has been preservation. As Duncan  
16 Blair has often heard me say, all buildings are  
17 historic to their own time. I think Wetlands  
18 tried to make the point that because this is  
19 Mid-20th Century architecture it doesn't really  
20 count, and I disagree with that statement. All  
21 buildings also change over time. There are very  
22 few buildings, unless they were built last year,

1 that are the way they were when they were first  
2 built, and those changes over time, do not  
3 necessarily change the architectural significance  
4 of then.

5           There was also a lot of discussion in  
6 the Wetlands' presentation about plant material  
7 which is not really germane. What is germane, are  
8 the six criteria in the zoning ordinance, and I  
9 think the preponderance of evidence shows that the  
10 building is architecturally and historically of  
11 interest in Alexandria. I think it also shows  
12 that there is some retention of the building,  
13 would help preserve and protect the historic area.  
14 And criteria six, I think, by definition, the fact  
15 that it's set the scale and character of the  
16 neighborhood since 1942 pretty much defines  
17 meeting that criteria.

18           Nowhere in the criteria are economic --  
19 or the fact that the applicant has to make money  
20 off of this, so that's not really a concern. And  
21 there was one other item that somebody said they  
22 needed to bring the building to current code. My

1 understanding as a practicing architect is  
2 buildings need to meet current code when they are  
3 built or substantially renovated, which, by the  
4 presentation made was last done in the '70s, so I  
5 think though, the evidence before you is fairly  
6 clear that the BAR's decision should be upheld.  
7 Thank you.

8 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you, John.  
9 Charlotte Landis, Boyd Sipe, John Baum,  
10 Christopher Jones, Elsie Mescudi.

11 MS. LANDIS: Good afternoon, Council  
12 Members. I'll try and short and sweet. This past  
13 week, I wrote a letter to the Editor, it appeared  
14 in both The Gazette and The Times, I hope you've  
15 had a chance to read it, if you haven't I'll share  
16 my copy with you, and if you have you know that I  
17 support historical preservation.

18 I think that everybody has spoken, many  
19 issues about the historical preservation, and I do  
20 feel that there are too many buildings have been  
21 lost in Parker-Gray, plaques don't impart the  
22 visual impact that leaving those homes there, and

1 what I've heard today is possibly renovating them  
2 to some of the original architecture. I think  
3 that sounds like a fabulous idea. I've been  
4 pleased to hear you support Old Town Board of  
5 Architectural Review, I hope you will support  
6 Parker-Gray Old Town BAR. Thank you.

7 MAYOR EUILLE: David (inaudible); Boyd  
8 Sipe, John Baum, Christopher Jones, Elsie Mescudi,  
9 Phillip Mattis and Robert Powell.

10 MR. SIPE: Mr. Mayor, Ms. Vice Mayor,  
11 Members of the Council. I'm Boyd Sipe, I'm an  
12 Archeologist and Historic Preservation  
13 Professional, with Wetlands Studies. I work with  
14 Ms. Moss, who gave her initial presentation  
15 earlier. I just wanted to take the opportunity to  
16 say a few words about some of the recent  
17 statements that have mentioned our work. I want  
18 to affirm that in our opinion as historic resource  
19 professionals, the Ramsey Homes have lost  
20 integrity and are not individually eligible for  
21 listing on the National Register of Historic  
22 Places under criterion C.

1           That said, if they were eligible,  
2       National Register Eligible Buildings are  
3       demolished in Virginia with appropriate  
4       mitigation. I think a good point to make is that  
5       appropriate mitigation also leads to greater  
6       opportunities for education in history, than  
7       leaving tangible remains. And there is a lot of  
8       talk about the, uselessness of plaques and  
9       interpretive materials, and the value of tangible  
10      buildings. However, in my experience, that's not  
11      always the case.

12           Sometimes it's the funding that comes  
13      from mitigation effort; that leads to really grand  
14      interpretive and educational efforts that bring  
15      information about a historical resource to the  
16      widest public audience. This we see done on the  
17      State level all the time. The funding from  
18      mitigation is often critical to that sort of  
19      interpretive potential.

20           Also, I want to address some issues on  
21      the fairness and -- the fairness issue regarding  
22      private properties versus city agencies under BAR

1 review, we do have to remember that the local  
2 period of significance ends in 1931, so the Ramsey  
3 Homes postdate the local period of significance,  
4 so already I think the higher level is being met  
5 to some degree, and individual homeowners of  
6 buildings dating to the 1940s in the Parker-Gray  
7 District may also -- Well, unlike Ramsey, may see  
8 less scrutiny of what they did.

9 I just want to wrap up by saying, I  
10 think that we made a case that the BAR decision  
11 did not view these buildings as resources that  
12 postdated the period of significance and that  
13 should have been taken into account in the sixth  
14 criteria. Thank you.

15 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. John Baum, to  
16 be followed by Christopher Jones, Elsie Mescudi,  
17 Phillip Mattis and Robert Powell.

18 MR. BAUM: Mr. Mayor, Madam Vice Mayor,  
19 Members of Council. My name is John Baum. I live  
20 at 8 West Oak Street in Historic Rosemount, and  
21 I've been a resident of Alexandria for over 35  
22 years. For the record, and out of respect for

1 full disclosure, I'm a housing professional and a  
2 housing advocate. I've been in the housing  
3 industry and an advocate for affordable housing  
4 for over 35 years. My day job, I represent  
5 housing and redevelopment authorities nationwide,  
6 over 3,200 of them, including ARHA.

7 I'm on the Board of ALIVE, and I'm Vice  
8 Chair of their Affordable Housing Committee, and  
9 ALIVE does support the redevelopment at Ramsey.  
10 I'm also a Parishioner at St. Josephs, located in  
11 Parker-Gray, and we are proud to be celebrating  
12 100 years this year. I'm here today to do  
13 something very simple and very straightforward.  
14 I'm here today as a private citizen however, and  
15 I'm speaking only for myself in saying that I  
16 support the redevelopment at Ramsey. I think  
17 there have to be, and I think we can together find  
18 ways to honor and respect, honor history and  
19 respect cultural footprint of this city, and I'm  
20 not talking only about a plaque or a marker.

21 I think we can do -- we can and should  
22 do better than that in this case, but I do support

1 the redevelopment, but more than that I am  
2 concerned, and have been concerned about the need  
3 for decent, safe and affordable housing in the  
4 city, and as a professional, but also as a private  
5 citizen. I think what's important here, is the  
6 end and underlying goal of the redevelopment to  
7 provide decent, safe and affordable housing for  
8 not only the residents who live there, but for  
9 those who work in the city. And I urge you to  
10 consider these arguments and the sentiments of  
11 those on the affordable housing campaign trail.  
12 And thank you very much for your time.

13 MAYOR EUILLE: Christopher Jones, Elsie  
14 Mescudi, Phillip Mattis and Robert Powell, Boyd  
15 Walker.

16 MR. JONES: Good afternoon, to you all.  
17 My name is Christopher Jones, I've been a  
18 community member here since 2011, across from the  
19 Ramsey Homes, at 910 Pendleton Street, in the  
20 Historic District of Parker-Gray. I'm asking you  
21 to affirm and hold the BAR's decision to save the  
22 historic Ramsey Homes and green space. I took the

1 video that was sent to you, the video shows the  
2 drive up route 1, North Patrick within the Uptown  
3 Parker-Gray Historic District.

4 The video also shows there are only a  
5 few blocks, about four blocks along this main  
6 entrance and exit to the Parker-Gray Historic  
7 District, destroying any of the historic Ramsey  
8 Homes or green space would have a major negative  
9 impact on visual openness and its identify.

10 Please affirm in whole the BAR's decision to save  
11 historic Ramsey Homes and green space. Thank you.

12 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Elsie  
13 Mescudi, Phillip Mattis, Robert Powell, Boyd  
14 Walker, Smita Anand.

15 MS. MESCUDI: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor,  
16 Ms. Vice Mayor, who just left, and Members of the  
17 Council. My name is Elsie Mescida, and I moved to  
18 900 Pendleton Street in January of 1982, with my  
19 husband and 10-year-old son. We lived in our  
20 house for 28 out of the 33 years we've owned our  
21 home. I support the comments that have been made  
22 by those in opposition to the demolition of the

1 Ramsey Homes.

2 I've been invested in my neighborhood  
3 since day one, when my neighbor and friend, the  
4 late Gail Perkins-Atkins, and I realized that the  
5 Old and Historic District boundaries did not  
6 extend to our neighborhood, and consequently there  
7 was no protection of the integrity of our  
8 neighborhood and its buildings, so we decided to  
9 work on getting the Old and Historic District  
10 boundaries extended. The compromise in 1984 was  
11 the creation of the Parker-Gray District. And, by  
12 the way, Gail was the first African-American  
13 Editorial Director for Channel 4, the NBC  
14 affiliate. I know some of you may remember her.

15 I mention this to underscore my  
16 commitment to my neighborhood to maintain its  
17 integrity, and its importance in Alexandria's  
18 history, that extends beyond the Colonial era. I  
19 would also like to add that I'm ashamed that it  
20 took this issue to learn that my neighbors, at the  
21 Ramsey Homes, have lived in such deplorable  
22 conditions. ARHA has had 63 years to improve

1 these buildings, and has been negligent.

2 Certainly, ARHA has not adhered even minimally to  
3 its mission on their website.

4 While some Members of Council do not  
5 believe this discussion is relevant about ARHA's  
6 neglect, I do, and I think it is. ARHA is using  
7 these deplorable conditions as an argument to  
8 support their claim to demolish, shame on them. I  
9 urge you to vote against the appeal and not allow  
10 ARHA to demolish the Ramsey Homes. Thank you.

11 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Phillip  
12 Mattis, Robert Powell, Boyd Walker, Smita Anand,  
13 Merrick -- excuse me -- Lara Rayon.

14 MR. MATTIS: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor,  
15 City Council. Phillip Mattis, once again, I live  
16 in Historical Town of Alexandria, own property  
17 here, and I'm a Realtor Broker in town, where I  
18 make my living. I would like to go back to some  
19 simple concepts, one was Mr. Spera mentioned that  
20 we have to be very careful about when you have  
21 discussion after this public discussion, and about  
22 public rights and constraining the property owner.

1 I would just like to say that I'm not  
2 exactly sure how ARHA became -- have ownership in  
3 these homes, but through HUD, and through the  
4 annual funding, that Mr. Priest mentioned, I would  
5 like to state that maybe we should look at this,  
6 and it's quite possible we have and equity in real  
7 estate we call equity rights, or equity share in a  
8 property, aren't on the title. You don't own the  
9 property but you have what they call, equity  
10 shares, and maybe we all have equity shares in  
11 Ramsey Homes, public -- you know, our taxes,  
12 public funding to bring these particular  
13 properties into the ARHA realm. It sorts of puts  
14 us in that position.

15 So if you think from that position we do  
16 have some other considerations that we can  
17 constrain that besides being in a historic  
18 district. But to talk to this issue at hand as  
19 well, the architectural significance here is, to  
20 me, it's hard to discuss and there's plusses and  
21 minuses on all accounts.

22 So I went to the aerial on page 66, you

1 all have that, I don't know if you can bring that  
2 up, page 66 in the package, but I think it's very  
3 significant because it really speaks to everything  
4 that the people are talking about in some ways.  
5 If you have page 66, thanks, Figure 17. But when  
6 I look at this from an aerial view; and I have a  
7 number of blocks that in this particular photo, is  
8 that 17 -- but when I look at it, a couple things  
9 come up very significantly, I look at the roofs,  
10 and there are no other roofs like these four  
11 homes. There are no other roofs in all these four  
12 blocks like this.

13 I look at it, I go, oh, that's what 40  
14 percent of open space looks like on public  
15 property. It makes me feel good to see that, or  
16 what it should look like based on, you know, some  
17 of our past discussions on previous items today.  
18 So, I look at this, and then I make one other real  
19 simple deduction, I go up to the right-hand  
20 corner, you are not showing, so you don't have  
21 Figure 17 up, but up in the upper right-hand  
22 corner what you have is a row of, so aerial the

1 roof lines of Eakin Youngetoub's Eakin  
2 Youngentoub's --

3 And I can honestly say that you can't  
4 separate cultural from architectural, but I think  
5 50 years from now, we can be talking about this  
6 particular piece of property and the cultural  
7 value, and we won't be able to say the same thing  
8 about the other property there. One other thing,  
9 and probably Al Cox can tell you about this, but I  
10 believe this was also a site of Rochambeau in  
11 General Washington Camp Site, as part of their  
12 campaign, and so it's not just about, you know,  
13 housing African-Americans post-war, it's about the  
14 history of Alexandria, and if there is a time that  
15 we should consider eminent domain based on the  
16 loss of integrity that ARHA has shown, perhaps  
17 this might the appropriate time.

18 We beat up a lot of people on the  
19 waterfront with that, didn't we, and maybe this  
20 one is the one way to go to preserve this. The  
21 other way is to, the next time we see Catherine  
22 Paskar and Duncan Blair here, and they want

1 additional FAR, and additional density, and higher  
2 and bigger buildings, let them actually build the  
3 units to give s affordable housing. We can figure  
4 that out for the 15 families that are there, and  
5 we can figure it out for the additional that they  
6 want to build on this unit -- I mean on this site  
7 that we will never be able to replace.

8 And I see these four homes eventually  
9 being historical cultural value to our tourism,  
10 and just to our history. It's a layered history,  
11 it's just about the homes after 1954; it goes back  
12 to the 1700s. Thank you. Do not approve  
13 demolition.

14 MAYOR EUILLE: Phil, I've avoided asking  
15 questions of the speakers because there were so  
16 many and we need to really get the process, keep  
17 it moving, we are almost at the end, not the end  
18 in terms of making a decision but certainly the  
19 public speakers. And you and others have said  
20 something today, and correct me if I'm rephrasing  
21 it incorrectly, that this site, these four units,  
22 and it's marked or blocked off there in read, have

1 a lot of -- it's public open space. Is that what  
2 I heard you say?

3 MR. MATTIS: Well, I use the term, but  
4 since ARHA is not necessarily considered it's --  
5 you know, it's not a public entity that -- I was  
6 just saying that that's what -- also, it was nice  
7 to see what 40 percent open space would look like  
8 if it was public, and maybe at some point, I don't  
9 know if these four homes were actually considered  
10 public. You know, if the City owned them, then I  
11 guess they would be public.

12 MAYOR EUILLE: Well, I hear you, but I  
13 guess maybe -- and that's why I wanted to have you  
14 clarify what you said, or if I heard you  
15 incorrectly -- and I was just going to ask you  
16 because let's just say right now, it's like any  
17 other home or property in the neighborhood, in  
18 that district and --

19 MR. MATTIS: That's why I discussed  
20 about the equity share and the value of owning  
21 something.

22 MAYOR EUILLE: Yes. And with that open

1 space you don't have to answer the question, but I  
2 was just going to ask you how often do you walk  
3 through that open space? Have you utilized that  
4 open space?

5 MR. MATTIS: I will tell you this much,  
6 I drive by there all the time, and when I take a  
7 ride onto Patrick Street and head north, which is  
8 at least three or four times a week, I'm drawn to  
9 look at those structures, and I think that it  
10 would be terrible if we had to knock them down,  
11 because I see them sometime in the future to the  
12 good of -- you know, to the good of everybody that  
13 they will still remain standing and they will be  
14 unique. I don't look at the other homes on the  
15 West Side, and so these are very unique, I mean,  
16 they catch your eye, and if it's history, I can,  
17 to this young lady, who gave us a presentation  
18 about the loss of integrity, I find that -- and  
19 for one of the items was a historical. She talked  
20 about going passed the properties; it doesn't do  
21 anything for you.

22 I would challenge her to walk pass my

1 property here in Old Town, tell me the history of  
2 it, tell me what's important about it, who lived  
3 there and everything else, but if she walked past  
4 and has an interest and this curiosity about it,  
5 she can at least look it up, and get the history.  
6 That's what we take away when we take away these  
7 four units. We take away a tremendous amount of  
8 visual history, and I can equate it to one of  
9 these elements. So I think you for your follow  
10 up.

11 MAYOR EUILLE: Yes. Robert Powell, Boyd  
12 Walker, Smita Anand, Merrick Malone, Lara Rayon.

13 MR. POWELL: Good afternoon, Mr. Mayor,  
14 Madam Vice Mayor, and Fellow Council Members. I  
15 live in the Parker-Gray Historic District, off of  
16 Oronocco Street, me and my wife, we've lived here  
17 for about two-and-a-half years now. I think -- I  
18 won't, you know, repeat all the different things  
19 that everybody has said, but there seem to be -- I  
20 know you have to vote on six separate issues, very  
21 specific issues, but I do believe the idea of  
22 rehabilitation is very intimately linked with this

1 decision, and I don't think enough information has  
2 been given on the different options in terms of  
3 renovations. It seems like ARHA has said, that  
4 they need to spend X-amount of money this large  
5 amount of money to renovate to certain standards,  
6 but I don't know that that's been picked apart.

7           There have been other people who come up  
8 and said, no, it's not going to take that much,  
9 it's going to take a lot less, and I know that  
10 from what I understood from the West Old Town  
11 Association Meeting a couple of days ago, that  
12 there is an independent assessment by Staff, and  
13 at a later meeting talking about that there's some  
14 disagreement about how much it would cost to  
15 renovate. And I think it would be hard to make a  
16 decision on whether or not to demolish a building  
17 where you don't have all the information on  
18 whether or not -- what the actual price tag is to  
19 renovate, and is it possible.

20           Because right now it's being said that  
21 it's not possible, when very well it could be, all  
22 these things that they've talked about, about

1 having modern amenities, that might be a very  
2 small part of what ARHA is claiming is the total  
3 renovation cost. And so if the Council Members  
4 vote to demo the buildings maybe we don't have  
5 that chance. If you see these as separate, you  
6 can't renovate a building that's been demolished.  
7 You know, so I think it's very linked to this  
8 discussion and should at least be thought of you  
9 know, when coming to your decision.

10 And so without all of the independent  
11 assessments that I would like to see, and I would  
12 like to have access to, to see what the cost truly  
13 is, I think it's hard to say that these buildings  
14 could be demolished without that information.  
15 Thank you very much.

16 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Boyd Walker,  
17 Smita Anand, Lara Rayon (sic) and Selena Zellers  
18 -- Oh, how did you get on here twice. I'm sorry,  
19 there's Phil Moffat, I'm sorry, he spoke already.  
20 Okay, and Charkenya Walker, she spoke; so then  
21 Katie Kennedy.

22 MR. WALKER: Great we are almost there

1 folks.

2 MAYOR EUILLE: Yeah.

3 MR. WALKER: So, I thank for listening  
4 to us all today. And I think you've heard the  
5 majority of speakers today have -- would like us  
6 to uphold the BAR's decision and to save the  
7 Ramsey Homes. So I would like to ask all the  
8 people who are here to save the Ramsey Homes to  
9 stand up and show themselves, so you can see what  
10 our numbers look like today. I know a lot of the  
11 housing advocates did have to leave, they are a  
12 lot here, but we have a lot of support for saving  
13 these homes.

14 From people in the neighborhood, from  
15 people in historic preservation, and from people  
16 concerned with history, the economics of saving  
17 these homes. And Bill Hendrickson made a nice  
18 quote about how having plaques, he took it from  
19 the Staff Report, that having plaques and  
20 information about these homes is not the same as  
21 saving the actual homes. That's what it actually  
22 tells you.

1           Like the Carver Nursery School when you  
2 walk by today, and you see a school, and I think  
3 people, in the future, will walk by the Ramsey  
4 Homes, and see public housing, hopefully we can  
5 also add some plaques and some information and  
6 some of the research that's now been done on  
7 these. I think Jane Jacobs, and Jane Jacobs who  
8 was mentioned before who wrote The Death and Life  
9 of Great American Cities, would actually really  
10 appreciate these homes, and the eyes on the  
11 street, because you can -- kids play, there as a  
12 playground as part of this project.

13           The open space is space that kids can go  
14 and play in, or that you could walk through it to  
15 get to the Black History Museum, it is on a very  
16 important block with the Black History Museum, the  
17 Watson Reading Room, the Robinson Library, The  
18 Black History Museum is now across from --  
19 straight from the Charles Houston Rec Center, they  
20 were put very specifically in heart of the  
21 African-American neighborhood as the Staff Report  
22 says.

1           And so, you know, we can put public  
2     housing, the extra units of public housing that we  
3     may need in the city elsewhere, but you can't move  
4     these elsewhere or recreate them in another part  
5     of the city. They need to stay here. The  
6     proposed building that ARHA is proposing would  
7     block the view of the Black History Museum, the  
8     Watson Reading Room this street, as you might  
9     remember, a few years ago, it proposed that  
10    actually brick over the street, and make it more  
11    of community gathering place to tie together the  
12    Black History Museum, and the Charles Houston Rec  
13    Center across the street.

14           I'd love to see that happen someday, and  
15    I think the open space of these buildings can be  
16    part of that, and part of history. As you also  
17    know, most of tours of African-American history,  
18    started at the Black History Museum. The  
19    Courageous Journey, as it's called. So people  
20    will pick up their brochure there, and start the  
21    walking tour. So this can certainly be part of  
22    one of the sites on African-American Walking Tour

1     which most certainly now, and at Freedom Cemetery  
2     on the other side of town, passed the Freedom  
3     House Museum, passed the Carver Nursery School,  
4     they are a part of a long journey.

5             And I wanted to end with two quotes that  
6     Thomas Day said in the Alexandria Times in his  
7     letter to the Editor, (buzzer) "How well  
8     Alexandria can contribute to the national  
9     dialogues significantly depends on vigilance to  
10    protecting every aspect of its history.  
11    Demolishing these structures and replacing them  
12    with a plaque and a density project will not only  
13    destroy an important feature of Alexandria's  
14    historic fabric but the character of a historic  
15    neighborhood as well." Thank you.

16            MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Smita Anand,  
17    Lara Rayon, Selena Zellers, Katie Kennedy, Teresa  
18    Del Nino.

19            MS. REYES: Well, thank you, honorable  
20    men and women of the Council. I'm Lara Reyes, and  
21    I reside at 914 Pendleton Street.

22            MAYOR EUILLE: And I apologize, I'm

1 reading what's typed, so.

2 MS. REYES: Oh, that's okay. No  
3 worries. I understand. Anyway I reside at 914  
4 Pendleton Street, directly across from the Ramsey  
5 Homes. I originally came here in 2000, fell in  
6 love with the historic city of Old Town in  
7 Alexandria, and when I bought my home, I bought  
8 specifically a home built in 1895, did my research  
9 across from what were originally Civil War medical  
10 encampments, later the distillery and  
11 developmental area, which became Parker-Gray and  
12 then the Ramsey Homes, the first -- some of the  
13 first public housing but also some of the first  
14 housing to house African-American Officers.

15 I listened to the people over here speak  
16 about the national insignificance; I would submit  
17 to you the reverse. These homes and our city is  
18 predicated upon national significance. Our  
19 forefathers, the authors of the Bill of Rights and  
20 Constitution sat within our great city walls.  
21 There is very little green space in history. If  
22 you walk around old town, and our City of

1 Alexandria, where else can you find units like the  
2 Ramsey Houses. I submit to you there are none.  
3 For us to say that these are historically  
4 architecturally insignificant has no merit. They  
5 are both architecturally and culturally  
6 significant and should be refurbished and restored  
7 as such. Plaques will not do it.

8 People come to our city to visit. They  
9 come to visit places. Not to see a plaque. So I  
10 would submit to you to uphold the BAR's original  
11 assessment. What we're talking about here, folks,  
12 and let's be honest, is the almighty dollar. And  
13 if the almighty dollar can trump history and our  
14 preservation of it then we and this Council have  
15 truly lost our way. And that would be a sad day.

16 So please, uphold the decision to keep  
17 the Ramsey Homes, thank you.

18 MAYOR EUILLE: Salena Sellers --  
19 Zellers, Katie Kennedy, Theresa del Ninno and Mark  
20 Mueller.

21 MS. ZELLERS: Mr. Mayor, Vice Mayor,  
22 members of City Council welcome back. Sorry that

1 this had to be your first session. My name is  
2 Salena Zellers. I live the in Braddock Metro  
3 Neighborhood. As you all know, I'm also a member  
4 of the ARHA Board of Commissioners appointed last  
5 year.

6 There is no question in my mind and  
7 yours that this has been a serious -- there have  
8 been serious problems with this process as we've  
9 all talked about. I understand the skepticism  
10 that people have talked about today with ARHA  
11 which is why I'm on the Board. I'm on the Board  
12 because I want to make a difference from the  
13 inside which is what I'm doing. So I ask you to  
14 help us improve the process.

15 That said, I fully believe that the  
16 staff report and the new historical report or the  
17 updated historical report does document that  
18 Ramsey doesn't meet the preservation criteria.  
19 That is for you to decide. The key point I think  
20 in that the City has a different set of rules than  
21 residents, well, in this case, this particular  
22 property does because it is considered a later

1 building by Parker-Gray standards of themselves  
2 that you set in 2013.

3 It's a later building whereas the other  
4 buildings around there that are really having to  
5 deal with a lot of the stringent requirements are  
6 early buildings. Later buildings do have as much  
7 of a stringent BAR review as far as I understand.

8 All of that said, that's your decision  
9 today but let me clarify a few issues that have  
10 been brought before you today. Vice Mayor  
11 Silberberg, you're right. Ramsey, it was built  
12 around the same time as Park Fairfax but it was  
13 not built the same way and, you know, it Park  
14 Fairfax buildings are amazing and they were built  
15 to last hundreds of years. Ramsey was not. It  
16 definitely was not.

17 That leads me directly into hopefully  
18 addressing some of the issues that Councilman  
19 Smedberg brought up and half the people in this  
20 room. There's been a great deal of discussion  
21 about the current conditions of Ramsey. All the  
22 capital improvements and repairs have been made in

1 an effort to maintain the housing in a safe,  
2 sanitary condition but the funding, as you know,  
3 has been limited. So nothing really could be done  
4 as far as upgrades.

5 That said, there have been upgrades made  
6 in addition to the general maintenance that's been  
7 done over the past few years. ARHA replaced the  
8 roofs that desperately needed replacing. They  
9 replaced the doors and windows. They added a new  
10 exterior. They added patios. They renovated the  
11 kitchens and bathrooms. They replaced the heating  
12 system and the water heaters and they made  
13 significant improvements to the landscaping and  
14 fencing so that the neighbors would actually have  
15 a nice thing to look at.

16 The problem is not in the facade. The  
17 problem is in the structure and the inadequate  
18 design. That said, I put this in my notes but I  
19 think it bears repeating. In order to meet -- to  
20 rehabilitate the property which is definitely  
21 something that the BAR addressed, you have to meet  
22 accessibility codes for some of the units. It's

1 very difficult with this property because of the  
2 way they were built with the narrow doors, the  
3 very steep staircases, the narrow stairs.

4 You have to accommodate turning radii  
5 and clear space requirements that are code. You  
6 have to do - (buzzer) and to do that, you have to  
7 change the building pad and replace a majority of  
8 the exterior walls. Bathrooms on the second floor  
9 are not accessible. Entry doors have to be  
10 widened and numerous other things including a new  
11 wall for sprinkler systems that aren't there.

12 That said, development costs aside, we  
13 can come up with money. We can rehabilitate  
14 anything you want. With your money, our money,  
15 our tax dollars we can do that but the problem is  
16 not development costs if you really think about  
17 it. The cost is sustainability and as a Board  
18 member, it's my responsibility to make sure that  
19 anything we decide is sustainable. These  
20 properties have to pay for themselves after  
21 they've been redeveloped or rehabilitated.

22 And right now they can't do that. We're

1 operating at a loss. And if you rehabilitate  
2 these units, 15 units, which would be great,  
3 they're still going to be operating at a loss and  
4 it's likely that we would lose HUD funding, the  
5 monthly subsidies that we get because HUD believes  
6 that -- HUD states that if your rehabilitation  
7 costs are 90 percent of your redevelopment costs  
8 they're not going to fund it. So then we would  
9 have to significantly increase the rents which  
10 none of us wants, you know, hopefully.

11 I mean none of us want to lose the  
12 affordable housing there. The goal is to create  
13 more. So that said, you know, if we -- if the  
14 Board and Council decide to support a project  
15 that's not sustainable, we can't maintain it. And  
16 if there's a problem with maintaining the  
17 properties now it will only be worse if we support  
18 a project that's not sustainable. So with that in  
19 mind, we really are trying to put forth an effort  
20 to have sustainable properties in the future and  
21 we just need your help. Thank you.

22 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Katie

1 Kennedy, Theresa del Ninno, Mark Mueller and  
2 Merrick Malone.

3 MS. KENNEDY: I am Katie Kennedy. I  
4 live at 20 East Oak Street. I was planning to  
5 stay home today and then, I heard Justin Wilson  
6 say he didn't think you'd ever considered  
7 something equal or similar.

8 I hate to tell you but most of you who  
9 were sitting on Council and including Justin, when  
10 you, Ms. Pepper accepted, when you voted to  
11 destroy the Carver Nursery School. And it took  
12 Boyd Walker and a pro bono attorney to save --

13 MR. WILSON: That's not correct. I was  
14 not on the Council then.

15 MS. KENNEDY: The Council before this  
16 one?

17 MR. WILSON: Yes, I was not on the  
18 Council when that vote happened.

19 MS. KENNEDY: Okay, take it back.

20 MR. WILSON: Yes, thank you.

21 MS. KENNEDY: You never had voted for  
22 that. But many of your colleagues did.

1           MR. WILSON: It was Councilman Smedberg  
2 and I who wrote the resolution that helped  
3 preserve it.

4           MS. KENNEDY: Well, good. It's very --  
5 Ms. Pepper didn't vote for that. I remember she  
6 was here. I definitely remember she was here.

7           MS. PEPPER: No, I voted to preserve it.

8           MS. KENNEDY: To extend it. Yes, well,  
9 but anyway the Carver Nursery School is just --  
10 it's not, you know, it's still standing thank God.  
11 It's not a very interesting building. It's not a  
12 handsome building. It's not a great building  
13 structurally but it's very important historically,  
14 very, very important just like these buildings.  
15 These buildings and the Carver Nursery School  
16 represent the time, which is just as important  
17 than anything in colonial history and something we  
18 so often ignore because so much was happening.  
19 World War II is the period when African-American  
20 people were in, because of the labor shortage,  
21 were invited into the workforce, into better jobs  
22 than they had had before because most of those

1 better jobs were segregated and white folks only.

2 That was a very important part of early  
3 segregation. When we invited, as a community, and  
4 you know we have good history, bad history, ugly  
5 history, I'm for preserving all of it but this is  
6 the good part. This is the moment in American  
7 history when, because the war forced it on us, all  
8 across this country African-Americans were invited  
9 into better jobs, wage-paying jobs, stable income  
10 jobs, jobs with even benefits, invited into better  
11 jobs than they had ever been able to hold in  
12 general before that.

13 Many historians think it's actually the  
14 basis of the civil rights movement because you  
15 have to have a little stability income wise before  
16 you start fighting for causes. This is very  
17 important, very important in our history and if  
18 nobody knows about these buildings, well, that's  
19 our fault. I admit I've driven by them (buzzer)  
20 100 times and not known what they represented  
21 though I've always thought they rather looked  
22 nice.

1           Anyway, we cannot go around destroying  
2 history because there's a better use for the  
3 property. There's a better use for Mount Vernon  
4 for goodness sake. You could build four or five  
5 mansions up there. You just don't have any  
6 history if you say we've got a better use for this  
7 property. This is important history. It's a good  
8 part of our history which I like to save as long  
9 as what you might consider the bad history, us bad  
10 old Confederates. But this is important. It's  
11 really important.

12           It's just like the Carver Nursery  
13 School. The parallels are complete. You should  
14 save this building, these buildings. If they can  
15 be sold by ARHA and used else by others for -- and  
16 the money spent on public housing, fine. But one  
17 way or another these buildings have to be saved.  
18 They're an important part of our history and of  
19 the nation's history.

20           MAYOR EUILLE: Ms. Kennedy, let me ask  
21 you a question. And this is not for Council's  
22 consideration today. We're limited to the six

1 criteria but just hypothetically and you and  
2 others have said let's save the buildings because  
3 of the historical significant, renovate,  
4 redevelop, whatever. But what would you, I mean,  
5 I'm asking you personally, what would you, if you  
6 -- if renovation cost is out of sight, what would  
7 you suggest would go there to, I mean, what would  
8 you put there to keep the historical significance  
9 visible? Have you given any thought to that  
10 yourself?

11 MS. KENNEDY: I would -- if ARHA can't  
12 afford rehabilitation, there may be others who  
13 can. The interiors are not, you know, we don't  
14 save interiors. We only save exteriors because we  
15 have to have modern amenities in the interiors. I  
16 would suggest that we sell those properties and I  
17 believe we could put, a lawyer would have to  
18 advise me, I believe you can put a clause in that  
19 they were not to be torn down or you wouldn't  
20 (inaudible) demolition permit. Future owners  
21 could put easements on the open space probably.  
22 It's got more than most buildings.

1           There would be people, God knows, it  
2       amazes me what people pay for houses in this town.  
3       My street isn't all that fancy and a house on the  
4       next block sold over a million a little while ago.  
5       I think they could just be sold with a proviso  
6       that they are not to be demolished, that there  
7       will never be a demolition permit granted because  
8       they have historical significance and they could  
9       be divided up maybe into fewer interior units.  
10      Keep the doors to the units and maybe fewer units  
11      and of course, all the money should go to ARHA to  
12      work elsewhere.

13                   MAYOR EUILLE:   Okay, thank you.  Next  
14      speaker is Theresa del Ninno, Mark Mueller, then  
15      Merit Malone as last speaker.

16                   MS. DEL NINNO:   Good evening.  I am  
17      Theresa del Ninno.  I am a licensed architect and  
18      I have an office several blocks from the  
19      neighborhood.  I'm also the chairperson of the  
20      Parker-Gray BAR.  I hadn't planned on speaking  
21      this evening because our most eloquent Phil  
22      Moffitt was speaking for us.  But I thought I

1 would be available to answer any questions you may  
2 have.

3 I also wanted to clarify something that  
4 has come up in a number of discussions and it has  
5 to do with the design guidelines. The design  
6 guidelines were made for one and two-family  
7 dwellings not for four-family dwellings. So it  
8 would not pertain to the Ramsey Homes. It was  
9 for, you know, single families that were trying to  
10 make improvements to their homes basically.

11 So the 1931 cutoff of whether a building  
12 is historically significant is really not  
13 applicable to the Ramsey Homes.

14 MAYOR EUILLE: I'm sorry, say that  
15 again.

16 MS. DEL NINNO: You know the cutoff of  
17 whether a building is built after 1931 is really  
18 only applicable to one and two-family dwellings  
19 for the townhouses and single-family dwellings.

20 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay, thank you. Mark  
21 Mueller and --

22 MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

1                   MAYOR EUILLE: I'm sorry.

2                   MS. SILBERBERG: Well, go ahead.

3                   MAYOR EUILLE: Ms. Vice Mayor?

4                   MS. SILBERBERG: I just want to -- so  
5 you're the Chair of the Parker BAR and Mr. Moffitt  
6 was here earlier and he couldn't -- he said he  
7 couldn't speak for the BAR nor can you totally  
8 speak for the Parker-Gray BAR but one of the  
9 things that he mentioned was, from his own  
10 opinion, was something about the possibility of  
11 some kind of hybrid approach which we've actually  
12 considered. And the staff last night sent us an  
13 email about regarding that possibility.

14                   So you never had that chance to weigh in  
15 that option, I realize but the idea being not an  
16 either/or but some -- that two out of the four  
17 buildings remain and something built --

18                   MS. DEL NINNO: There was some  
19 discussion during our Board meeting. I don't know  
20 if you had gone back and listened at all to the  
21 Web cast because we were very interested in really  
22 preserving the -- a three-dimensional building and

1 because the site it so long and thin, we though  
2 there may be opportunity to develop a portion of  
3 the site while keeping a couple of the buildings.  
4 So --

5 MS. SILBERBERG: I see.

6 MS. DEL NINNO: So that we had asked,  
7 because they came in front of us twice, we had  
8 asked for that to be looked into and, you know,  
9 unfortunately, we really didn't see a proposal of  
10 maybe something that we would consider.

11 MS. SILBERBERG: Thank you.

12 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you.

13 MS. SILBERBERG: Thank you for your  
14 service.

15 MAYOR EUILLE: Mark Mueller, did someone  
16 else just sign up? Mark, go ahead. I'll get the  
17 other person.

18 MR. MUELLER: Yes, I think someone just  
19 came up. Mark Mueller, spoke to you earlier.  
20 Thanks again for your time. I know it's a really  
21 long day but it's pretty rainy outside so you're  
22 really not missing anything.

1 I am very much in favor of preserving  
2 these homes to the extent possible. If there's a  
3 compromise, I'd certainly be open to that. ARHA  
4 -- I'm not here to beat you up but I think you  
5 really kind of made a lot of missteps in this  
6 process. And I think we now have an opportunity  
7 to come together and try to fix this.

8 So Ms. Walker made a comment that  
9 bothered me a little bit. She said something to  
10 the effect that the neighbors in the area haven't  
11 helped with the problems within the homes that  
12 they're in such bad shape. Well, I'm here to  
13 offer up that I'm willing to help and I think the  
14 neighbors would be willing to help if we organize  
15 a day. Perhaps if we didn't have enough help,  
16 we'd get Habitat involved.

17 And let's go fix up those units. If  
18 ARHA can't afford it, let's the neighbors do  
19 something. I'd be willing to cook some pork  
20 barbecue, okay? I think MacArthur; you probably  
21 have a potato salad recipe or something like that?  
22 Nanette, I know you got a German background so

1 maybe you're better off with the potato salad.

2 But seriously, folks, we've got an  
3 opportunity to come together. I have a garage  
4 there with a lot of tools. Those tools never get  
5 used. Here's an opportunity to use those tools.  
6 So I would ask that you please support the BAR's  
7 decision and at least in the interim, let's try to  
8 get the community together. This has been a very  
9 divisive process and I'd like to end that, work  
10 with you to end that. So that's all I had to say.  
11 Thank you very much.

12 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you. Mark Moses to  
13 be followed by Merrick Malone.

14 MR. MOSES: Good afternoon, I know you  
15 guys have been here long so I'll make this very  
16 short. I'm here to ask you guys to support the  
17 BAR's decision, unanimous decision, and to vote  
18 down this proposition from ARHA. I've lived in  
19 that area for a while. The design that I've seen  
20 is completely not with the surrounding area,  
21 maintaining the historical preservation and I  
22 can't imagine myself as a homeowner, I've worked

1 closely with BAR in the past to maintain my  
2 house's historical era. And I couldn't imagine  
3 the BAR completely voting me down and then, coming  
4 here and having the Council overturn that. That  
5 seems completely against what the BAR stands for  
6 and what it's there for. And with that, that's  
7 all I have.

8 MAYOR EUILLE: All right, Merrick Malone  
9 last speaker.

10 MR. MALONE: Mr. Mayor, Vice Mayor,  
11 Councilmembers my name is Merrick Malone and I am  
12 the Chair or ARHA. I am a transactional lawyer  
13 and developer. I have done both rehab, I have  
14 done new construction. So I come to this, I have  
15 also signed guarantees so I know what that means.

16 I think that there are a couple of  
17 issues I want -- you have a very difficult  
18 decision to make. To affirm, to reverse or to  
19 modify whatever that is, it will determine whether  
20 the ownership is constrained. I think there are  
21 some things we need to clarify.

22 I don't think that ARHA as an

1 institution has been asked to do -- to be treated  
2 any differently. I represent a Board of  
3 tremendous professionals including Chris Ballard,  
4 Daniel Bauman, so there are people on this Board  
5 that know development. They know numbers. We  
6 know numbers. We know financing.

7 This is a very difficult decision. You  
8 have conflicting testimony, conflicting  
9 perspectives. So how do -- you have conflicting  
10 experts so I know you've got a decision -- how do  
11 you decide which expert is more relevant than the  
12 other? And they're all very capable.

13 I do want to share what we are dealing  
14 with. ARHA, like all PHAs across their -- this  
15 country are facing tremendous problems with the  
16 decrease in HUD funding for operations. There are  
17 currently PHAs and redevelopment authorities that  
18 are actually insolvent. And they're looking for  
19 ways either to get out or the cities are trying to  
20 figure out how to save them.

21 So this Board that you appointed, this  
22 ARHA Board, has a fiduciary responsibility to

1 balance sustainability as well as the ability to  
2 create affordability. When we started this  
3 process for Ramsey it was looking at how do we  
4 take the opportunity to leverage one of our  
5 properties, to go in for low-income housing tax  
6 credits, which we have been very successful at and  
7 bring that forward.

8 We've done that. We've now run into  
9 very, you know, conflicting kinds of opposition  
10 and we respect that. I respect that. I think  
11 that has to be, I mean, we just have differences  
12 of opinion that we need to resolve. However, one  
13 of the things that will happen whether you affirm  
14 it or you overturn it, if it is affirmed; we will  
15 have to regroup as a Board and look at how we  
16 proceed.

17 Whether we proceed with Ramsey at all in  
18 terms of our strategic overall financial goals and  
19 what we're doing, we are developing a number of  
20 properties. And we're trying to leverage all of  
21 those because what we see as a trend in the  
22 Federal Government that there is not going to be

1 much more funding. Let's get to our finances.

2 (buzzer)

3 I think as the Chair, I get two minutes.

4 In our financing, what we've been able to do with  
5 HUD continually reducing its financing, we have  
6 been able to reduce our budgets like you do in the  
7 private sector. We have a balance budget which we  
8 do and we've made adjustments. So we are looking  
9 at how we leverage these things.

10 So whatever the decision is we will do  
11 what we have to do. And we will resolve these  
12 things and move forward based on what our fiscal  
13 priorities are and how we are to move forward. We  
14 respect the opposition but, in fact, we will  
15 respect the decision.

16 I have one another concern that I would  
17 like to make before I sit down which I take great  
18 exception, Mr. Smedberg, to the notion that we  
19 don't give you -- we don't talk to you. We have  
20 joint meetings of the Council and ARHA on a  
21 regular basis. This is not a surprise. We have  
22 worked countlessly with the staff. We have

1 changed our design numerous times working together  
2 with the staff.

3 We tried to get -- we let you know what  
4 our strategic plan is for all five sites that we  
5 have. So I was a little concerned that you  
6 lectured Mr. Priest relative to that. I take  
7 great exception to that. And I have one other  
8 thing to say.

9 That I really -- our motives are pure as  
10 the driven snow. We want to increase housing.  
11 It's not about the money. It's about us trying to  
12 increase affordable housing. I hope our  
13 opposition is equally pure in their -- and that  
14 they're not clothing something else under the  
15 guise of preservation. Thank you. Like racism  
16 and classism.

17 Let me just say this. I've seen it. I  
18 know what it looks like. Thank you.

19 MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

20 MAYOR EUILLE: Vice Mayor Silberberg?

21 MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Malone? Hi, Mr.

22 Malone. Well, I had asked a couple of other

1 people about this idea of the hybrid approach and  
2 I do want to thank you for serving on the ARHA  
3 Board, by the way, and all those who serve on the  
4 ARHA Board because I know it's a volunteer  
5 proposition and you donate -- you give a lot of  
6 your time.

7 So I had asked others and I thought I  
8 would give you the same opportunity to just  
9 describe how you might feel, speaking as the Chair  
10 of the ARHA Board, just speaking for yourself, I  
11 suppose, about this possibility of this hybrid  
12 approach which I know that you or a couple of  
13 y'all had a meeting earlier this week with regard  
14 to this idea and there were some numbers thrown  
15 around. And then our staff, our City staff came  
16 forward or Mr. Jinks came forward with a memo late  
17 last night and so if --

18 MR. MALONE: That memo --

19 MS. SILBERBERG: I just want to give you  
20 a full opportunity to respond as well.

21 MR. MALONE: Well, I think the point is  
22 with that particular -- we could do that. I think

1 that there is -- it's -- you can always do -- you  
2 can address -- you can do rehabilitation. It's  
3 not -- the question is looking at the numbers and  
4 what would make sense to do. But to say that you  
5 can't do it, of course you can do rehabilitation.

6 And I think if the decision is made to  
7 constrain our ability to do the full development,  
8 I think we would have to take a look at that and  
9 how do we approach rehabilitation strategically  
10 within the context of how we're looking at all of  
11 our other properties. It's possible, very much  
12 it's possible. It would be, you know, somewhat  
13 ridiculous to say that you can't rehab a building.  
14 It's a question of cost and I think Salena made  
15 the point that not just the cost to do the actual  
16 development but actually the cost of the continual  
17 maintenance of it.

18 MS. SILBERBERG: Right. And so okay.  
19 So you say that it's possible. I mean, when we  
20 talk in our country about what is possible so it's  
21 possible that either, you know, well, there's the  
22 rehab, the whole thing but also what the hybrid

1 approach is to rehab, part of it and to leave --  
2 sorry to rehab part of it and to let you all build  
3 something on part of the land. That was the  
4 hybrid approach, of course, and you all presented  
5 numbers and then our City staff, Mr. Jinks  
6 presented some other numbers.

7 But regardless of how those numbers play  
8 out, I mean, we should talk about that. I mean  
9 maybe you all need time to absorb that. I don't  
10 know what the answer is but I'm simply suggesting  
11 that, you know, there's a lot of discussion today  
12 about the historical relevance. I think that it's  
13 -- I think our City, to my way of thinking, has a  
14 commitment to both and both core values,  
15 affordable housing and historic preservation and  
16 it's unusual that we've seen this kind of neighbor  
17 against neighbor situation and really the  
18 neighborhood around there has actually stood up in  
19 many ways for the Ramsey Homes and reached out in  
20 a non-nimby-way.

21 So but this idea of this hybrid  
22 approach, it's just -- I mentioned it weeks ago in

1 my meetings with both sides and people, you know,  
2 seemed open to discussing it but it just -- and  
3 then it's only in recent days as always happens  
4 with our Council, it's only in recent days as we  
5 approach the moment when we get numbers and  
6 everyone started talking about it. But I just  
7 think that's interesting that as the Chair and I  
8 think that's kind of enlightening and provides  
9 some measure of hope that if you, as the Chair of  
10 the ARHA Board, would be willing to even entertain  
11 that because you would have, perhaps, not as many  
12 units. You would have 16 fewer units but you  
13 would preserve the historic relevance of this  
14 public housing entity.

15 You would sort of do -- get a bit of  
16 everything. And then, you'd perhaps add those  
17 units that you didn't get, the 16 to --

18 MR. LOVAIN: Madam Vice Mayor, could I  
19 just add one thing on that?

20 MS. SILBERBERG: Sure.

21 MR. LOVAIN: There's a possibility of  
22 maybe preserving just one unit even as a

1 possibility.

2 MS. SILBERBEG: You mean one building,  
3 Mr. Lovain?

4 MR. LOVAIN: Because then you'd have  
5 this one tangible building but yes.

6 MS. SILBERBERG: You mean one building?

7 MR. LOVAIN: One building.

8 MR. MALONE: I think that once --

9 MS. SILBERBERG: Okay.

10 MR. MALONE: -- the decision is made in  
11 whichever direction that goes, we would then have  
12 to -- we would then reconvene as a Board and try  
13 and figure out again, recognizing we do have a  
14 fiduciary financial duty to balance sustainability  
15 with in fact ability, our mission which is to  
16 create additional affordability.

17 And one of the things we talked about a  
18 lot today was public housing. And it's just not  
19 public housing. We're talking about creation of  
20 mixed-income tiered housing.

21 MS. SILBERBERG: Right.

22 MR. MALONE: That goes from 80 percent

1 of the AMI and we live in the one of the highest  
2 AMIs in the nation which is approximately  
3 \$109,000. And our range of housing that we would  
4 develop would go from 0 to 80 percent of the area  
5 median income which means that a lot of municipal  
6 employees would be eligible, firefighters,  
7 teachers, would be eligible for some of the  
8 housing that we would be building.

9 MS. SILBERBERG: And would -- just one  
10 last question if I could. The -- I'll let Mr.  
11 Priest --

12 MR. MALONE: I'm sorry?

13 MS. SILBERBERG: I didn't know if you  
14 wanted to -- if the suggestion of encouraging and  
15 working side by side with some members of the  
16 community to sort of enlarge your volunteer base,  
17 if you will, for a weekend of activity to help  
18 renovate, would that be of interest?

19 MR. MALONE: I'm sure that that would be  
20 a discussion that I'd have to have with Mr. Priest  
21 but it sounds good. It certainly would be --

22 MS. SILBERBERG: It would build

1 community.

2 MR. MALONE: It would build community,  
3 that's correct.

4 MS. SILBERBERG: Right.

5 MR. MALONE: And build trust.

6 MS. SILBERBERG: Well, sure and I know I  
7 was involved with the Economic Opportunities  
8 Commission when we renovated the Alexandria  
9 Community Shelter off of Mills Road in basically a  
10 one to two-day period. And it really did build  
11 community and it was all volunteer and all  
12 donations and everything. So if that does come  
13 forward, I would be thrilled to help and that --

14 MR. MALONE: Let me also, I think that  
15 as I want to apologize to the Board for my  
16 concern. I actually -- there -- I've listened to  
17 a lot of things. There were a lot of things that  
18 I found to be fairly misrepresentative of what's  
19 going on. I think that we can come together and  
20 work together.

21 We are trying to develop a number of  
22 units and buildings going forward in an effort to

1 again, balance our affordability and  
2 sustainability that will allow us to continue to  
3 do that and as I said before, our motives are  
4 pretty pure. We just wanted to do that and for  
5 someone to say that it's all about the dollar and  
6 that's what it's about, they're people and people  
7 that sometimes don't have a voice and but by the  
8 grace of God, a lot of people in this room would  
9 be in the same circumstance and --

10 MS. SILBERBERG: Okay.

11 MR. MALONE: -- that's -- I take that  
12 pretty seriously.

13 MR. MUELLER: Could I just have 30  
14 seconds please to respond to the racist comment  
15 because that is just --

16 MAYOR EUILLE: No, we don't have  
17 rebuttal.

18 MR. MUELLER: Let me tell you something  
19 --

20 MAYOR EUILLE: Excuse me; we don't have  
21 rebuttals in the Council Chamber.

22 MR. MUELLER: Well, look at --

1                   MAYOR EUILLE:   No, okay, Mark -- Mark --

2                   MR. MUELLER:    -- it is simply not true.

3                   We --

4                   MAYOR EUILLE:   Mark -- I --

5                   MR. MUELLER:    We have taken interest in  
6                   the children.

7                   MAYOR EUILLE:   Yes, I --

8                   MR. MUELLER:    I've taken Ms. Walker's  
9                   son to the Naval Academy to see the Blue Angels.

10                  MAYOR EUILLE:   Thank you.   Thank you.

11                  MR. MUELLER:    We've been out washing  
12                  cars together.   These are phenomenal kids.   There  
13                  is no racism issue here.   I just want you to  
14                  understand that.

15                  MAYOR EUILLE:   No, no.   No, no we -- and  
16                  I was going to ask Mr. --

17                  MR. MUELLER:    I know he's very  
18                  passionate but that is not going on.

19                  MAYOR EUILLE:   I'm just going to ask Mr.  
20                  Malone --

21                  MR. MALONE:     I'm thrilled to hear that,  
22                  I really am.    I really am.

1                   MAYOR EUILLE:    -- which he's done.  He's  
2   offered an apology so.

3                   MR. MUELLER:    Okay, fair enough.

4                   MAYOR EUILLE:    Yes, Mr. Smedberg.

5                   MR. SMEDBERG:    Mr. Malone, I did not  
6   question -- I've been in all those work sessions  
7   and I have asked tough questions but I want to  
8   make sure that you're a viable organization and we  
9   are doing everything that we can to make sure that  
10   that happens.  You're changing your model.  You're  
11   becoming a development corporation.  This is an  
12   important project.  It's your first important  
13   project and there was no outreach.

14                   I understand the -- and I'm not  
15   questioning the outreach you had with staff, the  
16   interaction you had with the City Manager.  But it  
17   would have been helpful, as Mr. Priest has on the  
18   back of his shirt, one team, well, that goes  
19   beyond what the picnic they had today.  We are  
20   part of that team.  I'd like to think we're an  
21   important part of that team with you and everyone  
22   else.

1           And I think the process and not coming  
2 forward to us, if there were these concerns and  
3 you were going to put us that either this thing is  
4 demolished or not, then we should be briefed or  
5 talked to or you assign Board members to come talk  
6 to us. Something, anything, that's all I'm  
7 suggesting and that's all I wanted to comment on  
8 and I have personally voted for everything that  
9 you have come to ask for, every single thing. So  
10 I've -- we are time and time again put in this  
11 position of having to make these tough choices  
12 against deadlines and oh, we got to do this  
13 because we've got to get this in by X date and X  
14 time and, you know, I -- it's really frustrating  
15 because we are really working hard to make this  
16 successful.

17           MR. MALONE: And Councilmember, I  
18 believe that but I guess I needed to ask. We had  
19 this -- we had a recently we had a joint meeting  
20 and I didn't -- I know you might not have been  
21 there but I thought at least someone would have  
22 told you at least. I'm not trying to dispute

1 that. I'm saying we did have a -- we talked about  
2 -- we had a meeting on this issue.

3 MR. SMEDBERG: If you have a joint  
4 meeting with the Mayor and Councilmember Chapman,  
5 that's a different Committee than the entire  
6 Council.

7 MR. MALONE: So we -- okay. I just  
8 needed to understand. I thought when we had those  
9 joint meetings that we've had that that was a  
10 representation of the Council. My apologies --

11 MR. SMEDBERG: It's a representation of  
12 the Council but it's not reaching out to  
13 Councilmembers to make them aware of the concerns  
14 and the issues that you have and the position you  
15 are in. That is a very different thing. That  
16 Committee is to be used as a sounding board and  
17 that doesn't --

18 MR. MALONE: I understand and true to  
19 form we have reached out to some individual  
20 Councilmembers. And my Board reaches out across  
21 the board and talks to various people. So we'll  
22 try and do better.

1           MR. SMEDBERG: Well, why do you just  
2 reach out to some and not to all? That's a good  
3 question.

4           MR. MALONE: No, no, all of our people  
5 reach out to different people we have different  
6 relationships with. My Board does that so we'll  
7 try and do better.

8           MAYOR EUILLE: Okay, we -- staff do you  
9 have any additional comments or anything? Mr.  
10 City Attorney?

11           MR. SPERA: The only thing I would add  
12 and I took a moment to confer with Mr. Cox and to  
13 see if he agreed with me. One of the issues here,  
14 we've heard some talking about a hybrid approach  
15 or, you know, one of the buildings remaining,  
16 three being redeveloped or whatever. And I  
17 understand that is something that isn't in front  
18 of you right now.

19           But one of the issues that Mr. Cox and  
20 I, I wanted to speak with him about, and I believe  
21 he and I are of the same mind about this. There  
22 is a one-year prohibition in the code for bringing

1 the same application forward if it's denied. But  
2 both Mr. Cox and I agree that a hybrid approach  
3 that's not seeking the same thing wouldn't be  
4 subject to that same one-year time bar.

5 So if -- so I'm not trying to forecast  
6 what your decision is but if the BAR decision were  
7 upheld, ARHA would not be subject that 12-month  
8 bar if something -- if what they brought back was  
9 a modification of the proposal. Now if they're  
10 going to bring back the exact same thing, the  
11 12-month bar applies. So that -- legal  
12 distinction for why I think that it is important  
13 given the words we just heard from the Chairman  
14 that they wouldn't have to wait 12 months if the  
15 proposal that they brought back was for something  
16 different, two out of the four, three out of the  
17 four as opposed to all of the four.

18 I think Mr. Cox and I are of like mind.  
19 The -- certainly from his expertise he does this  
20 every day. I read the code every day, lucky me.  
21 But I think we are of like mind that that would be  
22 a different proposal and not the same proposal and

1 they wouldn't have to wait that normal 12-month  
2 period.

3 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay, Mr. Blair, you're  
4 back at the mic.

5 MR. BLAIR: It's been an interesting  
6 afternoon. What's before is a permit to demolish.  
7 I think everybody in this room knows something's  
8 going to happen to these buildings. I think to a  
9 certain extent ARHA has been mischaracterized.  
10 ARHA does provide safe housing.

11 These buildings are 50 years old. They  
12 need to go. They're obsolete. They need to be  
13 redeveloped. The number of those units to be  
14 redeveloped will be determined during a separate  
15 process when this project comes forward with the  
16 DSUP. But I think somewhere, somehow either four  
17 buildings will be demolished, three buildings will  
18 be demolished, two buildings will be demolished.  
19 There will be some demolition of these buildings.

20 To look at your staff who recommended to  
21 the Board of Architecture Review and to you that  
22 demolition was appropriate, that the criteria was

1 not substantially met to warrant preservation of  
2 these buildings under the circumstances, that's  
3 your expert opinion.

4 Your other expert board is a housing  
5 authority who has spent an enormous amount of time  
6 looking at its financial obligations to provide  
7 safe and adequate housing. Looking at its charter  
8 to provide public housing, mandated to be and I  
9 can -- under 830 a certain number of units.  
10 They're trying to discharge their obligations.

11 It seems to me that under the  
12 circumstances, the appropriate is to follow your  
13 staff, listen to the consultants who elaborated on  
14 that. Look at the architectural merits of these  
15 buildings, knowing there is an associated value  
16 and knowing there's a land use process that's  
17 going to move forward. And then, reverse the  
18 holdings of the BAR, support your staff and let's  
19 move on to the dialogue of how these buildings  
20 will be -- and how this property will be used and  
21 its continued legacy of providing affordable  
22 housing, public housing for the residents of the

1 City of Alexandria.

2 To deny this today does not advance that  
3 discussion. It creates probably at a minimum,  
4 this project would not be a tax credit project for  
5 next year. It would be a tax credit project for  
6 2017. So the delay is more than -- is significant  
7 to ARHA. And lastly, you know, we were asked not  
8 to come forward in June to have a public hearing  
9 in June on this. We were ready and prepared to go  
10 forward in June.

11 We did take the time. We met with the  
12 Committee a couple of times. I know Board members  
13 have reached out to Council people. (Buzzer) We  
14 were asked to get a new history. We got a new  
15 history. We've been not asking for special  
16 privilege, not asking to be dealt with separately  
17 than any other property owner in the Parker-Gray  
18 district. But these are unique circumstances and  
19 there's a unique charge for these property not  
20 only under a City Council mandate, ARHA mandate  
21 and HUD mandate. And I think ARHA is doing the  
22 best it can to satisfy all of those mandates. Be

1 glad to answer any questions.

2 MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you, Mr. Blair.

3 And if you are not in a position to answer or  
4 respond to the question, certainly Mr. Priest or  
5 Mr. Malone can do so. Because we've had some  
6 conversation that I didn't think we, this panel up  
7 here was going to have, but we've opened that  
8 window and I heard what you said relative to  
9 making a decision to demolish or not to make a  
10 decision to demolish.

11 You know, what the next steps perhaps  
12 could be or will be. The question I have of ARHA  
13 would be if you were granted the authority -- the  
14 right to demolish does that necessarily mean that  
15 you would do -- you would move forward to do just  
16 that as opposed to being reactive and responsive  
17 to some other options?

18 MR. BLAIR: I think I can answer that  
19 question on my own which is, first of all, if you  
20 approved it and ARHA wanted to demolish a  
21 building, we've got to go next to our next  
22 partner, HUD, and say HUD can we tear down these

1 buildings? The first they're going to want to do  
2 is figure out what's going to go on with the  
3 property. So the real answer is no. These  
4 buildings would not be demolished until there was  
5 a plan in place for the future of affordable  
6 housing at this site.

7 I think the other thing that's important  
8 to remember --

9 MAYOR EUILLE: To include?

10 MR. BLAIR: To include the land use  
11 process.

12 MAYOR EUILLE: The land use process  
13 which could very well mean a partial demolition,  
14 no demolition, major rehab depending on financing?

15 MR. BLAIR: It's going to come down to  
16 those financial number. The Board -- I think it's  
17 malpractice not to but we were encouraged to do  
18 the demolition permit early, not to come in with  
19 the final plan. And I say malpractice because  
20 there has been an instance where the staff  
21 recommended approval of the new project and denial  
22 of the demolition and the building -- the

1 demolition was denied. A huge amount of money was  
2 spent and the property still sits there today.

3 So we were asked to come in early, have  
4 this dialogue to begin to create the template, the  
5 parameters on which the land use decisions can be  
6 made. So it's a healthy discussion now. It's an  
7 important discussion now but the land use decision  
8 and, unfortunately in today's world, once the land  
9 use decision's made, it still has to be -- tax  
10 credits have to be awarded. A million things need  
11 to happen and in the market rate project right  
12 now, those projects aren't moving forward because  
13 construction costs are going up and rents are  
14 going down. Well, it's twice as bad in affordable  
15 project because construction costs are going up  
16 and rents are already down low enough that there's  
17 this gap.

18 So part of the redevelopment discussions  
19 would probably end up being, all right, if you  
20 can't -- if it's going to be a compromise, there's  
21 going to be a gap and how is that gap funded?

22 MS. PEPPER: Mr. Mayor

1                   MR. BLAIR:   And, you know, it's not for  
2                   this discussion but to have that next discussion  
3                   is going to take quite a while probably.

4                   MAYOR EUILLE:   Okay, Ms. Pepper?

5                   MS. PEPPER:   Mr. Mayor?   Well, I guess  
6                   the concern I have is let us just say I don't know  
7                   where the Council is coming from.   So but I wanted  
8                   to ask you if the Council granted demolition but  
9                   with the idea that you didn't have to demolish  
10                  everything, but all you -- all we can decide on is  
11                  the demolition.   We can't put a little well, it  
12                  has to be demolition but we want you to come back  
13                  with a hybrid plan because here's what I'm worried  
14                  about.

15                  If we just said demolition and left it  
16                  at that and you later talked to HUD for tax  
17                  credits or whatever and they said, oh, no, we  
18                  can't do that.   None of this hybrid stuff.   What  
19                  we want is the whole thing or nothing.   Well, we  
20                  would already have granted you the demolition and  
21                  I bet a dollar to a donut that, by golly, you  
22                  would definitely tear them all down.

1           MR. BLAIR: I'll take some of that  
2           action because I think there would be a condition.  
3           And I assume there's a condition. The code was  
4           changed for a while. Demolition's good for a year  
5           but it can be tied to the redevelopment and by  
6           condition you say the buildings can't be  
7           demolished until there's a plan in place to -- for  
8           the redevelopment.

9           When I said malpractice that protects  
10          ARHA and their investment that they know they have  
11          to move forward with a plan. It has to be  
12          approved or the buildings don't get demolished.

13          MAYOR EUILLE: All right, and let's hold  
14          that thought for a second.

15          MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

16          MAYOR EUILLE: That is based on, what  
17          you just said is based -- would be via the  
18          land-use process. You're coming -- you're a  
19          client coming in with a proposal.

20          MR. BLAIR: Uh-huh.

21          MAYOR EUILLE: Which is what occurs  
22          after whatever our decision is today.

1 MR. BLAIR: But we know in moving  
2 forward the parameters that it will now be within  
3 the land-use process of what is an appropriate  
4 level of redevelopment for that site and,  
5 obviously, my client's going to be very clear.  
6 What is an appropriate level of redevelopment on  
7 that site that actually is viable and can be  
8 built?

9 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay but you said  
10 something and that's why I wanted you to hold that  
11 thought. You said I thought I heard you say that  
12 there's a condition that even if we grant the  
13 demolition, it would be conditioned, I thought I  
14 -- didn't you say something?

15 MR. BLAIR: On the approval of a  
16 development plan and that's been done before.

17 MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

18 MAYOR EUILLE: I just want -- because I  
19 actually pulled the City Attorney out earlier to  
20 sort of talk to him about something along this  
21 line and I just -- I just want to make sure that  
22 we're -- you're not saying something or maybe you

1 know something that the City Attorney doesn't  
2 know.

3 MR. BLAIR: Chris and I probably had  
4 conversations where we'd both agree on that.

5 MR. SPERA: By agreement, Mr. Mayor, you  
6 -- they can agree to whatever they want to agree  
7 to.

8 MAYOR EUILLE: So they can agree?

9 MR. SPERA: Correct.

10 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay.

11 MR. SPERA: But the discussion we had  
12 was about you imposing.

13 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay, that's what I want  
14 to clarify.

15 MR. SPERA: There's a distinction. So  
16 --

17 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay.

18 MR. SPERA: -- if the applicant agrees  
19 to be conditioned then that's different.

20 MAYOR EUILLE: All right.

21 MR. SPERA: What is before you is --

22 MAYOR EUILLE: Can't do that.

1 MR. SPERA: -- an application.

2 MAYOR EUILLE: Yes.

3 MR. SPERA: And you can't impose a  
4 condition on that. If they come to you and say,  
5 if you give us X we'll agree to this condition Y,  
6 then that's by agreement. That's different.

7 MR. WILSON: So they can make a  
8 representation that is completely independent of  
9 the appeal that they file and that's something  
10 that's binding on them essentially?

11 MR. SPERA: Yes. If they are agreeing  
12 to a condition we promise this if you -- if you  
13 had concerns about whatever it is.

14 MAYOR EUILLE: And when you say they can  
15 --

16 MR. SPERA: The criteria is before you  
17 and you say -- and you say I'm concerned because  
18 of X, related to one of the six conditions, and  
19 they say well, we promise not to do this or we  
20 promise to do something affirmatively to address  
21 your concern about one of the conditions.

22 MAYOR EUILLE: All right, so you're

1 saying that the -- timing wise is that something  
2 they could agree today? They can offer up today  
3 or you're saying --

4 MR. SPERA: I'd be okay with that.

5 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay, just wanted  
6 clarification.

7 MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

8 MR. SPERA: But I'm not sure it's the  
9 kind of decision you want to make in that short a  
10 period of time.

11 MAYOR EUILLE: No, no. I'm just tossing  
12 this out.

13 MS. PEPPER: Mr. Mayor?

14 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Blair, your response  
15 to -- reaction?

16 MR. BLAIR: I think Mr. Spera is correct  
17 and my client, we know what we have to do with  
18 HUD. We know we have an approval process to come  
19 through and for no other reason -- they're not  
20 going to displace the housing. They're not going  
21 to tear the units down until there's an approved  
22 plan in place. That approved plan has to be

1 approved by the Board, approved by you all and  
2 approved by HUD.

3 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay. Ms. Pepper then  
4 Vice Mayor Silberberg.

5 MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

6 MS. PEPPER: And you're agreeing to  
7 that?

8 MR. BLAIR: Yes.

9 MS. PEPPER: Okay. I guess the -- I  
10 guess what I'm concerned about is that this is a  
11 pretty big decision and I wish that there could be  
12 a better opportunity for everyone to actually have  
13 more information and to be negotiating or talking  
14 to each other. I feel very uncomfortable about  
15 saying okay, we're going to grant that you can  
16 demolish them, all four buildings or just demolish  
17 I guess the buildings. But that we would want you  
18 to agree to initiate an agreement that you would  
19 at least only demolish two.

20 And I feel very reluctant to grant  
21 anything until I really have a better  
22 understanding because I wonder if Mr. Priest

1 already knows that HUD is never going to buy a  
2 hybrid on that land. I mean, I don't know what he  
3 knows. But if we know right now that demolishing  
4 means they all go, well then, I don't feel very  
5 good about that.

6 I think this discussion, partly because  
7 we don't have all the information and we get a  
8 historical report that's a little late in coming  
9 here but what I'm trying to say is that, you know,  
10 it's pretty hard to make a decision like that.  
11 And I wish we had more assurances of things.  
12 That's really what I want.

13 MR. BLAIR: I'm going to laugh. I think  
14 I'm hearkening back to what Mr. Spera said a while  
15 ago in the beginning of the hearing when he was  
16 talking about decisions are hard. And I  
17 appreciate the dilemma. The numbers are hard.

18 Helen and Connie have probably spent too  
19 much of their lives over the last week going over  
20 numbers. The numbers really -- you don't --  
21 you're not going to know until you really know  
22 what a project is and what would help the

1 authority is to be able to have all its options,  
2 go through the land-use process, come back to you  
3 all and say I'm going to have to accept that  
4 decision or unfortunately appeal that decision.

5 But to know that the range would be  
6 total redevelopment or some hybrid and working  
7 through with the staff to determine what that is.

8 MS. PEPPER: And if HUD tells us that  
9 they won't approve of the particular land-use  
10 process or plan that we approve of, then do you  
11 get to go ahead and demolish all of them or is  
12 that the end of it?

13 MR. PRIEST: No, it wouldn't be -- let  
14 me try to answer --

15 MS. PEPPER: Do you come back to us?

16 MR. PRIEST: Yes. Let me say I want to  
17 piggyback on a point that Mr. Blair was making.  
18 Normally, what we would be doing is going through  
19 a process where we would be delivering a plan to  
20 the Planning Commission for them to approve it on  
21 DSUP change we would be making. Then we'd come  
22 before the Council and then, we would go before

1 the BAR and ask for a demolition permit.

2 Now we advanced that process because we  
3 wanted to really understand that we weren't going  
4 to go through a process of spending a lot of money  
5 to develop a plan only to have it ultimately voted  
6 down by the BAR and not give us a demolition  
7 permit. We were on a very fast timeframe. So we,  
8 in fact, moved ahead in the process to do this.

9 Now it's interesting. In doing that  
10 inquiry we have spent a considerable amount of  
11 dollars in terms of working through alternate  
12 plans to get where we are today with the 53-unit  
13 proposal. If the Council approves the demolition  
14 permit, we're not going to go out and start  
15 demolition on the buildings. We can't do that.  
16 We've got to go through a whole process to involve  
17 land-use planning with the Planning Commission and  
18 with the City Council again before we'd be able to  
19 do anything.

20 And then, once we had the plan approved  
21 is when we would go to HUD and get their approval  
22 for the plan that was agreed to by the City

1 Council and by the Planning Commission. So  
2 there's a whole process ahead of us that we've got  
3 to go through before we have a final plan that  
4 will be, in fact, one that we would take to HUD to  
5 ask for the approval for us to carry that out. So  
6 and if I could, you know, right now I wish I could  
7 tell you what HUD was going to do. If I could do  
8 that, I could own my new business operation if I  
9 could predict that because I don't know what they  
10 would do. And we would certainly be putting  
11 forward the plan that would be the one that would  
12 be ultimately adopted by the Planning Commission  
13 and the City Council.

14 MS. PEPPER: Yes, but if you had gone to  
15 the Planning Commission and then to us for a  
16 land-use plan we'd all have a better idea of what  
17 we're -- what we would be actually getting.

18 MR. PRIEST: Yes, what we --

19 MS. PEPPER: And at the same time.

20 MR. PRIEST: Yes, what we would know  
21 right now from the vote that you would take today  
22 is that we would have the authority to move ahead

1 with demolition as being an option that we could  
2 do. We know that we could demolish the buildings.  
3 It doesn't say that's what we're going to do. It  
4 says we have that capacity to be able to demolish  
5 these buildings.

6 MS. PEPPER: But that is exactly what  
7 you would do if the plan didn't come forward and  
8 that's what I'm worried about.

9 MR. PRIEST: No --

10 MS. PEPPER: Because that's what you  
11 want.

12 MR. PRIEST: But you have the checks and  
13 balance on that Councilmember because of the fact  
14 that we have to bring whatever we ultimately  
15 decide to do back through the Planning Commission  
16 and back to you. So we can't go from this point  
17 of having an approval of demolition and then go  
18 straight in to think we then have a plan that's  
19 going to be approved. We don't.

20 We have right now a document we have  
21 submitted to the BAR that says we want to do 53  
22 units. They felt that the property and they were

1 dealing with -- and again, their concern was in  
2 the six criteria that they looked at. Okay? They  
3 didn't approve our design.

4 MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

5 MR. PRIEST: We didn't ask them to do  
6 that. That wasn't in their consideration. And  
7 that's a matter that goes before the Planning  
8 Commission that we deal with ultimately with the  
9 design and what we're going to build. And then,  
10 ultimately to you all to approve that. So all  
11 we're going to have, if the -- you all voted to  
12 approve the demolition permit is only the  
13 knowledge that we have the right to be able to do  
14 that. That's all we have.

15 MAYOR EUILLE: Okay, thank you, Mr.  
16 Priest. Ms. -- Vice Mayor Silberberg?

17 MS. SILBERBERG: Thank you. Well, Mr.  
18 Blair and then, Mr. Priest as well, if we went  
19 down this road that you're suggesting, I think  
20 it's a hollow choice. It's tantamount to giving  
21 approval to demolition and I implore us not to go  
22 down this road. And I'm not being facetious but

1 it would be like walking down the aisle with a guy  
2 you haven't even met yet or giving approval to  
3 doing that. I mean, you haven't even seen what  
4 they're going to do and you have to -- so and Mr.  
5 Blair, with all due respect, you said the staff  
6 report had suggested that we approve the  
7 demolition.

8 But that was before last night's email  
9 which you didn't even reference. Last night's  
10 email, I asked --

11 MR. BLAIR: I didn't get.

12 MS. SILBERBERG: Okay, well, I'd be glad  
13 to share it.

14 MR. BLAIR: How's that?

15 MS. SILBERBERG: I'd be glad to share.  
16 So the thing is is that last night's email which  
17 when we get it, I would suggest -- our staff --

18 MR. BLAIR: What was last night's email?

19 MS. SILBERBERG: Hold on. If I might,  
20 just maybe this is a good example of just making  
21 it transparent as quickly as we get it, if it can  
22 go forward to the public and you all, I think that

1 would be great. I don't know what goes up on the  
2 Web site.

3 It basically is an email discussing what  
4 has been called option B, what I call the hybrid  
5 approach which I've been calling for weeks now.  
6 And so the idea is that ARHA put forward some  
7 numbers saying that it would be financially not  
8 feasible to do the hybrid approach because it  
9 might cost 11.8 million, just under, and then, the  
10 City Staff ran some numbers and they suggested it  
11 would be just under 2.8 million, a difference of  
12 \$8 million.

13 MR. BLAIR: Those numbers are the number  
14 --

15 MS. SILBERBERG: Hold on. Okay.

16 MR. BLAIR: What we discussed a week  
17 ago.

18 MS. SILBERBERG: Okay, well, we just got  
19 that last night. I could be wrong. I know I just  
20 reread the memo Mr. Jinks but I just really  
21 appreciate how fast staff and how hard they had to  
22 work to compare all these numbers and maybe you

1 all are off by 10 percent or something. Maybe we  
2 are, city staff, I don't really know.

3 Really no one knows. But it's hard to  
4 make a judgment call today, it's kind of a hollow  
5 choice I would say, it is a hollow choice to give  
6 you all the ability. And that's why I put forward  
7 this idea of this, you know, I think others were  
8 thinking it, too. I don't really know. I just  
9 kept talking to both sides and saying what about  
10 -- is there any middle ground? And now today  
11 we've heard some people who would be open to it  
12 and some people not so much actually.

13 So we don't -- it's really a fluid  
14 situation up here. But --

15 MAYOR EUILLE: But that's our challenge,  
16 Vice Mayor.

17 MS. SILBERBERG: Yes, Mr. Mayor, and I'm  
18 trying to carve a path here where both sides which  
19 are usually not pitted against each other,  
20 affordable housing and a historic preservation. I  
21 think that that's a false choice. I don't -- I  
22 never agreed with that but I think that various

1 folks on both sides have said to me quietly and  
2 then somewhat publicly that they would be okay.

3 Today we heard from a number of people  
4 who said this hybrid of saving --

5 MAYOR EUILLE: No, no, no. What I'm  
6 saying is the challenge that's before is that we  
7 don't have that flexibility nor the luxury to take  
8 those options into consideration.

9 MS. SILBERBERG: Yes, we do because Mr.  
10 Spera --

11 MAYOR EUILLE: No.

12 MS. SILBERBERG: -- just said, wait,  
13 wait, Mr. Mayor, with all due respect it's  
14 demolish, don't demolish or modify. And modify is  
15 the hybrid.

16 MAYOR EUILLE: Well, what I'm s --

17 MS. SILBERBERG: Am I -- Mr. Spera, is  
18 that -- could you weigh in, Mr. --

19 MR. SPERA: That would be a  
20 modification.

21 MS. SILBERBERG: Thank you.

22 MR. SPERA: You could do that --

1                   MAYOR EUILLE: Yes, but what I'm saying  
2 but in terms of the specific details of what a  
3 plan would look like, that's we don't have the  
4 luxury of having before us today. But the three  
5 options that he did lay out early to us is  
6 certainly what's there but, you know, but modify  
7 could mean anything.

8                   MS. SILBERBERG: Well, I -- Mr. Mayor, I  
9 know that we're going to continue to discuss this  
10 but at some point I would like to put forward a  
11 motion to modify meaning --

12                   Mr. Lovain: One or two or three?

13                   MS. SILBERBERG: I would say two because  
14 the historians, I spoke with Mr. Cox and Mr.  
15 Malone who said and they could speak to it for  
16 themselves is that it's saving two preserves a lot  
17 of green space but also allows, I mean, the ARHA  
18 -- the difference, we're talking about a  
19 difference of 16 units at most that we wouldn't be  
20 able to build on that site maybe.

21                   And of course you know how strongly I  
22 feel about affordable housing so I served on the

1 Economic Opportunities Commission for eight years  
2 and chaired it so -- yes.

3 MR. LOVAIN: (off mic) yield.

4 MS. SILBERBERG: Sure.

5 MR. LOVAIN: But there's huge millions  
6 of dollars of difference between one and --  
7 between two and between three and --

8 MS. SILBERBERG: Well, the difference --  
9 well, actually it's a difference of let's just  
10 look at the numbers that ARHA and our city staff  
11 put forward last night if we did the hybrid. The  
12 difference is between 11.8 million and 2.8  
13 million. It's a difference of \$8 million cheaper  
14 is that right?

15 MR. JINKS: I'd like to qualify and make  
16 sure that it's understood that it's possible  
17 under, in our city, ARHA joint meeting on Tuesday  
18 there were new numbers presented. City staff and  
19 ARHA staff went through those. And ARHA's  
20 projection is their funding gap is the 11.8  
21 million. City staff said it is possible, doesn't  
22 say probable, doesn't say certain, it's possible

1 the gap could be as low as 2.8 million. The  
2 biggest difference is whether or not the nine  
3 percent housing tax credits are available or not.

4 ARHA basically is -- believes they're  
5 probably not going to be available because of the  
6 economics of this particular project, the fact the  
7 hou -- the nine percent credits are highly  
8 competitive and there's a very detailed scoring  
9 system. And so their judgment is based upon their  
10 experience with that program saying -- highly  
11 skeptical or disbelieve they wouldn't be provided.  
12 It is possible, I think it was said earlier there  
13 are a lot of details that we don't know.

14 I think Mr. Blair hit the nail on the  
15 head. Housing finance is the most complicated  
16 part of municipal finance there is all given to  
17 federal rules where the benefits and the  
18 restrictions come from. So while there is a that  
19 range, it could be -- I say it could be possibly  
20 as low as 3 or as high as 12. They're just --  
21 there's just a whole more details that have to be  
22 worked through before I think we could assign

1       probable to any of these numbers.

2                   MR. LOVAIN:   Mr. Jinks, and that's the  
3       two -- the HUD -- what we're talking about here is  
4       the cost of two?

5                   MR. JINKS:   That's what that was modeled  
6       on, yes.

7                   MR. LOVAIN:   If you knocked down three,  
8       that delta would be smaller?

9                   MR. JINKS:   One would assume that's  
10      likely but until you actually work through the  
11      numbers, you know, there's a logical direction  
12      that that would be the case.

13                  MR. SMEDBERG:   And, Mr. City Manager,  
14      just to clarify, that delta, guess who would pick  
15      up that delta?

16                  Mayor Euille:   Taxpayers.

17                  MR. SMEDBERG:   Us?

18                  MR. JINKS:   Yes.

19                  MR. SMEDBERG:   Not ARHA, not anyone  
20      else, us.  So they really have, you know, we are  
21      in a position of either -- it's either yes or no  
22      and Allison, I'm very sympathetic to what you just

1 said but, you know, here we are again, last  
2 minute, yes or no. So you know --

3 MS. SILBERBERG: Yes or no or modify.

4 MR. SMEDBERG: Well, modify but who's  
5 going to come up with a minimum of \$3 million?  
6 Where are we going to get that money?

7 MAYOR EUILLE: All right --

8 MR. SMEDBERG: I mean, that's what I'm  
9 -- I'm not disagreeing with you necessarily in  
10 terms of what I'd like to see but I'm just saying,  
11 Mark, Mr. City Manager, that's what basically that  
12 delta is going to have to be picked up by us.

13 MR. JINKS: At the end of the day ARHA  
14 has explained they're financial position and the  
15 dollars that would probably have been making up  
16 gaps in funding were their tax credits and other  
17 sources of funding through the prior redevelopment  
18 processes -- in a sense there has been city money  
19 that has been basically, you know, bridge loans  
20 that have been made, other kinds of support.

21 And so at the end of the day, it's  
22 highly likely that they would be local dollars

1 that would have to make up a gap.

2 MR. SMEDBERG: This is another example,  
3 and not to take anything away from what Connie or  
4 Helen or anyone else have done on this, here's  
5 another reason why we needed to be briefed.

6 Mayor.

7 MS. SILBERBERG: And Mr. Mayor -- MR.  
8 Wilson: Mr. Mayor.

9 MAYOR EUILLE: Briefly.

10 MS. SILBERBERG: Just a follow-up point.  
11 I mean, given that we don't have all the numbers  
12 which Councilwoman Pepper alluded to a second ago,  
13 I mean, do we need to go back to the drawing board  
14 and run numbers or before we vote to under -- I  
15 mean, we've gone through a lot today I know but, I  
16 mean, to know what it would be of two versus one,  
17 saving one versus two or are we just going to  
18 eyeball this and to Paul's point, Mr. Smedberg's  
19 point, is a lot of money.

20 But the historic preservation issue, I  
21 don't know if there are historic preservation tax  
22 credits as well that could offset that 2.7, 2.8

1 million? We don't know. Not much I know.

2 MR. JINKS: They're included and it's  
3 not -- they don't make a huge swing in the  
4 numbers.

5 MS. SILBERBERG: Okay. MR. Wilson: Mr.  
6 Mayor.

7 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. I do want the  
8 City Attorney to once again tell us what we're  
9 limited to today in terms of decision because I'm  
10 sensing that maybe some folks may think that we  
11 can sort of not act today and defer. But I think  
12 legally we have a responsibility to do something  
13 here today and so I want the City Attorney to  
14 remind us, please.

15 MS. PEPPER: And I want to ask him a  
16 question, too, I want him to answer and that is we  
17 can't defer it but couldn't the applicant defer  
18 it?

19 MR. SPERA: To?

20 MS. PEPPER: Request a deferral?

21 MR. SPERA: I will answer the questions  
22 in reverse order with all due respect, Mr. Mayor.

1 But --

2 MS. PEPPER: This is a mess. We need  
3 more information.

4 MR. SPERA: Councilwoman Pepper is  
5 correct that we cannot, you as Council cannot  
6 defer it but the applicant could request and agree  
7 to a deferral if that's what they wanted to do.  
8 So but to answer the Mayor's question, you have  
9 three choices.

10 You can agree with the BAR and affirm  
11 their decision. You can reverse their decision or  
12 you can modify their decision. And, you know, I  
13 think that modification is -- and everything  
14 within all or none but do you have enough  
15 information to do that? But what I sense  
16 Councilwoman Pepper is suggesting is if the  
17 applicant agreed to the deferral and took that  
18 time to come in with what they believe is their  
19 best hybrid to use the Vice Mayor's term, then  
20 that might be the most productive use of that time  
21 as opposed to you just denying it and letting them  
22 start over.

1 I'm speculating. But I think I've  
2 answered --

3 MS. SILBERBERG: Can you repeat what you  
4 just --

5 MR. SPERA: I think I've -- I'm sorry,  
6 go ahead.

7 MS. SILBERBERG: Just repeat, what was  
8 it? Just say that one more time? Just repeat it?  
9 It's a long day. Can you repeat it?

10 MR. SPERA: Yes, okay. I said a lot of  
11 things so I'm not sure what --

12 MS. SILBERBERG: Oh, just that last  
13 part.

14 MR. SPERA: I'm not sure --

15 MS. SILBERBERG: That last sentence.

16 MR. SPERA: All right, the last sentence  
17 is -- I don't even know what I said.

18 MR. Blair: Do you want me to translate?

19 MR. SPERA: I said lots of sentences but  
20 what I was trying to convey was that I'm not sure  
21 if you want to try and sort of off the edge of the  
22 envelope, back of the napkin, figure out what the

1 right hybrid is today. That might be hard. But  
2 if they were to agree to a deferral, that might  
3 let them come back with more time and more  
4 analysis if they had any interest in doing a  
5 hybrid and come back without this having been  
6 denied. And then, present to you a modified  
7 proposal. I believe that was the last thing that  
8 I said.

9 MAYOR EUILLE: That's correct. Mr.  
10 Wilson and Mr. Lovain.

11 MR. WILSON: All right, thank you, Mr.  
12 Mayor. I've been uncharacteristically quiet for a  
13 second trying to take this in. I think this is  
14 absolutely absurd. This is decision-making that's  
15 unworthy of this body to be perfectly honest with  
16 everyone.

17 MS. PEPPER: Amen.

18 MR. WILSON: I think we have gotten to  
19 this place through a variety of problems that are  
20 on both sides and it's inexcusable to get here and  
21 it's really scary as we start a much bigger  
22 process in implementing the overall Braddock East

1 Plan to be here because this is the easy one,  
2 quite frankly and this is really, really  
3 unfortunate.

4 We are in a box that we erected most of  
5 which. We adopted Resolution 830. We adopted the  
6 Braddock East Plan. We created the Parker-Gray  
7 District. We put the box around this process that  
8 we're in. So we -- if we would like to change the  
9 parameters of that box then we need to do that but  
10 that's going to mean revisiting some of this stuff  
11 and clearly there -- it sounds like on the dais  
12 there is a willingness to do that. And if so,  
13 then, you know, I hope ARHA takes us out of our  
14 misery here for today and we go back to the  
15 drawing board on looking at the overall picture.

16 Because one way or the other, I mean,  
17 we're going to have to figure this out. So either  
18 going to mean significantly increased density on  
19 these properties, a significantly larger infusion  
20 of cash from this City or we destroy properties  
21 that are, in the opinion of some people,  
22 considered historic. There's no magic solution

1 here around all this. We're going to have to do  
2 one of these things. I mean, it's just -- it's  
3 not magic.

4 We're trying to create housing that is  
5 working against some powerful economic forces.  
6 And the only way that happens is by compromising  
7 something and in some cases a couple of things  
8 probably. So you know, we can figure out what to  
9 do here and maybe ARHA will pull the appeal for  
10 now and allow us all to have some more  
11 conversation. Given how the work has gone so far  
12 I'm not terribly confident that we're going to get  
13 to a much better place real quickly but, I mean,  
14 this is a mess and this is absolutely horrible  
15 decision-making to be sitting up here saying, oh,  
16 well, they sent us these numbers a couple of  
17 nights ago and, you know, maybe we'll keep three,  
18 maybe we'll keep two, maybe we'll keep -- that's  
19 ridiculous.

20 We're talking about multimillion dollar  
21 projects here. To be doing this up on this dais  
22 is absurd.

1 Mayor Euille: Absolutely.

2 MS. PEPPER: Amen.

3 MAYOR EUILLE: We need to get a motion  
4 on the floor --

5 MS. PEPPER: Well, and at least a delay  
6 would give us an opportunity to make an  
7 enlightened decision.

8 MR. BLAIR: But, you know, one of the  
9 things Mr. Spera said, we've agreed not to  
10 demolish the buildings until the development  
11 plan's approved. And --

12 MAYOR EUILLE: Excuse me, excuse me.  
13 I'm sorry, Mr. Blair, what did you say?

14 MR. BLAIR: We have accepted a  
15 condition. I don't think there's a motion so we  
16 can't -- it's not part of a condition but you  
17 know, ARHA has represented that it would accept a  
18 condition that there will be no demolition until a  
19 plan is put in place, approved by the City  
20 Council, Planning Commission and we got to add  
21 HUD, too. And the mere fact that, you know, if  
22 HUD doesn't approve it then it doesn't get the

1 status quo.

2 The City doesn't approve it, status quo.  
3 If the City approves something that's a hybrid and  
4 ARHA goes we think we can work with that because  
5 Helen and Connie have made magic out of numbers,  
6 then maybe everybody's happy. But at least, if  
7 there is an approval of the demolition, it allows  
8 that conversation to continue in a meaningful way  
9 in a framework where ARHA can continue to pay  
10 design costs, engineering costs, consultant costs  
11 and other costs to move forward.

12 MR. PRIEST: Mr. Mayor, I wanted to add  
13 one thing. I think it's important to understand,  
14 ARHA did not propose any options. We proposed a  
15 project that went to the BAR that got denied. We  
16 appealed that to City Council. We did not come  
17 with some option. That was brought up separately  
18 not by ARHA. We had the same impact that anybody  
19 else did to try to judge whether this made any  
20 sense to this because we were proceeding under one  
21 plan. We agreed, we agreed to defer this before.  
22 It was on the fact that we have an approval plan

1 that we had submitted to the BAR and we were going  
2 to bring it back for appeal.

3 We are not appealing an option A or an  
4 option B or option three. We are here appealing  
5 the fact that BAR turned down our application to  
6 build the development we put forward. Now the  
7 Council can either vote it up, can vote it down.  
8 We will respect whatever you do. We -- and in  
9 doing that, I'm saying to you that whatever action  
10 you take, we will take a look at where we are  
11 going.

12 If you approve it, we have agreed, as  
13 Mr. Blair has said, we're not going to be  
14 demolishing anything until we've gotten an  
15 approved plan, an approved plan through this  
16 Planning Commission, this City Council and HUD.  
17 We're not going to go and tear that down.

18 So the fact that you've got an option,  
19 we didn't propose that. And we're not prepared to  
20 respond to that.

21 MAYOR EUILLE: All right, thank you.

22 MS. SILBERBERG: But Mr. Mayor?

1 MR. SMEDBERG: Mr. Mayor?

2 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Smedberg?

3 MR. SMEDBERG: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

4 Mr. Mayor, I'm going to put a motion on the table  
5 that we uphold BAR.

6 MAYOR EUILLE: Well, first of all, we've  
7 got to close the public hearing.

8 MR. SMEDBERG: Okay. Mr. Mayor, I want  
9 to put a motion we close the public hearing.

10 MAYOR EUILLE: Is there a second?

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second.

12 MAYOR EUILLE: Motion and a second to  
13 close the public hearing discussion. Hearing  
14 none, all those in favor say aye.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Aye.

16 MAYOR EUILLE: Must be tired. Opposed,  
17 no? All right, public hearing is closed. Mr.  
18 Smedberg?

19 MR. SMEDBERG: Mr. Mayor, I'm going to  
20 put a motion on the table to continue discussion  
21 here that we uphold the BAR decision.

22 MS. SILBERBERG: Wait, to continue --

1 say that again? Just the --

2 MR. SMEDBERG: Oh, I'm sorry. Deny the  
3 appeal, I'm sorry.

4 MS. PEPPER: There's a difference.

5 MR. SMEDBERG: Yes, yes.

6 MS. SILBERBERG: Then repeat it since  
7 you just changed it? Just say it?

8 MR. SMEDBERG: Deny the appeal. Same, I  
9 mean, it's essentially the same thing. Deny the  
10 appeal and uphold the BAR decision.

11 MAYOR EUILLE: Motion by Mr. Smedberg.  
12 Is there a second? Is there a second?

13 MS. SILBERBERG: Second.

14 MAYOR EUILLE: Motion by Mr. Smedberg,  
15 second by Vice Mayor Allison Silberberg.  
16 Discussion.

17 MR. LOVAIN: Mr. Mayor?

18 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Lovain?

19 MR. LOVAIN: I'm just a little troubled  
20 by this because I mean I do think there's some  
21 merit in this that they cannot -- if the permit  
22 was approved, they cannot proceed with demolition

1 without coming back to us. And we could certainly  
2 make our intentions clear that we want them to  
3 seriously explore a hybrid option. And so what  
4 did that -- how -- if we did that, how would that  
5 tie up --

6 MR. SMEDBERG: Well, I was just simply  
7 putting a motion on the table to get the  
8 discussion started. So if someone else wanted to  
9 put another motion on the table, we're just going  
10 around in circles here.

11 MR. LOVAIN: And I'm not sure and I'm  
12 also not sure what I've just described what the  
13 functional difference is from asking them to  
14 defer. So --

15 MR. SMEDBERG: Listen, and, Tim, you  
16 know, I mean, in my view they have -- from the  
17 financial position and some of the things that  
18 Justin said, there's, you know, in there -- from a  
19 business perspective there's only one choice here.  
20 I mean, they need to get as many units on that  
21 site as possible from a purely business  
22 perspective. That's it. That model is changing.

1 How ARHA operates is changing.

2 Unless we're going to make up that gap,  
3 then that's, you know --

4 MR. LOVAIN: Yes, and I have to say,  
5 too, though, that you know, if the number -- the  
6 delta is as small as 2.8 million with two and they  
7 were able to do three, then to me it's getting  
8 into to be a reasonable range.

9 MR. SMEDBERG: And I'm not saying it  
10 isn't but that is if all the planets align and  
11 everything is perfect.

12 MR. LOVAIN: Yes.

13 MS. PEPPER: (Inaudible) by a different  
14 -- by allowing demolition, we open up more options  
15 because that puts them in a position of having to  
16 have an approved plan and we will have input on  
17 that improved plan and we can ask for a hybrid at  
18 that time.

19 MR. LOVAIN: Ask for it right now. You  
20 know, to be explored, to explore the finances of a  
21 hybrid.

22 MS. PEPPER: Explore all of that.

1                   MAYOR EUILLE: All right. We have a  
2 motion and a second. Further discussion?

3                   MR. CHAPMAN: Mayor?

4                   MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Chapman?

5                   MR. CHAPMAN: I mean, I've been quiet as  
6 well. It's not because I don't have anything to  
7 say. I think, you know, at the very beginning I  
8 mentioned the fact that this, like the young lady  
9 said in the back, this is about whether these  
10 homes are historic or not. And in talking to  
11 residents I've heard folks and I've heard  
12 conversation today, heard my colleagues but I  
13 think a lot of ancillary, whether they connect  
14 with the overall decision or not, things have come  
15 into the conversation about the role of ARHA,  
16 their management, other things, the financing.

17                   Like I said, all of them do connect with  
18 the wholesale view of the project. But in terms  
19 of this being historic or not, I think that is the  
20 essential question. And that's the question we  
21 are designed to stick to today. As Mr. Priest  
22 said in his last statements, the first part of

1     what he said is what we heard in the taskforce  
2     meeting.

3             It was not about options. It was not  
4     about hybrids. It was do you -- are you going to  
5     appeal? We're going to appeal the position  
6     because we are looking to demolish the entirety of  
7     the Ramsey Homes. It was not, hey, we're going to  
8     -- let's see if we can work out something and  
9     that's what the taskforce heard.

10            And so that's why there was no extra  
11     additional conversation. And I think that's why  
12     everything is so last minute to a number of folks  
13     because that was not the intent. I think there  
14     were definitely folks looking at other options.  
15     But that was not what ARHA was looking for. They  
16     simply asked the folks on the taskforce to look at  
17     their appeal, that's it. And looking at, I think  
18     Ms. -- I looked at the initial BAR meeting. I do  
19     think there should have been better historical  
20     presentation brought.

21            I mean, I think everybody knows that  
22     whether it's ARHA, whether it's staff or whatever

1 because what we've seen today is a marked,  
2 markedly different presentation from the initial  
3 one. And I would have loved to see BAR address  
4 some of the go -- have the back and forth with  
5 what we saw today because they did not get that  
6 chance at all. And I think it really it does a  
7 disservice to this Council, it does a disservice  
8 to BAR, it does a disservice to ARHA and does a  
9 disservice to answering this question because that  
10 opportunity was not there.

11 From my personal experience in growing  
12 up in that area, in the historic district, 823  
13 North Patrick Street, I know what it means to not  
14 be able to see the home that you grew up in. But  
15 I also understand and I believe I understand the  
16 real history of public housing. Public housing is  
17 not meant, as some will say, it is not meant for  
18 generational housing. It is a temporary housing  
19 so that people can get back on their feet, find  
20 opportunities and move forward.

21 In this country we have always had  
22 turnover of housing as agencies seek to improve

1 that housing. How this plot came to be in ARHA's  
2 hands and was given to the City and City agencies  
3 is a great story but I do not think that that does  
4 anything to demean or change what is the  
5 underlying theme of public housing history which  
6 is change.

7 Some because of different stories,  
8 different histories, different timeframes and  
9 decades the story of this plot changes; there's  
10 people who have lived here, buildings that have  
11 been added to, changed and whatnot but also I  
12 think one thing to keep in mind is that the main  
13 factor in public housing is not the buildings. It  
14 is the people. It is the people that pass through  
15 the doors, the people that raise their families  
16 there. So being tied to buildings does not work  
17 for public housing.

18 What changes and may change this  
19 discussion in other people's minds, not mine, but  
20 other people's minds is the fact of where these  
21 buildings are placed in a historic district. We  
22 have buildings not even two blocks away that are

1 still in that same historic district that, if I  
2 remember and maybe Bill or Del or whoever's on  
3 Council at the time, I do not remember that --  
4 this same fight for those homes when those were  
5 torn down and changed that do not necessarily  
6 reflect the culture and character of that  
7 neighborhood.

8           They are three, four stories, much  
9 taller, different design, different materials and  
10 so for us to now say that these do, even with  
11 their story, it troubles me. But that's my  
12 personal opinion. I do and I was going to vote  
13 for a full demolition. I don't want anybody to  
14 think anything different but it's because of that.

15           Do we have an interesting process of  
16 what we've worked out here? Yes, we do. But it's  
17 only because I feel and I do not want anybody to  
18 take this personally because it's not. I do think  
19 we have let other things get in the way of what  
20 our one decision was, our one question was and the  
21 problem with doing that allowed for us to get so  
22 sidetracked that we are now kind of freefalling.

1 So I'll end my comments and see where we go from  
2 here.

3           MAYOR EUILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chapman.  
4 I will and I share the comments, the frustrations  
5 that have already been expressed on the part of my  
6 colleagues. But I do want to associate my  
7 comments more closely with what Councilman Chapman  
8 just said. I'm a product of public housing myself  
9 and, you know, we've had older housing units in  
10 this City that have been torn down either, I mean,  
11 that were albeit not part of a historic district  
12 but, you know, certainly had probably a little bit  
13 more historic significance than in terms of who  
14 lived, actually lived, in those units than, you  
15 know, Ramsey Homes.

16           But the mere fact is is that, you know,  
17 this is really about an opportunity, and we've all  
18 talked about it up here, that ARHA in terms of a  
19 model, an agency trying to be responsive to  
20 improving the quality of life for their residents  
21 in all their units, developments throughout the  
22 entire city, you'd have to be naove to not know

1 that dollars from the US government, from HUD, are  
2 no longer available to do maintenance, repairs and  
3 upkeeps, that that falls on the shoulders of these  
4 -- of the individual housing agencies, we've  
5 already heard that.

6 And they, ARHA, made a decision probably  
7 four or five years ago to change their model,  
8 their structure simply so they can continue to  
9 meet the challenges and the needs of the 1,100  
10 plus housing units in the City both that's a  
11 combination of public housing, Section 8 housing,  
12 assisted living, all of the above. And then, Mr.  
13 Wilson's right. We have the Resolution 830 that's  
14 been on the books for 30-some years that requires  
15 a one-for-one replacement whenever a unit is torn  
16 down or whatever. You've got to find another  
17 place for it.

18 But then the real deal is when folks ask  
19 me and people ask me all the time, what's the  
20 number one challenge facing this city? It's not  
21 traffic congestion. It's not taxes. You know  
22 what? It's not even really the education, school

1 system. It's housing affordability. And when we  
2 talk about housing affordability, we're talking  
3 about housing for a mixed income level of families  
4 throughout, you know, that we want to live here.

5 And we have a responsibility to address  
6 those needs. ARHA has been a very valuable player  
7 with the City in terms of helping us to meet our  
8 housing affordability challenges and it's been,  
9 you know, proven to be successful. And when ARHA  
10 said they wanted to look at this Ramey Housing,  
11 this housing site to redevelop Ramsey, obviously,  
12 you know, you look at it to see how you can  
13 maximize your return on the investment.

14 And so I'm not going to get into the  
15 number of units because that's something still  
16 that can still be determined. But the mere fact  
17 is is that this affords an opportunity to make  
18 housing affordable for some additional families in  
19 our City that need housing. And so for me, and  
20 certainly, I support preservation but and we need  
21 to balance preservation and housing when we can  
22 and I think there's an opportunity to do just

1 that.

2 But it's not going to be easy. But it's  
3 -- and what we do know is that no matter what the  
4 options are it's going to cost. ARHA's original  
5 option is going to cost but certainly they benefit  
6 from getting tax credits and other financial  
7 assistance to get there whether it's option B or  
8 option C, it's going to cost. But the burden of  
9 that cost is going to fall on the shoulders of  
10 each and every one of us who are citizens,  
11 taxpayers.

12 That's really what this comes down to.  
13 So with that, Mr. Lovain.

14 MR. LOVAIN: I think I'm about ready to  
15 -- prepared to offer a substitute motion but I  
16 have a question I want to just understand. Did  
17 you say that if you had the permit in hand there  
18 are certain things you can do in moving the  
19 project along that you couldn't do if you didn't  
20 have the permit?

21 MR. BLAIR: I think procedurally we can  
22 do it. I think the issue is kind of the financial

1 commitment that you're going to make to move  
2 forward. I think this planning staff; we were  
3 supposed to get some conditions back. Hopefully  
4 we will get those back shortly and I think,  
5 candidly, the discussion may change a little bit  
6 during the land-use process.

7 MR. LOVAIN: So I'm kind of torn between  
8 asking ARHA to withdraw the appeal and work with  
9 the staff on exploring hybrid options and the  
10 second option would be to -- a motion to overturn  
11 the BAR decision with the understanding that  
12 you're going to come back to us before any  
13 demolition and with the assurance that you will  
14 work with the City staff to explore options. I  
15 mean, those are the two options --

16 MR. BLAIR: There is an overall number  
17 -- date that we are focused on and that date is to  
18 file a tax credit application in March 2015. '16.  
19 And in order to -- '16, next year, yes. In order  
20 to do that, we need to have the entitlements. And  
21 that is what we're working on. So a delay, you  
22 know, if this decision's not made, I think, Chris,

1 I'm correct we can't -- does it stay further  
2 action on our -- stay further action on our DSUP  
3 application. But it just makes it kind of  
4 problematic to have this out there.

5 MR. SPERA: Yes, I think if you don't  
6 have the demo approval, staff's not going to I  
7 mean, Karl you say -- you're not going to work on  
8 their DSUP application if they didn't have the  
9 demo approval.

10 MR. MORITZ: Well, we have been  
11 continuing to work on the DSUP application while  
12 the appeal process has been going on and we're not  
13 -- there's no legal reason why we can't continue  
14 to work on options or the proposal with ARHA  
15 irrespective -- we don't need a demolition  
16 approval or disapproval in order to guide that.  
17 We can continue to work on the options.

18 MR. SPERA: It's be subject two.

19 MR. MORITZ: Yes, yes.

20 MR. SPERA: That makes sense.

21 MR. LOVAIN: So I'm just thinking what  
22 is the functional difference between asking to

1 withdraw the application and overturning the BAR  
2 decision with these assurances. Is there a  
3 functional difference?

4 MR. BLAIR: The functional difference, I  
5 think is a conversation that have been had up  
6 there knowing that ARHA isn't going to demolish  
7 the buildings until a plan's approved but is  
8 moving forward with the knowledge that this  
9 Council is saying there will be some demolition  
10 and it's going -- it may be all, it may be part  
11 but it's going to be based upon the development  
12 plan when it's approved.

13 MR. WILSON: Mr. Mayor?

14 MR. BLAIR: And a lot of that is going  
15 to ultimately come down to the numbers that  
16 everybody looks at to figure out what's the future  
17 of this property.

18 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Wilson?

19 MR. WILSON: So HUD disposition rules if  
20 today we approve demolition and you went to HUD  
21 tomorrow and said, hey, we want to knock it down,  
22 that process requires a plan, correct? An

1 approved --

2 MR. BLAIR: That's above my paygrade so  
3 Connie, you missed the -- you got the call in the  
4 uniform today but --

5 MR. WILSON: I just want to close this  
6 loop here so.

7 MR. BLAIR: -- can you explain the  
8 disposition rules?

9 MS. STAUDINGER: Actually, the way the  
10 process would work is if we get our entitlements  
11 by next March, we would apply for the funding in  
12 March. We wouldn't hear from VHTA until probably  
13 May or June and they would say this is the first  
14 ranking and then there's a challenge situation.

15 MR. WILSON: Forget all that.

16 MS. STAUDINGER: Just disposition we  
17 probably wouldn't --

18 MR. WILSON: Right now HUD has control.  
19 They have a say.

20 MS. STAUDINGER: Right.

21 MR. WILSON: In that property?

22 MS. STAUDINGER: Right.

1           MR. WILSON: So if today you called them  
2 up and said, hey, I'd like to knock it down, what  
3 are they going to say to you?

4           MS. STAUDINGER: They would say give me  
5 a development proposal and we'll see if it's a  
6 viable project.

7           MR. WILSON: An approved development  
8 proposal?

9           MS. STAUDINGER: Right. And they have  
10 75 days to approve it once we put together a  
11 development proposal and submit it to them.

12           MR. WILSON: They're going to require  
13 that you have an approved development proposal?

14           MS. STAUDINGER: Yes.

15           MR. WILSON: So this Council has to go  
16 through the land --

17           MS. STAUDINGER: No, they will actually  
18 approve our development proposal. In other words,  
19 they'll ask us for the development proposal and if  
20 they see it as a viable project for the site, then  
21 they will approve it. They get 75 days to review  
22 what we submit to them.

1 MR. WILSON: Is that after we've  
2 approved your -- we've given you your entitlement?

3 MS. STAUDINGER: In our process it would  
4 be because we wouldn't submit a disposition  
5 application until we know we're moving forward.

6 MR. WILSON: Okay, got it. Okay. So  
7 the bottom line is you cannot knock down this  
8 property, regardless of what we say, you cannot  
9 knock down this property until you have an  
10 approved development plan from the City of  
11 Alexandria?

12 MAYOR EUILLE: That's right.

13 MS. STAUDINGER: Yes. Yes.

14 MR. LOVAIN: Mr. Mayor?

15 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Lovain?

16 MR. LOVAIN: And with this  
17 understanding, I'm going to offer a substitute  
18 motion that we overturn the BAR decision with the  
19 assurance that there will be no demolition without  
20 further Council approval and with the assurance  
21 from ARHA that they will work with City staff to  
22 fully explore the finances of hybrid arrangements,

1 more than one.

2 MAYOR EUILLE: Motion by Mr. Lovain,  
3 second by Mr. Chapman. I want to ask the City  
4 Attorney if the motion is proper.

5 MR. SPERA: I'm sorry (inaudible).

6 MAYOR EUILLE: I wanted to ask you if  
7 the motion is proper that was just put on the  
8 table.

9 MR. SPERA: Is the motion proper? The  
10 -- any of you can make a motion for whatever you  
11 want. The question becomes is there a legal issue  
12 with making a motion in the manner of the --  
13 here's the thing I'm wrestling with.  
14 Determination about whether or not there is a  
15 historic element to this property that needs to be  
16 preserved. That's the issue that's before you and  
17 so it becomes difficult -- so if the motion was  
18 we're going to let you knock down no more than  
19 three because we believe that some aspect of this  
20 property is -- we believe the property is historic  
21 in some respect and that some aspect of it should  
22 be preserved, then you've made a finding whether

1 or not the property is historic or not and you're  
2 leaving some contingency and some come back  
3 subject to a plan as to how much of that is  
4 preserved.

5 But if the option is all of it gets  
6 knocked down or maybe you come back with an option  
7 that only some of it gets knocked down, then  
8 you're not really making that determination. I  
9 think, as I said at the beginning, either the  
10 property's historic or it's not and that's not  
11 contingent upon whether you like the development  
12 project that's going to come after it or you  
13 don't.

14 But where you do have some discretion or  
15 I think you do have some room to maneuver is if  
16 you say, we believe there are historic aspects to  
17 it but we don't believe those historic aspects are  
18 such that all four of the properties need to be  
19 maintained. So you can demolish some of it but  
20 you can't demolish all of it. And this is a  
21 unique -- and look, I'm not worried about  
22 precedent here because this is a unique property.

1 You've got four buildings with common architecture  
2 and common historical significance and despite the  
3 hours of gobbledygook and amateur testimony, plus  
4 some very, very heartfelt testimony and very  
5 sincere testimony with actual qualified people  
6 that we heard today, the fact remains that nobody  
7 said that all four of the buildings have to be  
8 preserved in order to maintain the historical  
9 significance of the site.

10 And so there's something there in the  
11 hybrid approach but I don't know that you have  
12 enough information before you. But so with that  
13 caveat, see I think you can say either it's  
14 historic or it's not. Either knock all of it down  
15 or knock some of it down. But so if you're saying  
16 knock all of it down, you're saying there's no  
17 historical significance, okay? You're overturning  
18 the BAR, right?

19 And if you say we're going to give you  
20 approval to knock down some of it, come back and  
21 you're not going to go forward until you get these  
22 other approvals that, to me, I think is

1       defensible. But I that the -- you can't put  
2       something out that doesn't maintain some of it if  
3       you're going to give them an approval to demolish.  
4       That probably gives you -- but you're nodding your  
5       head like you understand, Mr. Lovain?

6                   MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

7                   MR. LOVAIN: You had me there for a  
8       while but I --

9                   MR. SMEDBERG: It's black and white.  
10       Either you put -- I put a motion on to accept the  
11       appeal and -- or I'm sorry to deny the appeal and  
12       accept the BAR decision. I think if there are  
13       other people on this dais that feel the other side  
14       you just got to do it.

15                   MAYOR EUILLE: Just put a motion.

16                   MS. SILBERBERG: Wait, wait, wait, Mr.  
17       Mayor?

18                   MR. SMEDBERG: And also, Mr. City  
19       Attorney --

20                   MS. SILBERBERG: Point of clarification.

21                   MAYOR EUILLE: Hold on.

22                   MS. SILBERBERG: Okay, sorry, Mr.

1 Smedberg.

2 MR. SMEDBERG: And, Mr. City Attorney, I  
3 think you should be careful about how you  
4 categorize people's testimony. If that's the case  
5 then every comment I make or something, if I don't  
6 have a PhD in something then my testimony is not  
7 valid or my remarks are not valid.

8 MR. SPERA: I apologize if my duration  
9 of stay up here expressed itself in some  
10 frustration but the fact remains that many people  
11 comment sort of off the cuff and many people  
12 comment from their hearts and it's very difficult  
13 sometimes to maintain the distinction between the  
14 two.

15 MS. SILBERBERG: Mr. Mayor?

16 MS. PEPPER: Mr. Mayor?

17 MS. SILBERBERG: Just point of  
18 clarification.

19 MAYOR EUILLE: Hold on, hold on. Vice  
20 Mayor Silberberg?

21 MS. SILBERBERG: Thank you. Just  
22 briefly, when we talk about historical

1       significance, there was some discussion through  
2       the day about that. Sometimes buildings have  
3       historical significance because something happened  
4       there, a treaty was signed there or something but  
5       sometimes buildings have a cultural significance  
6       and that was referred to over and over again  
7       today. So it's a broader description and to the  
8       point that it has become -- it became public  
9       housing but that's not how it began.

10               Over and over we heard how it began as  
11       housing in the early forties for African-Americans  
12       to participate and help with our war effort in  
13       World War II. So it became public housing, as I  
14       understand it, right? So that's an important  
15       point that you were making but --

16               MR. CHAPMAN: That is public housing.

17               MS. SILBERBERG: It is now.

18               MR. CHAPMAN: No, no, no.

19               MS. SILBERBERG: But back then --

20               MR. CHAPMAN: When it began it was  
21       public housing. It was government subsidized  
22       housing.

1 MS. SILBERBERG: No, it was housing for  
2 workers for World War II.

3 MAYOR EUILLE: All right, come on.

4 MR. CHAPMAN: That's government --

5 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Lovain?

6 MR. LOVAIN: Okay. I think what I'm  
7 sensing is that maybe the best way to go is with a  
8 simple motion to overturn the BAR with the  
9 assurances and the understandings that have been  
10 expressed up here and the strong interest in  
11 exploring hybrid options and possibly preserving  
12 at least one unit. But we're just going to make  
13 the motion to overturn BAR's decision on the  
14 permit.

15 MAYOR EUILLE: Which is to uphold the  
16 appeal.

17 MR. LOVAIN: Yes.

18 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. Is there a  
19 second?

20 MR. CHAPMAN: Second.

21 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Chapman, your  
22 second's there. Ms. Pepper, you wanted to say

1 something.

2 MS. PEPPER: Well, yes. I would hope  
3 that that motion would include not just, I mean,  
4 the way you worded it it doesn't include -- it's  
5 -- you're saying sort of off the record we want  
6 them to come back. I want that part of the  
7 record.

8 MR. BLAIR: Under the zoning ordinance  
9 under Section 10 procedures, I would submit that  
10 I've already made the recommendation that's part  
11 of the record --

12 MS. PEPPER: Okay.

13 MR. BLAIR: -- that the demolition will  
14 not occur until it has been approved, a plan has  
15 been approved.

16 MS. PEPPER: Serious effort for a hybrid  
17 pro -- let me tell you why I'm so interested in a  
18 hybrid project. No, it's because the question  
19 that's before us, really I can't find an answer  
20 to. That's why I'm interested in a hybrid where  
21 we can at least have some kind of a compromise.  
22 The question is whether or not this really is

1 property that is of tremendous significance.

2 And as far as I'm concerned, we've heard  
3 from both sides and there's no, you know, it's  
4 contradictory information and that's why I was  
5 hoping that you would defer it so that we could at  
6 least get that portion of it analyzed and then,  
7 anything else we needed. It either is of  
8 historical value and meets the six criteria and I  
9 am not convinced that it does. I'm not convinced  
10 that it doesn't. So that's why I'm interested in  
11 thy hybrid.

12 MAYOR EUILLE: All right. And --

13 MS. PEPPER: It leaves options open.

14 MAYOR EUILLE: Yes.

15 MS. PEPPER: And compromises.

16 MAYOR EUILLE: We have a responsibility  
17 to -- and we're the judges that the seven of us to  
18 make the decision. We've heard -- we started  
19 taking testimony, dealing with this at 2:30. We  
20 started hearing from staff and we had questions.  
21 At 3:35 we started hearing from speakers. It's  
22 7:30, four hours later, and the reality is is that

1 it's now our call.

2 I mean, we have heard and it's, you  
3 know, it's like you go to a court. The judge  
4 hears everything and then, you make the decision.  
5 And whether, you know, you have to come down on  
6 what your heart tells you. And that's really what  
7 this is about. So we have a motion on the floor.  
8 It's been seconded and it's a substitute motion.  
9 So call the question on the substitute -- all  
10 those in favor of the substitute motion say aye.

11 (Ayes said)

12 MAYOR EUILLE: Let's get a show of  
13 hands. All those in favor of the substitute  
14 motion raise your hand. One, two, three, four,  
15 five. Those that oppose the substitute motion,  
16 two. So the substitute motion becomes the main  
17 motion. All those in favor of the main motion  
18 please say aye.

19 (Ayes said)

20 MAYOR EUILLE: All right, those oppose?

21 (Nos said)

22 MAYOR EUILLE: Motion carries again, I

1 believe on a five to two voice vote. Madam Clerk?

2 MS. HENDERSON: May I clarify that the  
3 substitute motion was just to overturn the BAR  
4 decision period, not the rest of it.

5 MAYOR EUILLE: That's it. That's it.

6 MS. JONES: Okay, I just want to make  
7 sure. Thank you.

8 MR. LOVAIN: Can I get that assurance  
9 though that ARHA's prepared to work closely with  
10 the City to explore the hybrid options.

11 MR. BLAIR: And work with them, continue  
12 to work on the numbers, yes.

13 MAYOR EUILLE: Mr. Wilson?

14 MR. WILSON: Ready to make a motion on  
15 number 17.

16 MS. PEPPER: Victory Center.

17 MAYOR EUILLE: Madam Clerk, number 17.

18 (Whereupon, the HEARING was  
19 continued.)

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21 \* \* \* \* \*

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CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC  
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

I, Carleton J. Anderson, III, notary public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia, do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

(Signature and Seal on File)

Notary Public, in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia

My Commission Expires: November 30, 2016

Notary Public Number 351998



**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA**  
**SERVICE REQUEST**  
**Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets**

01/20/2016  
MPA2015-0003  
Additional Materials

**REQUESTID:** 87759

**PRIORITY:** 3

**PROBLEMCODE:** PZ\_PLAN\_COMMISSION

**SUBMITTO:** PLZ, PLAN\_COMMISSION

**DESCRIPTION:** Planning Commission Inquiries, Dc

**INITIATEDBY:** API, SR

**PROBADDRESS:**

**PRJCOMPLETEDATE:** 01/26/2016

**DATETIMEINIT:** 01/19/2016

**CALLER(S) INFORMATION:**

CELLPHONE

**FIRSTNAME** ALISON

**HOMEPHONE** 7039811496

**LASTNAME** BRODY

**WORKPHONE**

**ADDRESS**

**EMAIL** BRODYA12@GMAIL.COM

**CELL PHONE**

**QUESTION:**

**ANSWER:**

**COMMENTS:**

By API, SR: 1/19/2016 11:10:39 AM

Hi,

I would just like to state my opposition to the redevelopment of the Ramsey homes, including the increased density of the area. I think it totally changes the neighborhood feel. And I'm extremely concerned about the proposed parking plan. I enjoy living in Alexandria very much and part of that is due to the space and greenery. This plan takes away both of these things, which is why I am opposed. Thank you for your time!

Priority: 3 Category: BLDG\_CONPLA

Submit To: PLZ, PLAN\_COMMISSION

Initiated By: API, SR

Date: 1/19/2016 7:29:02AM

MPA2015-0003

WO Needed: N

Additional Materials

Investigation Date:

Submit To Date: 1/19/2016 7:29:02AM

Dispatch To:

Date:

Project Name

Prj. Comp. Date: 1/26/2016 12:00:00AM

Incident Information:

Address:

Alexandria,

Apt #:

Landmark:

Shop

Title No:

Map Page:

District:

Location

X:

Y:

Details: Concern regarding RAMSEY HOMES development:

- I do not approve of the plan to increase the affordable housing footprint from 15 to 53.

- I believe this increase will depreciate the value of single family homes in the area, increase loitering and impact the overall safety of the neighborhood.

- I believe a mixed use building with approximately 15 affordable housing units is a better solution and fit for the neighborhood.

Thank you for your consideration.

**Callers:**

Last Name

First Name

Call Time

VOTH

JANEL

1/19/2016 7:29:02AM

**Work Orders:**

Id:

Description

Priority:

Status:

Submit To:

Priority: **3** Category: BLDG\_CONPLA Submit To: PLZ, PLAN\_COMMISSION

Initiated By: API, SR Date: 1/19/2016 7:18:02AM  
WO Needed: N MPA2015-0003  
Investigation Date: Submit To Date: 1/19/2016 7:18:02AM Additional Materials  
Dispatch To: Date:  
Project Name Prj. Comp. Date: 1/26/2016 12:00:00AM

**Incident Information:**

Address:

Alexandria,

Apt #:

Landmark:

Shop

Title No:

Map Page:

District:

Location

X:

Y:

**Details:** I am very much opposed to increasing the density at Ramsey Homes, 699 N. Patrick. I think having a large population of lower income residents across the street is going to decrease our property value and increase the crime rate.

**Callers:**

<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Call Time</u>
VOTH	KATHERINE	1/19/2016 7:18:02AM

**Work Orders:**

<u>Id:</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Priority:</u>	<u>Status:</u>	<u>Submit To:</u>
------------	--------------------	------------------	----------------	-------------------

Dear Mr. Moritz and Mr. Farner,

As a city resident who attended every community meeting to develop the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan (BMNP) and a member of the Braddock Implementation Advisory Group, I was immensely disheartened when I attended ARHA's presentation on what it envisions for Ramsey Homes on 13 January.

The proposed development violates several of the most fundamental elements of the Braddock Metro and Braddock East Small Area Plans. Given the amount of community time and city resources that went into developing these two small area plans, and given the fact that both of these plans are less than 10 years old, there is not an acceptable reason to permit ARHA to deviate from any of the plan requirements.

The Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan (BMNP) states that "new buildings east of Route 1 will remain as walk-ups or townhouses with backyards;" the Ramsey Homes site is located east of Route 1 and thus is subject to this requirement. (p. 5) The Braddock East Small Area Plan similarly "recommends that Ramsey Homes should either be rehabilitated as part of the overall redevelopment program for the area, with some potential for infill, or be redeveloped with townhomes or townhouse scale buildings..." However, the developer is proposing to build two large apartment buildings, replete with elevators (i.e. not walkups), clearly violating this requirement of both plans. Many neighborhood residents have expressed a strong preference that at least some of the original buildings be preserved and rehabilitated as the Braddock East Plan suggests, and the City Council at the 9/12/15 public hearing likewise encouraged ARHA to look for a compromise that included a preservation option. Why has the City not pressed ARHA to pursue this option?

The density that ARHA seeks to place on this small parcel is also excessive and in violation of the Braddock East Small Area Plan requirements. The Braddock East Plan on page 47 specifies a FAR of 1.5, maximum square footage of 21,000 SF, and between 15-30 units for any redevelopment on the Ramsey site.

Conversely, ARHA want to more than triple the density on the site to 53 units, approximately 230 people, and nearly 78,000 SF (gross). This level of density is inappropriate for this location. The Braddock East Plan clearly states that the specified FAR of 1.5 is the maximum that is likely to be supportable on the site.

The Plan makes it clear that constraints on density and height, urban design, and open space requirements are the driving considerations, not what ARHA claims is a "right of return" for the current residents. ARHA has stated that 53 units are needed to allow for the return of the existing residents plus new

affordable housing units. However, this is based upon a false premise (right of return) which the Braddock East Plan clearly rejects. In fact, the Braddock Plan makes it abundantly clear that "In the event that density considerations and market conditions at the time of redevelopment indicate that it is unlikely that all of the public housing can be relocated on the sites within the Plan area then, under Resolution 830, it will be necessary to replace some of the public housing units elsewhere in the City," and the Plan provides a funding mechanism to support such off-siting. Considerable debate and community buy-in went into determining what is appropriate density and development for differing parts of the neighborhood, and ARHA must be held to the 1.5 FAR and maximum of 30 units that is specified in the Braddock East Plan.

The proposed development also is incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood homes. The BMNP recognizes that there are four distinct "character areas" within the planning area that mark shifts in visual character and tone. The Plan's recommendations for height and density reflect the existing scale and character of the four zones. The Ramsey Homes property falls within that the Plan describes as the Parker Gray Historic district. The Plan, as a part of its overall urban design concept, requires that "the height and scale of new development reflects the existing scale and character of the four Character Areas and provides context appropriate transitions." (p. 125) The character of the proposed development (apartment buildings rather than town houses), the requested density (moving from a current .75 FAR to a 2.0 FAR and increasing from 15 units to 53 units) is wholly out of character with this particular neighborhood zone. The Braddock East Plan even goes further stating on page 45 with regard to the Ramsey site that "the character of development on this small site will be determined and be compatible with the scale and height of the adjacent townhomes." However, the apartment buildings the developer is proposing show little relation, much less compatibility, with the adjacent century-old, largely wood-frame, row houses on Pendleton and Patrick streets. As this project falls within the historic district, it is from those homes that it should take its reference, not modern structures like the Charles Houston Recreation Center.

The proposed development also violates BMNP requirements with regard to parking. Page 84 of the Plan "recommends reducing the minimum requirement for units with less than three bedrooms to 1.0 space per dwelling unit. The Plan recommends that units with three or more bedrooms have the same requirement as single-family houses: 1.5 spaces per dwelling units." However, the developer proposes to only include 29 parking spaces for a 53 unit development, which includes several 3 bedroom units. Under the BMNP, 1.5 parking spaces are required for 3 bedroom units. Since ARHA claims the redeveloped Ramsey

will not include public housing, the .75 parking space per unit indicated in the Braddock East Plan is not applicable. Given the already constrained street parking situation around the proposed development, ARHA needs to increase its underground parking to at least 40 spaces. Additionally, residents of the new development should be prohibited from obtaining City residential parking permits, similar to what the City permitted with regard to the Robinson Terminal South development.

Although many will diminish the importance of architecture, both the Braddock Plans place considerable emphasis on the need for high quality architecture on key streets, which include Wythe and Patrick streets. The BMNP specifies on page 130 that “these streets also present important public faces both to local residents and to others passing through the area to and from the Metro and other destinations. Accordingly, land use selection and quality of architecture and urban design are subject to high standards in these guidelines to ensure quality and distinction of character.” However, the architecture and design of the proposed development is mundane at best. The design and architecture of the proposed development must be substantially improved to meet the Plan requirements.

I would also ask that staff certify that the proposed development meets all other BMNP and Braddock East requirements. For example, per ARHA’s site plan for the redevelopment, the setback on Patrick street is listed as .1’. However, the BMNP states on p. 145 that “the build-to line for residential buildings shall be located 6 to 15 feet back from the sidewalk to provide space for individual unit yards, plantings, fences, stoops and similar elements creating a privacy buffer between public space and private dwelling interiors.”

Lastly, I’ll conclude by lamenting the massive loss of open space. That ARHA is providing a mere 16% open space on the ground level, particularly for a development that will have many young children, is a travesty. The fact that Ramsey Homes contains the last remaining significant swath of green space in the eastern part of the neighborhood makes the loss of this green space even more tragic.

Respectfully,  
Heidi Ford  
Parker Gray Historic District  
Alexandria Virginia



**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA**  
**SERVICE REQUEST**  
**Planning & Zoning - Inqs, Compliments**

01/20/2016  
MPA2015-0003  
Additional Materials

<b>REQUESTID:</b> 87799	<b>PRIORITY:</b> 3
<b>PROBLEMCODE:</b> PZ_FEEDBACK	<b>SUBMITTO:</b> PLZ, FEEDBACK
<b>DESCRIPTION:</b> Planning & Zoning - Inqs, Complim	<b>INITIATEDBY:</b> API, SR
<b>PROBADDRESS:</b>	<b>PRJCOMPLETEDATE:</b> 01/26/2016
<b>DATETIMEINIT:</b> 01/19/2016	

**CALLER(S) INFORMATION:**

CELLPHONE

<b>FIRSTNAME</b> ROBERT	<b>HOMEPHONE</b> 703-244-0011
<b>LASTNAME</b> IRMER	<b>WORKPHONE</b>
<b>ADDRESS</b>	
<b>EMAIL</b> ROBIRMER@GMAIL.COM	

**CELL PHONE**

<b>FIRSTNAME</b> ROBERT	<b>HOMEPHONE</b> 703-244-0011
<b>LASTNAME</b> IRMER	<b>WORKPHONE</b>
<b>ADDRESS</b>	
<b>EMAIL</b> ROBIRMER@GMAIL.COM	

**CELL PHONE**

<b>QUESTION:</b>	<b>ANSWER:</b>
<b>QUESTION:</b>	<b>ANSWER:</b>

**COMMENTS:**

By API, SR: 1/19/2016 10:59:59 PM  
I am opposed to the redevelopment of The Ramsey Homes at 699 N Patrick St. Especially the reduction in parking(29 spaces for 53 units???), but also the increase in density and number of residents as well as rezoning.

---

**From:** Dan Koslov via Call.Click.Connect. <CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 21, 2016 10:17 AM  
**To:** CCC PZ PlanComm  
**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #87859: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets SUBJECT: Ramsey Homes Redevelopment

Dear **Call.Click.Connect.** User

A request was just created using **Call.Click.Connect.** The request ID is 87859.

**Request Details:**

- Name: Dan Koslov
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: No Phone
- Email: [df90@verizon.net](mailto:df90@verizon.net)
- Service Type: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets
- Request Description: SUBJECT: Ramsey Homes Redevelopment

I'm writing to express strong opposition to the ARHA redevelopment plan for this property: demolition of the existing four buildings; erection of two far-larger 3-story buildings; increasing housing units from 15 to 53; provision of only 29 parking spaces for 53 units; more than tripling the current unit per acre density from 22 units per acre to 74 units per acre; rezoning the property from residential to commercial and residential.

1. The vastly increased density is both unwanted and inappropriate for our neighborhood.
2. The street parking in our neighborhood, as in all of Old Town, is already untenable. Reducing the amount of parking in the proposed redevelopment is indefensible.
3. Rezoning and adding commercial entities to the redevelopment exacerbates the already indefensible reduced parking for residences even further.
4. Individual home owners who seek to create off-street parking on their own property, adjacent to alleys behind their homes, are often blocked by the City from doing so in the name of "preserving open space". The redevelopment as proposed will VASTLY reduce the amount of open space afforded by the current Ramsey Homes configuration. In light of the restrictive measures placed on individual homeowners with regard to open space, allowing ARHA to totally abrogate such standards would represent a gross miscarriage of fairness on the part of the City toward its residents. This simply should not happen.

I strongly and respectfully request the Planning Commission DISAPPROVE AHRA's ill-conceived redevelopment plan for this property.

Dan Koslov  
1015 Oronoco Street

- Expected Response Date: Thursday, January 28

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at [the Call.Click.Connect. staff interface.](#)

If you need assistance with handling this request, please contact [CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov](mailto:CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov) or call 703.746.HELP.

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**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA**  
**SERVICE REQUEST**  
**Planning & Zoning - Inqs, Compliments**

01/21/2016

**REQUESTID:** 87878

**PRIORITY:** 3

**PROBLEMCODE:** PZ\_FEEDBACK

**SUBMITTO:** WALENTISCH, KRISTEN

**DESCRIPTION:** Planning & Zoning - Inqs, Complim

**INITIATEDBY:** API, SR

**PROBADDRESS:** 699 N PATRICK ST

**PRJCOMPLETEDATE:** 01/28/2016

**DATETIMEINIT:** 01/21/2016

**CALLER(S) INFORMATION:**

CELLPHONE

**FIRSTNAME**

**HOMEPHONE**

**LASTNAME** UNKNOWN

**WORKPHONE**

**ADDRESS**

**EMAIL**

**CELL PHONE**

**QUESTION:**

**ANSWER:**

**COMMENTS:**

By API, SR: 1/21/2016 12:19:49 PM

<a href="http://apps.alexandriava.gov/MapThis/?a=-77.048676,38.8117019&amp;cityworks=1" target="\_blank">Problem location map</a>

By API, SR: 1/21/2016 12:19:49 PM

I am opposed to the AHA action requesting approval to redevelop this area. New 3 story buildings will ruin the view, block light and increase the population density to undesirable levels. This is a historic neighbourhood and should be preserved, not changed to Commercial property.

Vote no.

By WEBB, CHRISTIA: 1/21/2016 2:25:44 PM

Reassigning to K Walentisch to be included with other Ramsey Homes callers.

## Kristen Walentisch

---

**From:** Tim Hartpence via Call.Click.Connect. <CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 21, 2016 5:05 PM  
**To:** CCC PZ PlanComm  
**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #87915: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets This message comes in reference to the p

Dear **Call.Click.Connect.** User

A request was just created using **Call.Click.Connect.** The request ID is 87915.

### Request Details:

- Name: Tim Hartpence
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: 9088686281
- Email: [Hartpencet@gmail.com](mailto:Hartpencet@gmail.com)
- Service Type: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets
- Request Description: This message comes in reference to the proposed redevelopment of the Ramsey Homes located at 699 N. Patrick Street.

As a city resident living adjacent to the site, I am extremely disappointed in the plans put forth by the ARHA. This action will significantly change my quality of life in many aspects, see the following for further information:

Increasing affordable housing from 15 units to 53 units by erecting two large 3 story buildings: Sure this makes it so the city had more affordable housing, but what I don't like is that they are large buildings.. I could see creating buildings with the same look and feel as the EYA townhomes, but to create an apartment building complex will be an eyesore to the area.

Limited Parking: The plan to only put in 29 parking spots for 53 units is absurd. Think about the Titanic with limited life boats. Sure this will possibly increase revenue by forcing more individuals to purchase parking permits, but this is low income. Will they really want to pay? I'm sure off street non-city lots will suffer here with people parking anywhere and creating further problems. Moreover, I can usually park right in front of my house without any big issues. This will definitely change with the current development in place.

Increase in residents: A large low income building will effect property values and not positively. More people equals a larger possibility for crime, increased traffic and noise. This particular development will be located right on route 1. Traffic is already an issue here and I have no doubt that this will increase 10 fold with an increase in the local population.

What can I say, I'm disappointed. And I will likely relocate.

- Expected Response Date: Thursday, January 28

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at [the Call.Click.Connect. staff interface.](#)

If you need assistance with handling this request, please contact [CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov](mailto:CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov) or call 703.746.HELP.

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**From:** CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 21, 2016 10:09 PM  
**To:** CCC PZ PlanComm  
**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #87921: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets I am a resident on North Patrick Street

Dear **Call.Click.Connect.** User

A request was just created using **Call.Click.Connect.** The request ID is 87921.

**Request Details:**

- Name: **Call.Click.Connect.** Customer
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: No Phone
- Email: No Email
- Service Type: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets
- Request Description: I am a resident on North Patrick Street in Alexandria, VA. I am writing to voice my opposition to the plan to demolish the homes at 699 N. Patrick Street by the AHRA in order to erect larger buildings. I am very concerned about this on multiple fronts:

1) The density in and around this area is already a huge problem - just look at the traffic load on the street, the parking space issues, and the general lack of space. Adding incrementally more residents is going to make an already congested start cracking under its own weight

2) It can't be overstated how the math of a lower number of parking spaces than units built is going to impact existing residents. There has to be some value to the opinions of those that have resided in and care about where we live and to maintain the charm of what brought us here in the first place

3) The overbuilding has gotten out of control all through Old Town Alexandria. I understand the need for the new and for updating and to keep the city economics flowing, but just look around - every week it seems like some block has being something demolished to build multiple story buildings with multiple units

I hope that the City Planning Commission sees this through a logical and rational lens, keeping in mind the consequences of letting this happen - it will be a burden to the existing infrastructure and will only go to make the area feel more and more "commercial" rather than the quaint feel it has always had. This is a slippery slope and we must be careful.

Regards,  
A concerned resident

- Expected Response Date: Thursday, January 28

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at [the \*\*Call.Click.Connect.\*\* staff interface.](#)

If you need assistance with handling this request, please contact [CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov](mailto:CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov) or call 703.746.HELP.

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**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA**  
**SERVICE REQUEST**  
**Planning & Zoning - Inqs, Compliments**

01/27/2016

MPA2015-0003  
 Additional Materials

**REQUESTID:** 87945

**PRIORITY:** 3

**PROBLEMCODE:** PZ\_FEEDBACK

**SUBMITTO:** WALENTISCH, KRISTEN

**DESCRIPTION:** Planning & Zoning - Inqs, Complim

**INITIATEDBY:** API, SR

**PROBADDRESS:**

**PRJCOMPLETEDATE:** 01/29/2016

**DATETIMEINIT:** 01/22/2016

**CALLER(S) INFORMATION:**

CELLPHONE

**FIRSTNAME** GREGORY

**HOMEPHONE** 703-838-8060

**LASTNAME** CORD

**WORKPHONE**

**ADDRESS**

**EMAIL** GCORD-MYS@ATT.NET

**CELL PHONE**

**QUESTION:**

**ANSWER:**

**COMMENTS:**

By API, SR: 1/22/2016 11:26:55 AM

I would like to state my opposition to the proposed Ramsey Homes redevelopment. I would like to see the redevelopment stay at the current 15-16 units instead of 53.

**WILLIAM P. HARRIS**

---

1106 Tuckahoe Lane • Alexandria, VA 22303-3515

Phone: (703) 684-1106

Cell: (703) 684-6432

Email: wpharris@comcast.net

January 25, 2016

Madam Mary Lyman, Chair  
and Members of Alexandria Planning Commission  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: Support for ARHA Ramsey Homes Proposal  
Master Plan Amendment #2015-0003

Greetings:

The subject project is important for several reasons, and I urge your support.

1. These 53 units are desperately needed to replace a few of the thousands lost in recent years.
2. The project is attractive and compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.
3. The existing buildings are unsightly, rundown, and remodeling is not practical.
4. The proposed project makes more efficient use of the very limited land in Alexandria.
5. The reasons BAR gave for denial, as stated in the staff report, are without merit:
  - a. Removal of existing buildings are not detrimental of the public interest. *No public interest* was demonstrated in these building until ARHA presented it's plan,
  - b. The Ramsey buildings will certainly not "promote the general welfare," "increase real estate values," "attract new residents," or any other of the things listed in criteria 5) of Chapter 10-205(B) of the Zoning Ordinance governing when/whether demolition is permissible, and
  - c. Retaining these old buildings will "maintain the scale and character of the neighborhood." These buildings are a detriment, not an asset, to the neighborhood.

I am disappointed the original plan for 64 units has been discarded. As new affordable projects come along Alexandria needs to make the best use of its limited land with greater heights and more density.

Respectfully,



William P. Harris



**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA**  
**SERVICE REQUEST**  
**Planning & Zoning - Inqs, Compliments**

01/27/2016

MPA2015-0003  
 Additional Materials

**REQUESTID:** 88009

**PRIORITY:** 3

**PROBLEMCODE:** PZ\_FEEDBACK

**SUBMITTO:** WALENTISCH, KRISTEN

**DESCRIPTION:** Planning & Zoning - Inqs, Complim

**INITIATEDBY:** API, SR

**PROBADDRESS:**

**PRJCOMPLETEDATE:** 02/01/2016

**DATETIMEINIT:** 01/25/2016

**CALLER(S) INFORMATION:**

CELLPHONE

**FIRSTNAME** MELANIE

**HOMEPHONE** 2022513326

**LASTNAME** ROWLAND

**WORKPHONE**

**ADDRESS**

**EMAIL** MELANIELROWLAND@GMAIL.COM

**CELL PHONE**

**QUESTION:**

**ANSWER:**

**COMMENTS:**

By API, SR: 1/25/2016 8:24:18 AM

Ramsey Homes, 699 N. Patrick.

Erecting 2 large housing units in the place of the historic Ramsey Homes is irresponsible. Parking is already at a premium in the Old Town area and planning a structure without adequate parking for the occupants will put even more stress on the crowded parking areas.

---

**To:** DBL230@nyu.edu  
**Subject:** RE: Call.Click.Connect. #88060: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets I write in opposition to the current dev

**From:** David Lawrence via Call.Click.Connect. [<mailto:CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 25, 2016 3:16 PM  
**To:** CCC PZ PlanComm  
**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #88060: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets I write in opposition to the current dev

**Request Details:**

- Name: David Lawrence
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: 4013168580
- Email: [DBL230@nyu.edu](mailto:DBL230@nyu.edu)
- Service Type: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets
- Request Description: I write in opposition to the current development proposal for two new Ramsey Towers, because my wife and I think ARHA's proposal is extremely destructive to the historic district, ignores competing considerations, and the alternatives have not been adequately considered. We would, however, support an alternative that doubled the site density and retained one of the historic buildings.

My wife and I bought a townhouse just last year at 907 Pendleton St--adjacent to the Ramsey homes. We had rented on Queen street for 3 years before that. When we moved to DC, we literally drove the beltway looking for a place we would want to live. We ultimately chose the Alexandria historic district specifically because we liked the density and scale, and there was no close second.

The historic districts here are full of folks who have sacrificed financially and sacrificed convenience in order to join together to hold onto old-fashioned, low-density living. As a result, the place has great character and draws in millions in tourist revenues. The old-fashioned low-density feel is not easy to maintain, but requires the neighbors' commitment be supported by a city that also works to maintain the historic districts. Together, the residents and city have kept this town special, and I hope they will continue to do so for generations.

ARHA's Ramsey Towers plan tramples the competing considerations, like history and density and neighborhood character, in pursuit of the worthy goal of increasing affordable housing availability. Promoting affordable housing is a powerful argument to increase the density at Ramsey homes, and I agree with it, but it has its limits. Why, then, stop at 3 stories, or at merely quadrupling the density? Why not build an 8 story complex here and add hundreds of units? Somewhere competing considerations must meet.

Simply adding more and more low-income housing density isn't always a good thing either. Placing a high-density building in a low-density area sends a powerful signal that affordable housing is "different." But affordable housing is supposed to be about integration, not separation. For generations the residents of the new Ramsey Towers will see every day that they stick out from the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood. The country and even Alexandria have numerous examples of how outsized affordable housing projects send exactly the wrong message and lead to exactly the opposite of the outcomes affordable housing is intended to achieve.

The problem is that ARHA has refused to adequately and thoroughly analyze how to balance the competing considerations here. They've been driven, myopically I would argue, by an early mistake to put all their eggs in the 9% HUD credit basket. HUD did not design its requirements with historic districts in mind, and so all paths to that credit lead ARHA astray of our city's commitments to maintain the character of the historic district. I suspect a proper analysis and balance of competing considerations would leave us close to the area plan--doubling the density at Ramsey to about 30 units. But ARHA has refused to do that analysis, even after being told to do so by city council. Their memo to you last week even admits it is "not exhaustive" and based on "assumptions."

I also reject ARHA's argument that there just isn't time to do a proper analysis of alternatives to the proposed Ramsey Towers. They've put themselves up against a deadline by closing off collaboration with the city last

October, and the city and its residents shouldn't pay the price of their refusal to work constructively. The Ramsey homes have stood for generations, and their replacements will mark this neighborhood for generations to come. ARHA's cursory alternatives analysis is the wrong input for such critical policy planning. Another year of planning work would be a small price to pay to get this right for generations.

Please send ARHA back to work to get this right. Demand a thorough analysis and a development plan that actually balances the competing considerations, leaves our neighborhood intact, and gives the new Ramsey residents homes they will be proud of. Vote "no" on the Ramsey Towers.

Thanks,  
-David Lawrence  
907 Pendleton St.

- Expected Response Date: Monday, February 1

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**To:** whendrick@aol.com  
**Subject:** RE: Call.Click.Connect. #88318: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets To: Members of the Alexandria Planning C

**From:** Bill Hendrickson via Call.Click.Connect. [<mailto:CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>]

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 26, 2016 4:01 PM

**To:** CCC PZ PlanComm

**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #88318: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets To: Members of the Alexandria Planning C

**Request Details:**

- Name: Bill Hendrickson
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: 703-519-9410
- Email: [whendrick@aol.com](mailto:whendrick@aol.com)
- Service Type: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets
- Request Description: To: Members of the Alexandria Planning Commission

From: Bill Hendrickson, chair, Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

Re: ARHA proposal on February 4, 2016 docket

Dear Chairwoman Lyman and members of the Planning Commission:

Your February 4 docket includes a request for approval from the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) to build new mixed-income housing units on the site of the historic Ramsey Homes public housing complex, which ARHA plans to demolish.

The Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC) requests that you defer this application until options for preserving the Ramsey Homes are reviewed by an independent construction cost estimator and public housing consultant, and the federal Section 106 historical review process is complete.

HARC took this action at its January 19 meeting, by a unanimous vote of the 22 members present.

HARC, as do many others in the city, believes that the Ramsey Homes are historically and architecturally significant and seeks to preserve one or more of the four existing buildings.

The Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review voted unanimously to oppose demolition, citing the historic and architectural significance of the homes, but a majority of the City Council voted to overturn this decision. However, Council also asked ARHA to examine alternatives to demolition.

At a community meeting on January 13, ARHA said it had done so, but that none of the options were financially viable. Yet at the meeting, ARHA did not present any material to support this conclusion.

Further, we understand that the planning staff developed a number of preservation options that it believes are workable and shared this information with ARHA, but that ARHA did not provide staff with the information needed to sufficiently analyze the options.

Without an independent review of possible options for preservation, ARHA's proposal is not credible.

We have been told that ARHA has now provided city staff with a document detailing the alternatives that were considered and their financial analysis of each, and that the planning staff and a "tax credit consultant" are reviewing them. We are awaiting more detail to be publicly released.

ARHA has also maintained that it must receive approval for its project now in order to meet a March deadline for

applying for affordable housing tax credits. But ARHA has provided no evidence that a delay would irretrievably harm its interests.

There are other uncertainties associated with ARHA's proposal, especially its need to meet the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

In July 2015, HARC voted to nominate the Ramsey Homes to an endangered list being developed by the Alexandria Archaeology Commission. Attached is a copy of the nomination report, which we urge you to read. Note that the Ramsey Homes is listed as contributing structures of the Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District, listed in the National Register.

Sincerely,

Bill Hendrickson  
Chair, Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

- Attachment: [Ramsey Homes nomination.docx](#)
- Expected Response Date: Tuesday, February 2

**Nomination of Ramsey Homes to the  
2015 Alexandria Archeological Commission's Endangered List  
by the  
Historic Alexandria Resources Commission,  
July 2015**

The current site of the Ramsay Homes was built on an open site that in 1781 was part of a huge encampment along the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail, which can be found at the following link:

<http://www.nps.gov/waro/index.htm>

This camp of thousands of Revolutionary soldiers sought refuge north of the young town of Alexandria on their way to the American victory at Yorktown.

The multi-family housing complex, also known as the Ramsay Houses, is located at 605-607, 609-611, 613-615, 619-623, and 625-627 North Patrick Street, (with the combined address of 699 North Patrick Street) and is comprised of four buildings constructed in 1942 by the Federal Housing Authority to provide housing for African Americans working on the World War II efforts. The property has been identified as the oldest extant public housing in the Parker-Gray neighborhood and is listed as a contributing resource to the Uptown/Parker-Gray National Register Historic District which can be found at the following link:

[http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Cities/Alexandria/100-0133\\_Uptown-Parker\\_Gray\\_2011\\_FINAL\\_amended\\_nomination.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Cities/Alexandria/100-0133_Uptown-Parker_Gray_2011_FINAL_amended_nomination.pdf)

The National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Nomination Form entitled *Public Housing in the United States, 1933-1949* can be found at the following link:

<http://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/guidance/Public%20Housing%20in%20the%20United%20States%20MPS.pdf>

(PHUS) discusses the history of public housing at great length and especially that of “Public Housing as Public Works.” Under sub-headings called “A New Deal for Housing” and “Drive for National Legislation,” the government and populous began to view public housing as a Federal priority for the nation. President Franklin Roosevelt heartily believed in this new movement and signed laws to fund this effort as his promise to create low-income housing for defense workers; and just as important to put people back to work.

Introduced in the [U. S.] House [of Representatives] by Republican Congressman Fritz Lanham of Texas, the so-called “Lanham Act” was signed into law by President Roosevelt in October 1940. The Lanham Act provided \$150 million to the Federal Works

Administration to provide massive amounts of Federally built housing quickly and cheaply... As can be expected in a wartime crisis, the Lanham Act emphasized both speed in construction and economy of materials.” PHUS, pp. 60-61. Typically, a public housing project of this period will consist of an assemblage of multi-family, low-rise residential buildings situated in a deliberate plan around (large) open spaces...” This type of low-income housing built for defense workers “adhere[s] to the strict low-cost guidelines set by the Federal programs, most of these properties are of a functional, utilitarian design featuring long, unembellished lines, flat roofs, and minimal architectural decoration,” and so was called ”functional modernism.” They “possessed a livable human scale and revealed a satisfactory balance between buildings and open space...” PHUS, pp. 59 & 70-72.

Built with Lanham Act monies, the Ramsey Homes are listed in a chart of the PHUS nomination as National Register eligible on p. 137 under Appendix IV: “Federal Public Housing Projects, 1933-1949” (also p. 19 of that Appendix). The following information is stated therein:

State: VA  
Housing Authority/Locality: ALEXANDRIA  
Project Number: VA39P004005  
Project Name (Original): RAMSEY HOMES  
Program: LANHAM  
Units: 15  
Building Type: RW  
Construction Start Date: 11/1/41  
Occupancy Date: 5/1/43  
Termination Date: NA  
Construction Start Date: 11/1/41  
Occupancy Date: 5/1/43  
Termination Date: NA  
Cost (\$000): \$80,000

#### Architectural Description and Site Context

The project site contains 15 dwelling units in three quadruplexes and one triplex on a parcel of land bounded by Wythe, North Patrick and Pendleton streets to the north, west, and south, respectively and an unnamed public alley to the east. The site features an unusually generous amount of open space, more typical of garden apartment complexes constructed during and after World War II.

According to the Sanborn maps, the four buildings were constructed of pre-cast concrete slabs, 11/2 inches in thickness, which were used to build the floors, walls and roof of each building. The concrete serves as the exterior wall surface material, which is painted with a stucco-like appearance. Each quadruplex or triplex has a hipped roof with dark-

colored roofing that appears to be either a continuous membrane of a bituminous asphalt product. Metal flues rise from the center ridges of the roofs in place of chimneys. Each unit has an inset porch at the entry with additional shelter provided by a projecting pent roof with asphalt shingles. Just outside each inset porch is a patio surrounded by a concrete half wall. The windows are double-hung 1/1 vinyl replacement sash flanked by decorative louvered shutters.

The buildings are set back 10 to 35 feet from each public right-of-way and there is a space of 40 to 50 feet between every two buildings. The entire complex is surrounded by a lawn that is enclosed with a metal picket fence of recent vintage. There are mature street trees along the sidewalk on the side toward the houses; the fencing steps around the trees leaving an area of about 10 by 20 feet open to the sidewalk at each tree.

The BAR2015-00088 report 699 N. Patrick St. (City-BAR) furthers our historical knowledge of The Ramsey Homes project that was “designed by Alexandria architect and architectural historian, Delos H. Smith, in the Modernist style... to house African-American defense workers...the local firm of Smith, Werner and Billings...had offices located at 220 King Street. The three architects—Delos H. Smith, Sheldon Werner and J. M. Billings—were selected to work for the housing authority to create plans for hundreds of wartime housing units. Smith had formerly worked for the United States Housing Authority before being selected as the local architect, working for Executive Director of the Alexandria Housing Board, R. S. Marshall, Jr. Smith was one of the inaugural members of the Alexandria Board of Architectural Review....” FN #2 (“Architect Delos Smith,” *Alexandria Gazette*, Nov. 9, 1946: p. 9. and “Historic Alexandria Foundation” files at Alexandria Library Special Collections.) City-BAR, p. 4.

Mr. “Smith was a noted ecclesiastical architect and his local work included two annex buildings at St. Paul’s Church [228 S. Pitt St., Alexandria] as well as the [U.S.] Capitol Building Prayer Room.” FN #3 (St. Paul’s Church to Break Ground for New Buildings,” *Alexandria Gazette*, October 27, 1955: p. 1; and City-BAR, p. 4. He is listed in the American Institute of Architects Member Directory (Google): Smith, Delos Hamilton (1884-1963); DC AIA 1920-; FAIA 1952.”

The BAR Report continues: “The 1958 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map describes the site as a United States Housing Authority project constructed specifically for African Americans. The Sanborn map describes the building construction as pre-cast concrete slabs and walls.” City-BAR, p. 6.

The Lanham Act also funded the construction and operation of wartime nursery schools, including the Carver Nursery (built in 1944 at 224 North Fayette St., Alexandria) to provide subsidized childcare for African American children whose parents worked for the defense effort. The Ramsey Homes project was constructed initially as permanent family housing. FN #4- (“Scheme of NHA Involves 26,206 Units in 6 Groups in Metropolitan Area,” *The Washington Post*: Sep 12, 1943:R4.) Additionally, it would appear that the Ramsey Homes may have been one of the better quality family dwelling unit options as they had the second highest rent of all ARHA properties with only Chinquapin Village

having higher rents by the mid-1950s when ARHA operated the properties. FN #5- (“Alexandria Facing Some Rent Boosts,” *The Washington Post*: Nov. 29, 1957: D4.), City-BAR, p. 8.

The project was located in an institutional center for African Americans across from the Parker-Gray School (later Charles Houston Elementary School), on the same block as the Robert Robinson Library and near several African American churches... This African American center of life reflects segregation patterns in Alexandria in the middle of the 20th century.

“Additionally, while these may be considered “average” buildings to the common eye, they are some of the remaining early public housing buildings constructed in the City.”

The Ramsey Homes are the only extant public housing of the modest International Modernist style left in Alexandria. “The Ramsey Homes, as well as several other housing sites in the City, including the demolished Chinquapin Village, the demolished John Roberts Homes, the mostly demolished Cameron Valley project, and the partially extant George W. Parker Homes, were constructed under the Lanham Act in the early 1940s.” City-BAR Report, p. 8. [The other extant site is Samuel Madden which is comprised of two blocks of Colonial Revival garden apartments located between North Henry and North Patrick streets.]

### **Significance**

The Ramsey Homes are significant as an important example in Alexandria of the Federal Government’s effort to provide housing for African-American war workers. Furthermore, they were designed by a significant local architect, Delos H. Smith, who usually specialized in the Colonial Revival and Federal Revival styles: it is of significant architectural interest that he developed these quadruplexes in the International Style. Moreover, the buildings were constructed as permanent family houses, rather than as temporary housing, as were many World War II projects.

The buildings possess cultural and social significance that promote the history of Parker-Gray, particularly as the cultural history of Parker-Gray has become less visibly apparent:

1. They are the remaining institutional core of Parker-Gray neighborhood, of which only the Carver Nursery and the Robert Robinson Library remain as civic landmarks.
2. These buildings are unique, their open space and setting provide value to their residents, and to the community surrounding them.
3. They play a major role in our understanding of the history of segregation in Alexandria, and the war effort in the city.
4. They are some of the remaining early public housing buildings constructed in the City.
5. The Ramsey Homes significantly contribute to the character and openness of the Parker-Gray Historic District. The historic district is predominantly still

comprised of two-story buildings, except for the replacement of the James Bland housing project by the 3-4 story Old Town Commons development. The Ramsey Homes maintain a significant amount of open space and open setting that has come to characterize many of the 20<sup>th</sup> century residential buildings in this area of the district.

6. If retained, these buildings could be incorporated into understanding 20<sup>th</sup>-century African American history as part of a larger initiative by the **Visit Alexandria** tourism agency to promote African American heritage tourism.

The National Register Criteria for Evaluation are found under 36 CFR Part 60 and provide Federal agencies, State, tribal and local governments, and other the criteria by which all resources are to be assessed. These criteria and the standards for evaluating the significance of historic properties were developed to recognize the full range of contributions to our country's history and heritage. P.74.

The Ramsey Homes qualify for full National Register listing under:

**Criterion A: Association with Significant Events, p. 75** of above PHUS document:

“...the development of federal public housing programs during the 1930s and 1940s represented a crucial event in U.S. history. The efforts of Federal, state, and local agencies and the individuals involved in the establishment of these programs comprised a complex series of political, economic, social, and military events that affected the lives of thousands and changed the face of communities across the nation.”

Under National Register Criterion A, it may be shown that a public housing project is associated with the broad pattern of national, local, or, in some cases, statewide history. These patterns of history may include...(3) Federal efforts to alleviate severe housing shortages in important industrial centers during World War II.” And, as stated on p. 83, “...through association with the ideals of modern architecture and urban planning.”

The specific areas of significance attributable to public housing projects under Criterion A may include:

...(2) Politics/Government, for the federal and local government's acceptance of responsibility, through legislative and direct action, to assist in providing housing for low-income residents during the Great Depression and for World War II industrial workers; and (3) Community Development, where information reveals that public housing served to alleviate a persistent housing shortage among low-income residents during the Great Depression or among migrant defense industry workers during World War II.”

“A few projects may be significant under Ethnic Heritage as the Federal or local government's first attempts to provide adequate housing for African-Americans...such projects often developed into important centers of cultural pride within the minority community. Although segregated, these housing projects were

accepted by many African-Americans and other minority leaders as important steps forward in government provision of equal services.” P.75

**Under National Register Criterion B: Association with Significant Persons, p. 76**

If research on a particular housing project can demonstrate association with an individual who make important contributions to the local housing effort, the public housing project may be eligible under Criterion B.

**Under National Register Criterion C: Design/Construction, p. 77**

Some public housing projects may be eligible under Criterion C, which recognizes properties that: (1) embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, style, or method of construction...Public housing projects, particularly those built as wartime construction, were often characterized primarily by a concern for low cost and rapid construction, with less concern shown for high aesthetic ideals.

Although closely associated with national programs, individual public housing projects may be eligible for listing at the national, state, or local levels of significance,” i.e. “within their local context” “ reflecting the important implementation of Federal programs to stimulate the economy,...solve a growing local housing problem, or meet local demands associated with the massive defense buildup in anticipation of World War II.” PHUS, p.79 & P. 83

**Integrity**

Integrity, as defined by the National Register, is the ability of a property to convey its significance;” this “is assessed by evaluation its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and establishing to what degree these characteristics have been altered since the property’s period of significance.” PHUS, p. 86.

Location: The Ramsey Homes complex remains in the same location.

Design: “With regard to public housing projects, integrity of design refers to the overall design of the project—arrangement of buildings, spatial relationships—as well as the design of the individual component buildings.” PHUS, p.87. The Ramsey Homes maintain all of these features (of its 1941 design as built (modified from initial blueprints). These features include height, a livable human scale, and massing: the two-story height echoes the height of the original neighborhood buildings, within its original setting.

Setting: “Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. It involves how, not just where, the individual housing project components are situated and their relationship to surrounding features, landscape elements, and open spaces.” PHUS, p. 87. The Ramsey Homes especially maintain integrity of setting, with considerable setbacks (10 to 35 feet) from the surrounding streets, internal walkways, green open space which is pleasing to the eye in that there is 40-50 feet between buildings. There are mature trees

on the N. Patrick St. side of the property. Together the “Design,” and “Setting” make this complex a contributing feature of the Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District, listed in the National Register (2010).

Materials: “Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property.” PHUS, p. 87. Though the Ramsey Homes have had changes over the years, such as the flat roofs becoming hipped (circa 1960), this change is insignificant from the street level. “In 1995, the BAR approved replacement metal fencing, replacement stucco, replacement of coping on the porches, addition of canopies over the front doors, replacement windows and doors, and new shutters.” City-BAR, p. 8. The emphasis is on the word “replacement.” These are typical updates for buildings of this type, especially since they were built rapidly at low cost. One would hardly expect public housing of 1941-43 to not need some maintenance. The basic form of each building, with original placement of windows and doors and the interesting waist-high porches, has not lost its integrity. We can still read these buildings for their original design and intent. Furthermore, pictures included in the ARHA report of 7/6/2015 show original interior features, such as the unusual rounded heating vents, which add to the story of integrity visible in these homes.

Workmanship: “Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history.” PHUS, p. 87. The construction of the Ramsey Homes is pre-cast concrete slabs for the floors, roofs, and walls (11-1/2 inches in thickness) which was characteristic of the 1933-1949 period, and of some public housing.

Feeling: “Feeling is the property’s expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. With regard to public housing projects, integrity of feeling may be associated with the concept of retaining a “sense of place,” the notion of the sum total of all of the physical and cultural qualities that defined the housing project.” PHUS, pp. 87-88. The Ramsey Homes has a distinct “sense of place” which is easily recognizable as representative of 30s and 40s public housing, as described under “Setting,” “Materials” and other sections above.

Association: “Association is the direct link between and important historic theme, event or person and a historic property. . . While many historic events associated with the development of the Federal public housing program took place in Congress, city halls, or local planning offices, the housing projects themselves were often the most tangible, physical manifestation of those activities.” This Federally-funded, low-income, segregated public housing project is considered a crucial event in U.S. history (per National Park Service-PHUS) and is designed by a noteworthy Alexandria architect, Delos H. Smith.

### **Listing in the National Register**

The Ramsey Homes definitely qualify for listing in the National Register as locally significant.

This public housing project complex represents an important chapter in the architectural history of the City of Alexandria. The Ramsey Homes a “functional modernism” complex is unique for the sum total of its National Register criteria and integrity represented by its relatively intact buildings in the modest International Style; the unchanged open-space plan emblematic of U. S. public housing of the 30s and 40s; and as a project funded by the Lanham Act.

Furthermore, the Ramsey Homes is the only intact complex of public housing of the six complexes mentioned above (5 of which are in the National Park Service report). The exception is the Samuel Madden development, but its style is Colonial Revival. Thus the Ramsey Homes complex is the only modest International Style 40s public housing complex in the City of Alexandria. The Uptown/Parker-Gray National Register nomination paperwork (2008) lists the Ramsey Homes as contributing structures. This district was officially listed in the National Register in 2010.

Of special significance is that the Ramsey Homes were specifically built to house African Americans as an integral part of a community which included African American schools, churches, a library, and the 1944 “Lanham Act-funded Carver Nursery built to provide subsidized childcare for African American children whose parents worked for the defense effort.” City-BAR, p. 8.

As well, the Homes were designed by a notable local architect, Delos H. Smith, FAIA, whose firm was “selected to work for the housing authority to create plans for hundreds of wartime housing units. Smith had formerly worked for the United States Housing Authority before being selected as the local architect, working for Executive Director of the Alexandria Housing Board.” Smith has other noted building projects in Alexandria as well as the design of the [U.S.] Capitol Building Prayer Room. City-BAR, p. 4.

To raze the Ramsey Homes would destroy a significant low-income, segregated public housing complex, built with Federal funds, and would extinguish the representation of an important chapter in the architectural history of the City of Alexandria.

### **The Threat**

ARHA, the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, plans to demolish these buildings in order to redevelop the site with a mixed income development totaling 53 units. The Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review unanimously denied the application to demolish the buildings on April 22, 2015. ARHA has appealed that decision to the City Council, which is expected to hear the case in the early Fall of 2015. Poor condition is not a reason to demolish these National Register buildings. There are many ways to mitigate this as described in the National Institute of Building Sciences’ *Whole Building Design Guide: Historic Preservation*, by the WBDG Historic Preservation Subcommittee; Last updated: 04-16-2015 ([http://www.wbdg.org/design/historic\\_pres.php](http://www.wbdg.org/design/historic_pres.php)). See “Treatment Plan” section.

**From:** Karl Moritz  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 28, 2016 1:53 PM  
**To:** Kristen Walentisch  
**Cc:** Kendra Jacobs  
**Subject:** FW: Ramsey Homes Redevelopment Project

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Please forward to the Planning Commissioners and relevant staff.  
Thanks!

**Karl W. Moritz**  
Planning Director | City of Alexandria  
Room 2100 | 301 King Street | Alexandria, VA 22314  
Desk: 703-746-3804 | Cell: 571-329-3052

**From:** Carol Downs [<mailto:caroldowns2u@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 28, 2016 1:18 PM  
**To:** Karl Moritz  
**Cc:** Helen McIlvaine  
**Subject:** Ramsey Homes Redevelopment Project

Dear Karl,

Could you please forward this email to Mary Lyman and members of the Alexandria Planning Commission. I would really appreciate it as I am having difficulty with my Microsoft Word program.

Thanks!

Carol Downs

**From:** Carol Downs  
**To:** Mary Lyman, Chair and Members, Alexandria Planning Commission  
**Re:** Support of Ramsey Redevelopment Proposal Master Plan Amendment No. 2015-0003

Dear Ms. Lyman,

I am writing in support of the Ramsey Redevelopment Proposal Plan Amendment and urge you and members of the Alexandria Planning Commission to support the Project. The severe lack of affordable housing is reaching a crucial level in Alexandria. The addition of 53 affordable housing units that would be provided by the replacement of the current Ramsey Homes property is a step in the right direction in helping to replace the thousands of units lost over the past few years.

City Planning and Zoning Staff spent much time and effort in analyzing the current condition of this property and have assessed that the current four structures are obsolete and no longer meet livability standards for affordable housing. Renovating the existing homes would be extremely costly and, in the end, may not meet current HUD requirements for obtaining funding for maintaining the property.

The proposed project is consistent with the City's Housing Master Plan that calls for a diverse range of architecture of the developing Braddock Metro neighborhood; meets height restrictions and makes efficient use of limited land.

As a long-time resident of Alexandria, I applaud efforts to maintain the historic value and legacy of our City's neighborhoods, especially unique neighborhoods such as Parker-Gray. My concern is with the lack of affordable housing, these neighborhoods stand to lose the very residents that make them special. It is NOT the buildings but the people who live in the neighborhood that keep the spirit going.

Sincerely,  
Carol Downs  
725 Timber Branch Drive  
Alexandria, VA 22302  
703-519-0098

To: Ms. Mary Lyman, Chair, and Members the Alexandria Planning Commission  
From: Jane King  
Re: Support of ARHA Ramsey Redevelopment Proposal Master Plan Amendment No. 2015-0003  
Date: January 28, 2016

I am writing to urge your support of ARHA's proposal for Ramsey Homes. The need for affordable housing in Alexandria has reached a crisis point and the 53 units would make a substantial addition to the availability of affordable housing in the city.

The planning staff's analysis of the ARHA proposal has made it clear that, in terms of the many considerations taken into account prior to approval of a Master Plan Amendment, rezoning and an SUP, the Ramsey Redevelopment should be approved by the Planning Commission. A new Ramsey development would be consistent with the Small Area Plan, create attractive buildings that blend with the Parker Gray neighborhood, improve the streetscape, provide open space, and enable underground parking.

The current Ramsey Homes are obsolete and deteriorating. The residents of affordable housing deserve homes, in contrast to the current Ramsey Homes, that provide important enhancements that improve comfort and safety.

I have lived in Alexandria for nearly three decades, and believe that voting for the Ramsey Homes proposal will be beneficial to Alexandria and very important for those who would live in the new buildings.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jane King  
118 East Randolph Avenue  
Alexandria, Virginia 22301  
703-519-7843

# Ramsey Homes

## West Old Town Citizens Association <wotca1@gmail.com>

Fri 1/29/2016 10:07 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>;

Cc: Donna Reuss <donna555@yahoo.com>; Heidi Ford <ha.ford123@yahoo.com>; Keil Gentry <keil.gentry@usmc.mil>; Leslie Zupan <missz@aol.com>; Peter Prahar <praharp@yahoo.com>;

Dear Chairman Macek and Planning Commissioners,

The West Old Town Citizens Association has substantial concerns with the Alexandria Redevelopment Housing Authority's (ARHA) proposed redevelopment of Ramsey Homes at 699 North Patrick Street and urges you to deny the developer's requests to spot zone the property and for master plan amendments.

During the September City Council hearing on Ramsey Homes, Vice Mayor Silberberg and Council members Lovain, Pepper, and Smedberg all expressed support for pursuing a hybrid option for the property that would preserve at least one of the existing units, with Councilman Lovain going so far as to ask ARHA for its assurance that "ARHA is prepared to work closely to explore the hybrid options," to which ARHA's attorney replied, "yes." However, as the staff report makes clear, ARHA "directed its staff not to participate further in exploring and creating the various development options." In essence, ARHA has ignored Council guidance and refused further efforts at compromise. Why should such intransigence be rewarded with blanket approvals?

ARHA argues a fiscal imperative to redevelop the site exactly as it proposes, using the upcoming VHDA low-income tax credit application deadline to push City officials into making hasty decisions about this project. ARHA publicly distributed photos of Ramsey Homes interiors as "proof" of the poor condition of the units in an attempt to discredit the notion of rehabilitation. However, the staff report now debunks this notion and demonstrates that rehabilitation is definitely possible. ARHA's position is that maintenance and upgrading is too costly, with demolition and redevelopment the only option, declaring that compromise over its redevelopment proposal is fiscally impossible.

However, at almost the same moment ARHA was advocating the demolition of Ramsey Homes based on the project's maintenance problems, it purchased a new headquarters building for \$4.8 million in cash. This fact was apparently not known to Council until the land records of the sale were brought to its attention. We now learn from the staff report that ARHA will need to return to the City for as much as \$2 million in additional loans for the Ramsey Homes redevelopment. The sheer chutzpah of saying no to further compromise, limiting City staff's access to key information, and then confidently approaching taxpayers for a handout -- no questions asked -- should give any responsible policymaker reason to pause.

In light of the headquarters acquisition, questions have been raised about ARHA's finances and Councilmen Smedberg and Chapman have even spoken of a forensic audit. It is unthinkable that any responsible funding entity would hand over millions of dollars yet again without having a clear picture of the grantee's true financial situation.

Also troubling is the notion that affordable housing must be pitted against historic preservation. The staff report, as limited as it was due to ARHA's lack of cooperation, indicates that the homes were solidly-constructed and could be revamped to meet code and ADA requirements. Compromise would mean both historic preservation and the preservation of affordable housing are weighted equally, and achieved equally.

WOTCA also questions why this proposal is going forward while a lawsuit is pending in Alexandria Circuit Court over the denial of the BAR approval for demolition. A ruling on the BAR decision should be made before this project proceeds.

The project's proposed density -- 53 units -- far exceeds that permitted in the Braddock East Plan, which specifies 15-30 units for the site (p.47). It is worth recalling that ARHA's then-vice chairman Carlyle Ring testified in favor of the Braddock East Plan in 2008, raising

no issues with regard to the Plan's height, density, open space, or other requirements. In fact, ARHA's own 2012-2022 Strategic Plan also proposes 15-30 units for a redeveloped Ramsey. Given these factors, and the relative currency of the Braddock East Plan, spot rezoning should be rejected.

It seems reasonable to assume that the overall number of units for the project could be reduced to a level more consistent with the Braddock East Plan by adjusting the AMI level for the various units; for example, raising the AMI for some units from 50% to 80% or even some market-rate units. The Braddock East Plan also includes a provision to fund off-siting of units if needed. Again, this option could potentially be used to reduce the project's density to a more appropriate level while also generating tax revenue from the market-rate units.

In summary, Council last year called for compromise, and compromise has been demonstrated to be possible. ARHA has offered nothing further and assumes that its stance will be rewarded with City approvals and yet another loan from Alexandria taxpayers. Until the authority's finances are thoroughly reviewed, and past and future maintenance practices and funding are investigated, it would be unwise for the Planning Commission to approve this project.

Sincerely,

WEST OLD TOWN CITIZENS ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE BOARD

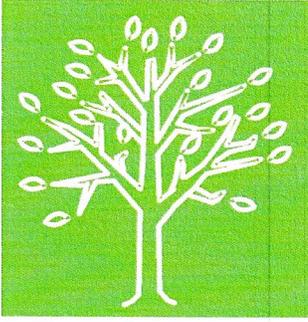
Leslie Zupan, President

Peter Prahar, Vice President

Keil Gentry, Vice President

Heidi Ford, Secretary

Donna Reuss, Treasurer



**ALIVE!**

*ALexandrians InVolved Ecumenically*

2723 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22302  
alivetoo@aol.com www.alive-inc.org

Phone: 703-837-9300  
Fax: 703-837-9399

January 29, 2016

Planning Commission  
City of Alexandria  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Members of Planning Commission:

ALIVE! (Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically) is writing in support of the request by ARHA for an amendment to the Braddock East Master Plan and the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan to accommodate the redevelopment of Ramsey Homes. This includes the demolition of the current buildings and construction of new apartments for the current residents and additional working families in Alexandria. ALIVE! is a non-profit social services organization, representing more than 40 affiliated congregations of different faiths as well as members of the community at large.

ALIVE! is the largest private safety net for those in need in the City of Alexandria. We provided over \$300,000 in 2015 in emergency assistance for rent, utilities and medical needs; feed on average more than 2,000 individuals each month; offer quality early childhood education to children of working poor Alexandrians; deliver transitional housing and support services to mothers and their children to help them achieve self-sufficiency; and deliver furniture and house wares each week to support families in need.

At ALIVE!, we see families and individuals each day that need assistance, primarily because rent is taking a significant portion of the family's income. In our experience, there has not been a decrease in the need for housing assistance in Alexandria, even as the economy has improved. Rather, as Alexandria has become a more attractive area in which to live, rents have increased (affecting additional lower-income families) and new housing development has primarily been targeted to upper-income families and individuals.

**Diane L. Charles,**  
**Executive Director**  
**Food**  
**Furniture**  
**Housewares**  
**Last Saturday Food**  
**ALIVE! House Shelter**  
**Child Development Center**  
**Family Emergency Program**

*Agudas Achim Congregation*  
*Alexandria Church of the Nazarene*  
*Alfred Street Baptist Church*  
*Beth El Hebrew Congregation*  
*Beverly Hills Community United Methodist Church*  
*Blessed Sacrament Catholic Community*  
*Christ Episcopal Church*  
*Church of St. Clement*  
*Church of the Resurrection*  
*Church of God and Saints 16th Tabernacle*  
*Commonwealth Baptist Church*  
*Community Praise Center*  
*Convergence: A Creative Community of Faith*  
*Del Ray United Methodist Church*  
*Downtown Baptist Church*  
*Ebenezer Baptist Church*  
*Emmanuel Episcopal Church*  
*Fairlington Presbyterian Church*  
*Fairlington United Methodist Church*  
*First Agape Church*  
*First Baptist Church of Alexandria*  
*First Christian Church*  
*First Church of Christ, Scientist*  
*iGood Shepherd Lutheran Church*  
*Grace Episcopal Church*  
*Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill*  
*Meade Memorial Episcopal Church*  
*Old Presbyterian Meeting House*  
*Roberts Memorial United Methodist Church*  
*Spiritual Assembly of Baba'is*  
*St. Andrews United Methodist Church*  
*St. James United Methodist Church*  
*St. Joseph's Catholic Church*  
*St. Mary's Catholic Church*  
*St. Paul's Episcopal Church*  
*St. Rita's Catholic Church*  
*Third Baptist Church*  
*Trinity United Methodist Church*  
*Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington*  
*Victory Temple*  
*Washington Street United Methodist Church*  
*Westminster Presbyterian Church*  
*Zion Baptist Church*

**A United Way # 8352**  
**CFC #44658**



ALIVE!'s decision to take a position in this debate is based primarily on our belief that development and retention of affordable housing should be a priority for the City. Additionally, we believe the redevelopment of Ramsey Homes provides an opportunity to both retain and expand this important resource in Alexandria. We understand that ARHA has completed an examination of options for retaining one of the current buildings to accommodate the concerns of those who believe the buildings are historically significant. However, with the constraints on the redevelopment (e.g., underground parking, height restrictions, open space requirements, retaining current extremely low-income families, etc.), ARHA has determined that the development of only a portion of the small site is not economically feasible. And, there are not funds available to either bring an existing building up to code as housing or to transform it into a museum.

We believe ARHA has demonstrated its ability to design buildings that will fit into the neighborhood and satisfy concerns about increased density, parking, and open space. Another important factor for consideration is this property's location near a metro station and community amenities. The end result of the redevelopment would be better utilization of this property than its current provision of 15 very small apartments.

We are hopeful that the Planning Commission will approve an amendment to the Braddock East Master Plan and the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan that will allow ARHA to redevelop the site to retain at least 15 units as affordable to extremely low income families plus add up to 38 units of workforce housing for families with annual incomes between approximately \$40,000 and \$65,000. Both the provision of mixed income housing and the addition of workforce housing are consistent with the Housing Master Plan and would help the City achieve its goals in these areas.

Best regards,



Diane Charles  
Executive Director



Deborah Patterson  
President

**From:** David Donselar via Call.Click.Connect. <CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 31, 2016 2:02 PM  
**To:** CCC PZ PlanComm  
**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #88993: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets Planning Commission Members,Regardin

Dear **Call.Click.Connect.** User

A request was just created using **Call.Click.Connect.** The request ID is 88993.

**Request Details:**

- Name: David Donselar
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: No Phone
- Email: [donselard002@gmail.com](mailto:donselard002@gmail.com)
- Service Type: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets
- Request Description: Planning Commission Members,

Regarding Master Plan Amendment #2015-0003  
Rezoning #2015-0003 Development Special Use Permit #2014-0035 and Transportation Management Plan SUP #2015-0081:

I oppose the proposed redevelopment plans for The Ramsey Homes on N. Patrick Street. As a resident of the area I am concerned with the significant increase in housing density, particularly in light of the limited parking included in the plan. The increased vehicle and foot traffic, exacerbated by the "commercial use" designation, will further clog the residential streets. Additionally, the size of the buildings in not consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. While I do not object to redevelopment of the Ramsey Homes, I do not think the scale of the proposed plan is a good fit. I urge the Planning Commission to reject the current plan and recommend ARHA solicit additional community input and revise the scale of the project to better fit the surrounding area.

- Expected Response Date: Monday, February 8

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at [the Call.Click.Connect. staff interface](#).

If you need assistance with handling this request, please contact [CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov](mailto:CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov) or call 703.746.HELP.

This is an automated email notification of a **Call.Click.Connect.** request. Please do not reply to this email.

**From:** David Tracy via Call.Click.Connect. <CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 01, 2016 2:31 PM  
**To:** CCC PZ PlanComm  
**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #89102: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets Please do not reduce parking requirement

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear **Call.Click.Connect.** User

A request was just created using **Call.Click.Connect.** The request ID is 89102.

**Request Details:**

- Name: David Tracy
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: 703-256-1074
- Email: [dpt@ccottages.com](mailto:dpt@ccottages.com)
- Service Type: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets
- Request Description: Please do not reduce parking requirements at all for the 699 N Patrick street Ramsey House ARHA project. I have been made aware the applicant is proposing 29 parking spaces for 53 units. This is way under-parked and will result in major parking problems in this area. The project should have to meet 100% of the parking requirements for residential developments.

David Tracy  
President  
Classic Cottages, LLC

- Expected Response Date: Monday, February 8

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at [the \*\*Call.Click.Connect.\*\* staff interface.](#)

If you need assistance with handling this request, please contact [CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov](mailto:CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov) or call 703.746.HELP.

This is an automated email notification of a **Call.Click.Connect.** request. Please do not reply to this email.

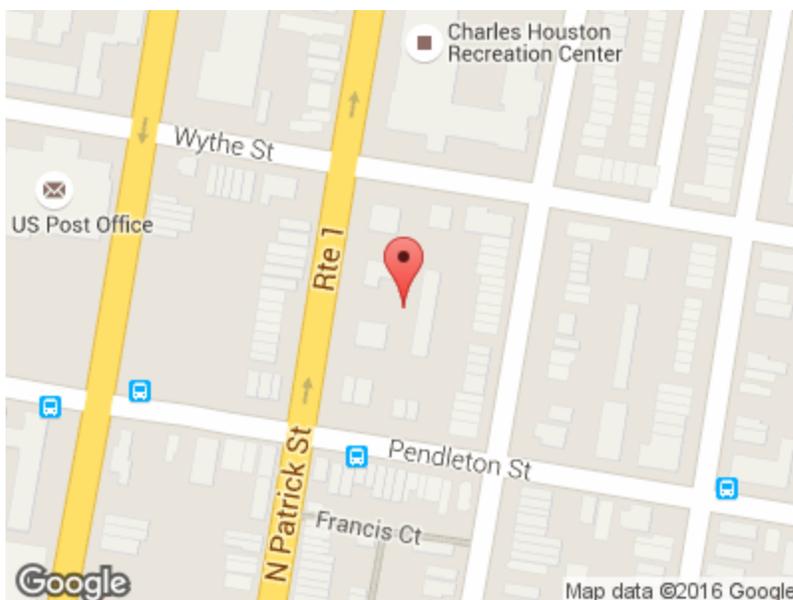
**From:** Barbara Karn via Call.Click.Connect. <CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 01, 2016 7:21 PM  
**To:** CCC PZ PlanComm  
**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #89131: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets at 911D PENDLETON ST The proposed density is too great. We'r  
**Attachments:** map.png  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear [Call.Click.Connect](#). User

A request was just created using [Call.Click.Connect](#). The request ID is 89131.

**Request Details:**

- Name: Barbara Karn
- Approximate Address: 911D PENDLETON ST (See [map below](#))
- Phone Number: 703-836-5666
- Email: [dr.barb@ix.netcom.com](mailto:dr.barb@ix.netcom.com)
- Service Type: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets
- Request Description: The proposed density is too great. We're getting surrounded by large footprint high buildings. I suggest limiting the height to 2 stories and the residential numbers to 30 affordable units with 30 parking spaces. There have been more commercial units in the neighborhood lately, and the existing ones would be sufficient for this smaller development. It's been upsetting to see the neighborhood become overly gentrified and overly homogeneous. We need to keep what diversity we can.
- Expected Response Date: Monday, February 8



Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at [the Call.Click.Connect. staff interface](#).

# Letter of Support for ARHA's Ramsey Homes Project

Additional Materials

melissa mcmahon <m.e.b.mcmahon@gmail.com>

Tue 2/2/2016 11:52 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>;

Cc: Allison Silberberg <allison.silberberg@alexandriava.gov>; Justin Wilson <justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov>; John Chapman <john.taylor.chapman@alexandriava.gov>; Timothy Lovain <timothy.lovain@alexandriava.gov>; Paul Smedberg <Paul.Smedberg@alexandriava.gov>; Willie Bailey <willie.bailey@alexandriava.gov>; Del Pepper <Del.Pepper@alexandriava.gov>; Mark Jinks <Mark.Jinks@alexandriava.gov>; Karl Moritz <Karl.Moritz@alexandriava.gov>;

Dear Planning Commission,

I am writing to express continued support for ARHA's Ramsey Homes redevelopment project. I'd like to share a few observations with you about why you should support this project, too.

**Responsive, respectful, and knowledgeable professionals are leading this project for ARHA and Alexandria.** In meeting after meeting, I continue to be impressed with the professionalism and poise of Roy Priest from ARHA and City of Alexandria planning staff. They are patiently and diligently moving forward this proposal that will add badly needed new affordable units to our neighborhood. They provide excellent explanations about their work: the historical resources review, and how this project is carefully designed to qualify for low income tax credits which help Alexandria create and maintain affordable housing. The design has also been modified numerous times in response to months of community input. In my observations of the process so far, I have confidence that the staff not only have Alexandria's best interests at heart, but that they are entirely qualified to advise and shape a successful outcome.

**Many community members, boards and commissions are asking for affordable housing and supporting it at this location.** At the recent community meeting on this project held at Charles Houston Recreation Center, existing residents of the current public housing units spoke up clearly and respectfully in favor of the redevelopment proposal, and to explain how important it is that all community members have dignity in their homes. Other neighbors explained how important it is that we encourage the development of housing that is affordable for teachers, firefighters, restaurant workers, and others who work in Alexandria and our neighborhood, but who cannot afford to live here now. At a joint meeting held last fall made up of Alexandria boards and commissions dealing with issues related to youth, families, the elderly and housing, the unanimous opinion of those bodies charged to directly advise Council on policy issues was that the single biggest issue facing the welfare of this City is affordable housing.

**Alexandria needs to try harder to provide affordable housing.** A startling statistic hits home for me: since 2008, well over 900 net new market rate/luxury units have been built in the Braddock Metro neighborhood, while during the same period, only 10 net new affordable units have been built here. I'm not sure I could afford to live here if my husband and I hadn't bought several years ago when we did, and "the market rate" in Alexandria is getting less affordable every day. If Alexandria is serious about providing a range of housing opportunities for a range of incomes, and securing those opportunities over the long term, we need to get serious about facilitating development of affordable housing.

**This is a good location for more affordable housing because its accessible.** Location accessibility is important for lower-income households. This neighborhood in particular is well-suited to provide homes for families who need transportation options, families that may not want or be able to pay to own a car. This project site is within easy walking distance of Metrorail, bus lines, a community park, a community recreation center, two grocery stores, restaurants, neighborhood services, carsharing services, Capital Bikeshare, and more. ARHA's proposed project gives more households access to this great place, and in return, we benefit from productive growth and increased diversity in our community.

**The long-term sustainability of affordable housing requires fiscal realism, and this project proposal is realistic.** It does not appear to be economically feasible to retain any of the existing structures for historic purposes. The current structures cannot be made accessible for residential use, there is no funding source to renovate or operate an existing structure as a museum as some have proposed, and retaining any of the existing structures reduces the number of new units that can be built on the site. It is important that when Alexandria plans for new affordable units, there is a responsible and realistic plan in place for both developing them and maintaining them over the long term. The project team here is not only aware of this necessity, but it is a major principle of the design.

With these points in mind, I ask that you please support ARHA's Ramsey Homes project proposal, as well as the following actions to make it happen:

1. Amendment to the Braddock East Master Plan within Braddock Road Small Area Plan chapter of the Alexandria Master Plan to amend the maximum allowable housing units from 30 to 53, and amend the land use designation from RB to CRMU-M;
2. Map Amendment (rezoning) to the official zoning map to change the zone from RB / Townhouse Zone to CRMU-M / Commercial Residential Mixed Use – Medium;
3. Development Special Use Plan (with site plan) to construct 53 multi-family housing units with a Special Use Permit for an increase in allowable floor area ratio (FAR) from 0.75 to 2.0; and
4. Zoning modifications to the CRMU-M zone as needed to support the project.

Thank you very much for your consideration and your service to our community.

Sincerely yours,

Melissa McMahon  
1237 Madison St.  
Alexandria, VA

February 2, 2016

MPA2015-0003

Additional Materials

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and City Council Members

I respectfully request that you write to Planning Commissioners and request denial of Docket Item #3, at their meeting Feb 2 2016; the request by ARHA to amend the following items:

Master Plan Amendment #2015-0003

Rezoning #2015-0003

Development Special Use Permit #2014-0035

Transportation Management Plan SUP #2015-008

The Parker-Gray Historic District nomination and the Braddock Metro Small Area Plan emphasized the importance of protecting the historic fabric of the neighborhood. These agreed to actions clearly recognize the need to preserve the overall Parker Gray area identity. The property at 699 N. Patrick Street has been listed as a major contributing resource to the Uptown/Parker Gray National Register Historic District and remains the oldest extant public housing in Parker-Gray neighborhood. Historic preservation and historic districts have significant relevance in Alexandria and can only enhance the initiatives by the Visit Alexandria tourism agency to promote African American heritage tourism.

In September I, and many of my neighbors, sat for many hours and spoke with City Council to oppose the current development proposal for two new Ramsey Towers which has not been changed. ARHA's development proposal for Ramsey Homes violates the most fundamental tenets of the Approved Area Plans. The Parker Gray Board of Architectural Review voted to deny demolition only to have City Council overturn the decision. At present ARHA has violated the spirit of what City Council asked of them in some form of preservation.

Many of my neighbors have supplied specific data for the arguments regarding each amendment. I am in total agreement and will not take time to reiterate them.

The Planning Commission and City Council continue to ignore the Parker Gray BAR, as well as, the heavily invested community hours and tax dollars spent on consultants in creating Master Plans. In this respect, the Planning Commission needs to explain to the citizens and voters why so much precious energy has been wasted in plans to make our city the historic & cultural center in Northern Virginia. The responsibility of the Planning Commission is to uphold the Approved Area Plans, support adherence to zoning requirements and ordinance restrictions. When the Planning Commission upholds this responsibility, they will not succumb to spot rezoning at the request of developers. Respect for the richness of our city's heritage is more important than the pockets of developers.

We cannot deny that Black Lives Matter and then take actions that significantly harm Black American Heritage and its role in our nation's history. I ask that Planning Commission deny these amendments.

Charlotte Landis

433 N Patrick Street  
Alexandria VA 22314  
[landiscf@comcast.net](mailto:landiscf@comcast.net)  
703-549-2950



**Joe Valenti, Chair**  
*Financial Sector*

**Andrew Baldwin, Vice-Chair**  
*Housing Sector*

**Canek Aguirre**  
*Tenants and Workers United*

**Melissa Befekadu**  
*Bridges to Independence*

**Burke S. Brownfeld**  
*Representing Commonwealth*  
*Attorney Brian Porter*

**LaVon Curtis**  
*Parent Leadership*  
*Training Institute*

**Seena Foster**  
*Representing Del Pepper,*  
*Alexandria City Council*

**Ann Marie Hay**  
*ALIVE!, Inc.*

**Jason Hughes**  
*West End*

**Richard McPike**  
*Representing State*  
*Senator Adam Ebbin*

**Dipti Pidikiti-Smith**  
*Representing Mayor*  
*Allison Silberberg*

**LaDonna Sanders**  
*Representing*  
*John Taylor Chapman,*  
*Alexandria City Council*

**Amos O. Simms-Smith**  
*Education Sector*

**Kelly Stone**  
*Carpenter's Shelter*

## **City of Alexandria**

### **Economic Opportunities Commission**

February 2, 2016

**Karl Moritz, Director**  
Department of Planning and Zoning  
301 King Street, Room 2100  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Moritz:

We are writing to address the proposed demolition of the existing Ramsey Homes public housing units, which we understand will be replaced by a new construction project which will provide for 100% replacement units (15 total) in addition to 38 new units of affordable housing.

As the Commission charged with advising the City Council on matters of import to the most disadvantaged in our community, we believe this proposal has significant merits which appear to outweigh the disadvantages. As we have noted in prior communications with the City Council, the loss of affordable housing opportunities in our community is well known and extensively documented in the Housing Master Plan, and has negative spillover effects on our fellow citizens' well-being.

This project represents an opportunity to not only replace deteriorating public housing units but to take advantage of the greater density the site's current zoning provides to include new affordable units close to transit (Braddock Metro), amenities, and potential job opportunities. The most recent proposal by the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, or ARHA, while not flawless, reflects the best possibility at this time to preserve and expand the supply of quality affordable housing.

We recognize the opposition to increased density and the desire to maintain or renovate the existing structures on the site. However, as ARHA has made clear, the existing structures are unsuitable as housing units

and have few other public uses without major renovations to meet contemporary building codes. Maintaining one of the four structures for historical purposes, even if it were economically feasible, would also require even more density on the remainder of the site.

To be competitive for the only non-profit way ARHA can redevelop the property, using Low Income Housing Tax Credit program funding, ARHA or the City would have to find other monies to fund restoration of one of the buildings. ARHA cannot use any of its resources to fund “other purposes” such as a museum or meeting site that alternative plans envision.

Additionally, the issue of increased density among ARHA properties in redevelopment will continue as proposals arise for the remaining sites across the City. Without approving increased density on this and other sites, it will be impossible to meet the existing affordable housing needs required under Resolution 830, let alone the City goal of an additional 2,000 affordable housing units by 2025.

We recognize the difficulty of balancing the competing issues on a project of this complexity. However, we believe the opportunity this project provides to create new affordable housing opportunities in Alexandria should be given special weight as it meets a critical community need. We must ensure that the planning process provides opportunities for an inclusive Alexandria, and this project represents a valuable first step.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

Joe Valenti  
Chair, Economic Opportunities Commission  
on behalf of its members

C: Mayor Silberberg, Vice Mayor Wilson, and Members of City Council  
Helen McIlvaine, Director, Office of Housing



**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA**  
**SERVICE REQUEST**  
**Planning & Zoning - Inqs, Compliments**

02/03/2016

MPA2015-0003  
 Additional Materials

**REQUESTID:** 89233

**PRIORITY:** 3

**PROBLEMCODE:** PZ\_FEEDBACK

**SUBMITTO:** PLZ, PLAN\_COMMISSION

**DESCRIPTION:** Planning & Zoning - Inqs, Complim

**INITIATEDBY:** API, SR

**PROBADDRESS:**

**PRJCOMPLETEDATE:** 02/09/2016

**DATETIMEINIT:** 02/02/2016

**CALLER(S) INFORMATION:**

CELLPHONE

**FIRSTNAME** JAMES

**HOMEPHONE** 2023303475

**LASTNAME** HAYES

**WORKPHONE**

**ADDRESS**

**EMAIL** J.E.HAYES3@ATT.NET

**CELL PHONE**

**QUESTION:**

**ANSWER:**

**COMMENTS:**

By API, SR: 2/2/2016 6:03:45 PM

I strongly object to Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority's redevelopment plan for Ramsey House on 699 Patrick Street. Private property owners have to conform to city regulations when remodeling their homes; we should all have to play by the same rules, including government agencies like ARHA.

---

**From:** Glen Roe via Call.Click.Connect. <CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 03, 2016 11:13 PM  
**To:** CCC PZ PlanComm  
**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #89328: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets Dear Planning Commission-I live on 9

Dear **Call.Click.Connect.** User

A request was just created using **Call.Click.Connect.** The request ID is 89328.

**Request Details:**

- Name: Glen Roe
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: 917-597-7140
- Email: rglenroe@gmail.com
- Service Type: Planning Commission Inquiries, Dockets
- Request Description: Dear Planning Commission-

I live on 920 Pendleton St., directly across from the Ramsey Homes. I have some major reservations regarding this project. I will speak about the redevelopment on a personal level at the meeting. However, it thought it important to put the below information in front of you prior to Thursday evening. My concerns center on three issues: parking, school bus safety drop off and pickup, and the financial assumptions and assertions made by ARHA.

**Parking**

Please reference Roy Priest's memo to the Mayor and City Council dated January 21, 2016, page two, numbered points one and two. It is in these sections that Mr. Priest speaks of 40 % AMI rent payments, not 30 % AMI, as used for parking calculations in their proposal. ARHA staff has also communicated to me directly the 40% AMI cap. Numbered point two reads:

"The 15 families currently living at Ramsey Homes will have the right of first refusal to return to the redeveloped community; and fifteen units will remain affordable to houses at or below 40% AMI as long as Resolution 830 is in effect."

The parking calculations (see page 17 of the staff report) were based on 30% AMI. There is no provision in the parking ordinance for 40 % AMI. Accordingly, those units should be calculated at the 50 % AMI ratio, not the 30 % AMI ratio. It appears as though, if the current residents do not return, that ARHA will replace them with families earning up to 40 % AMI. This increases the needed parking spaces beyond the 29 provided in the redevelopment and should be heard as a consideration by the Planning Commission.

I understand that the staff recommends that ARHA be audited every year for compliance with the 30 % level. Could the commission and council consider a penalty, equal to the difference between the 40 % AMI and 30 % AMI, should ARHA go back on their commitments?

I respectfully request that either the parking calculations be adjusted to 50 % AMI, or the Commission consider a mechanism to ensure ARHA complies. They should not be allowed to calculate parking at 30% AMI if they do not intend to keep the units at that level. ARHA is submitting an error in calculation and degrading the planning process, creating further liability for the City.

**School Bus**

I did not see any mention of how students will be picked up by the school bus in the submission before you.

Currently, the alley and its entrance are used as a de-facto bus stop on Pendleton. Kids wait in the entrance of the alley, and parents will setup folding chairs while they wait with the kids (especially in the warmer months). Currently, this is not an issue because traffic in the alley is light. Once the alley is turned into an entrance to a parking garage, however, volume will change. Additionally, with the added density, there will be more kids living on the property. Can something be done to ensure that the kids will be picked up and dropped off safely? An additional staff recommendation regarding what accommodations must be made would be beneficial.

## Finances and Model Assumptions

The issues below are a result of analysis on the memo submitted by Mr. Priest City Council on January 21, 2016. In no particular order, I have concerns regarding the following:

1) Omission of Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits (FHPTC). I have spoken with a consultant in DC who advised me, on a cursory level and all else being equal, that the credits could apply to any complete buildings that were preserved on the site. Therefore, for any hybrid option ARHA considers that include historic preservation, the equity funds generated from a FHPTC tax credit should at least appear on the pro forma. ARHA estimates the cost of rehabilitating a unit at Ramsey at \$162,154.00. In their option 2, which preserves 8 units, that would be a total cost of \$1,297,232. The FHPTC is worth 20% of eligible costs, which in the case would be \$259,446,40. Assuming that these numbers are inflated (both in terms of ARHA's per unit rehab estimate and that not all costs would be eligible), it is still reasonable to assume that \$225,000 of equity is not being considered. At the very least these numbers should be considered on the pro forma.

2) State of Virginia Historic Preservation Tax Credits (VHPTC). The VHPTC provides a credit of 25% of eligible expenses. Similar to the FHPTC, this line item is not listed on their pro forma. We are quite literally speaking about hundreds of thousands of dollars that are not part of their financial model. It is neither possible for the community or city to analyze their models, nor have faith in their due diligence, when these omissions are so conspicuous.

3) LIHTC competitiveness. It is my understanding that certain options are not competitive for LIHTC. However, if the Historic Preservation credits are available, thus reducing the overall cost of the project, I assume it is possible the credits might increase the competitiveness score. More units for less money would seem like a competitive advantage. Unfortunately, ARHA will not release their model out of the office so we cannot analyze it if this is applicable.

4) Debt Service. Related to #1 and #2, increased equity available from the HPTCs should reduce the amount of mortgage needed, thus reducing the debt service payments and increasing the cash flow.

5) Expense Estimates. ARHA estimates for each option that expenses will increase five percent year over year. I find this hard to justify, especially in our current economic conditions and particularly with the stagnant, if not declining, cost of energy. If the output (services to residents and utilities) is expected to remain constant (no further increase in units), ARHA should provide justification for these large annual increases in expenses. This estimation seems especially high if the building attains Leeds certification. The increased energy efficiency of the units should keep expenses relatively constant year to year, especially in the early models of the pro forma.

In ARHA option two, if you change the expense estimate from a five percent annual year-over-year increase to a more reasonable three percent the project achieves POSITIVE cash flow through all fifteen years. Again, because I could not have access off-site, I reproduced their pro forma as provided. It can easily estimate how changes in revenue and expense estimates alter the cash flow. If you would like this sent to you I can under separate Email (no attachments on CCC).

6) Options Three and Four. Please reference page 9, the summary of options page, from Mr. Priest's memo. It states that option three would include 51 units, while option four would include 39 units. However, if you reference the pro formas for each option (pages 17 and 24 respectively), the annual operating expenses in year one - FOR EACH OPTION - are \$252,625. It is not logical for two developments of differing unit counts to have identical operating expenses. This is especially true given that the operating expenses were different under the other options.

7) Section 504 Compliance. ARHA contends that Ramsey homes cannot be rehabilitated into Section 504 compliance. I question the assumption that rehabilitation of all or any units is necessary based on the following from the Section 504 Code:

Section 8.31 Historic Properties:

"Accessibility to historic properties subject to alterations need not be provided if such accessibility would substantially impair the significant historic features of the property or result in undue financial and administrative burdens."

Further, Section 8.32(c):

"This section does not require recipients to make building alterations that have little likelihood of being accomplished without removing or altering a load-bearing structural member."

These sections indicate that ARHA could make a successful case to rehabilitate Ramsey Homes in their current format and be within their right under the code. It is also important to note that city staff, in their report, found that the homes could be rehabilitated.

In conclusion, thank you for your efforts regarding this redevelopment proposal (and if you made it to the end of this, thank you for reading). Your time and consideration is greatly appreciated. Regards-

Glen Roe

- Expected Response Date: Wednesday, February 10

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# Letter of support for Ramsey Homes redevelopment

Jesse O'Connell <oconnellj@gmail.com>

Thu 2/4/2016 11:15 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>;

Planning Commissioners,

In advance of your deliberations tonight, I'm writing this letter to express my support for ARHA's redevelopment of the Ramsey Homes- a critical project not only for the Braddock neighborhood but for the entire city.

Along with many of my neighbors, I believe deeply that our city has a responsibility to ensure the development of affordable housing. Public servants like teachers, firefighters and police officers spend their days working to better our city- they should not have to spend their nights driving to a neighboring county or across the river into Maryland to find an affordable place to live. There should be a place for them here, in Alexandria. We are a better city when we have a range of housing opportunities for a range of incomes, and to ensure those opportunities over the long term, we need get serious about developing affordable housing and stop letting these much-needed projects be pushed from one neighborhood to another or delayed indefinitely out of well-meaning, but misguided, nostalgia.

Throughout this project's planning process, of which I've been a close observer, I've been continually impressed with both the community's engagement and ARHA's willingness to adapt and change their design in response to resident feedback. The current proposal is a responsible and realistic plan to develop the site and maintain the project over the long term. The structures currently standing on the site are hopelessly outdated and cannot be easily brought to contemporary standards. Moreover, the notion to create a museum from one of the units, while thoughtful, neglects the reality of the complete lack of funding for such an initiative, and downplays the meaningful impact that keeping even one of the current units would have on the number of new units that can be built on the site- a number that is critical for a viable application for federal tax credits.

I'm supportive of the following specific actions that can advance this project toward fulfillment:

- Amend the Braddock East Master Plan (found in the Braddock Road Small Area Plan chapter of the Alexandria Master Plan) to increase the cap on the allowable housing units from 30 to 53, as well as change the land use designation to CRMU-M (currently RB);
- The official zoning map should see a map amendment to change the zone from RB/Townhouse Zone to CRMU-M/Commercial Residential Mixed Use – Medium;
- Increase the allowable floor area ratio (FAR) from 0.75 to 2.0 through an SUP; and
- Such zoning modifications to the CRMU-M zone as needed to support the project.

I appreciate your time and attention to this letter, and for your service to the city and our community. Through your efforts I have no doubt that we can achieve the full vibrant potential of the Braddock neighborhood, along with Alexandria as a whole.

Regards,

Jesse O'Connell  
525 N. Henry St.  
Alexandria, VA

---

**From:** Robert Irmer via Call.Click.Connect. <[CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov](mailto:CallClickConnect@alexandriava.gov)>

**Sent:** Thursday, February 4, 2016 1:05 PM

**To:** City Council; City Council Aides; Jackie Henderson; Call Click Connect; Gloria Sitton

**Subject:** Call.Click.Connect. #89370: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council Dear Mayor Silberberg, Vice-Mayor Wilson

Dear **Call.Click.Connect.** User

A request was just created using **Call.Click.Connect.** The request ID is 89370.

**Request Details:**

- Name: Robert Irmer
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: 703-244-0011
- Email: [robirmer@gmail.com](mailto:robirmer@gmail.com)
- Service Type: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council
- Request Description: Dear Mayor Silberberg, Vice-Mayor Wilson and esteemed council members,

I am writing to express our opposition to the proposed demolition of the historic Ramsey Homes, the proposed redevelopment, the increase in FAR from .75 to 2.0, and rezoning from RB townhouse to CRMU-M, and last, but certainly not least a reduction in parking (29 spaces for 53 units?)

We find it particularly disconcerting that ARHA gets to play by a different set of rules than the actual residents of the Parker-Gray Historic District. However, for the sake of brevity, I won't go into depth since you are surely familiar with all the arguments, and we just want to go on record as opposed to the redevelopment at 699 N. Patrick St.

Sincerely,

Robert and Martine Irmer  
512 N Alfred St.

P.s. In case the proposed project is approved, please take an another look at the parking situation. Parking is at a premium here just like the rest of Old Town, and parking along Pendleton is on one side only. At the very least, residents of the new development should be ineligible for district 3 parking stickers.

- Expected Response Date: Thursday, February 11

Please take the necessary actions in responding, handling and/or updating this request at [the Call.Click.Connect. staff interface.](#)

# Ramsey Homes

City of Alexandria, Virginia

WSSI #22386.02

## Historic Context and Significance Statement

August 2015

*Prepared for:*  
Ramsey Homes, LP  
401 Wythe St.  
Alexandria, VA 22314

*Prepared by:*

David Carroll, M.A., Anna Maas, MUEP, and Boyd Sipe, M.A., RPA



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thunderbird Archeology, a division of Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc., of Gainesville, Virginia conducted archival research and developed a property history and historic context for Ramsey Homes, located on North Patrick Street between Pendleton and Wythe Streets for Ramsey Homes, LP of Alexandria, Virginia. The Board of Commissioners of the Alexandria and Redevelopment Housing Authority (ARHA) propose to redevelop the study area consistent with the Braddock East Master Plan (BEMP) at a density high enough to sustain a critical mass of low-income residents in order to maintain the strong social and support networks that are essential in low-income communities. The increased density is a key goal of the BEMP, the ARHA 2012-2022 Strategic Plan and the City-adopted Housing Master Plan. In a memo to the Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review (BAR CASE #2015-0088), dated April 22, 2015, city staff recommended demolition.

The Ramsey Homes (the “Project”) is located in the City of Alexandria “Parker-Gray District” (Zoning Ordinance Article X. Sec. 10-200); therefore, the development review process requires the Parker-Gray BAR approve a Permit to Demolish. According to Sec. 10-200, the Parker-Gray District was established “to protect community health and safety and to promote the education, prosperity and general welfare of the public through the identification, preservation, and enhancement of buildings, structures, settings, features and ways of life which characterize this nineteenth and early twentieth century residential neighborhood”. Note that the establishment of this district emphasize resources that predate or date to the early twentieth century (1900 to the early 1930s), not the mid-twentieth century (late 1930s to late 1960s), thus the local district’s Period of Significance ends before the homes were built in 1942 and should be the guiding factor in decisions made by the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) and the City Council. Additionally, much of the language in the local Historic District guidelines emphasizes respecting the scale and setback of historic resources that pre-date the mid-twentieth century and are dramatically different from the Ramsey Homes.

The Project also contributes to the “Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District” listed to the Virginia Landmarks Register (VLR) in 2008 and the National Register of Historic Place (NRHP) in 2010. The Period of Significance for the NRHP district is ca. 1810 to 1959. Frequently, the boundaries and Period of Significance of a local zoning district is different from a NRHP district. They may overlap, but have different priorities, standards for eligibility, and associated laws. The NRHP often includes longer Periods of Significance, does not dictate changes to the exterior of buildings, and has a low bar for eligibility, particularly for buildings contributing to a district or associated with minorities. The Project as a whole has significance in social history rather than architecture, and while they contribute to the NRHP-listed district and will be part of a federal undertaking, their listing does not preclude them from demolition if the disposition and demolition is approved and the loss is properly mitigated.

Since settlement, the Project area’s land use has constantly evolved from vacant land to farmland (pre-1849) to Union Army military housing and hospital during the Civil War

(1861-1865) to affordable tenant housing for European immigrants (1865-1914) to vacant land (1914-1941) to military housing during World War II (1942-1945) and finally to affordable public housing (1946-present).

Continuous alterations to the Project have compromised the integrity of the building and landscape design. They were designed in 1941 and constructed with flat roofs in the vernacular Modernist style in 1942. Between 1964 and 1979, ARHA removed skylights and constructed hipped roofs, altering the buildings' style to vernacular Prairie. In 1995, the addition of Colonial Revival elements were approved by the BAR, and by then, significant components that had contributed to its integrity and helped convey its social history were removed, including original chain-linked fencing, clothes lines, paved playground, and plantings.

The integrity and Project's ability to convey the depth of their history is not evident and does not meet the City of Alexandria Board of Architectural Review (BAR) six criteria for protection. 1) The buildings are not of such architectural or historic interest that their removal will be a detriment of the public interest. The buildings and landscape were altered so dramatically after 1964 that they do not reflect their period of significance (1941-1942), the Modernist economy with which they were built, or for what they were built. 2) The buildings do not merit becoming a shrine because as stated, they have lost integrity of design, do not reflect their period of significance, nor do they convey the original purpose as wartime housing. 3) The American foursquare with Prairie features is ubiquitous in American cities from the 1910s through the 1940s. Adapted to this style after 1964, this is a very late example and not original to the site and therefore not worthy of reproduction as they now stand. 4) Retention of the property does not protect an historic place as defined by the local Zoning Ordinance because as noted the Period of Significance for the "Parker-Gray District" ends in the "early twentieth century" before the Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal and World War II. The Period of Significance of the "Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District" is not relevant to decisions made by the BAR. In consideration of the NRHP district, their retention is not essential to the viability of the district's listing because it represents less than one percent of the contributing resources. The NRHP nomination form incorrectly states that architectural significance is related to the Prairie style, which is not original to the building and is not listed among significant styles under the architectural classification section of the nomination form on page two. 5) Retention of the building will not promote general welfare because its declining condition may decrease real estate values. Retention will generate less business because there will be fewer residents to patronize local venues and learn, live, and work in the area. The buildings do not convey what they were or teach non-professional historians by just looking at them. The introduction of more housing units next to the history museum and community center will expose more residents to local American history. Their removal will result in a more attractive block, a more desirable place to live, and a higher quality of life for current residents. 6) The Project and associated landscape are out-of-scale in the neighborhood as they lack the density of their neighbors. Their demolition would allow for buildings more consistent with the BAR Historic District guidelines and the neighborhood in design, height, and setback.

Appropriate mitigation of Ramsey Homes is the introduction of more units of affordable housing within this block. Preservation of the resource is not absolutely necessary as there is ample opportunity for public interpretation and commemoration of the site's public housing legacy. In our opinion, such efforts would be appropriate mitigation for loss of the resource. The possibilities for such mitigation are broad and, in our opinion, preservation of the Ramsey Homes buildings, in comparison with appropriate mitigation, offers fewer opportunities to celebrate and inform the public about the social history of public housing in the city. ARHA has contributed to the city in the past by funding other interpretive displays.

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## INTRODUCTION

The Ramsey Homes are located on North Patrick Street between Pendleton and Wythe Streets in the City of Alexandria, Virginia within the bounds of the historically African-American community known as Uptown and the locally zoned “Parker-Gray District” (Figure 1). The Board of Commissioners of ARHA propose to redevelop the study area consistent with the BEMP at a density high enough to sustain a critical mass of low-income residents in order to maintain the strong social and support networks that are essential in low-income communities. The increased density is a key goal of the BEMP 2012-2022 Strategic Plan and the City-adopted Housing Master Plan. In a memo dated April 22, 2015, city staff recommended demolition.

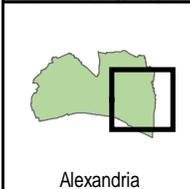
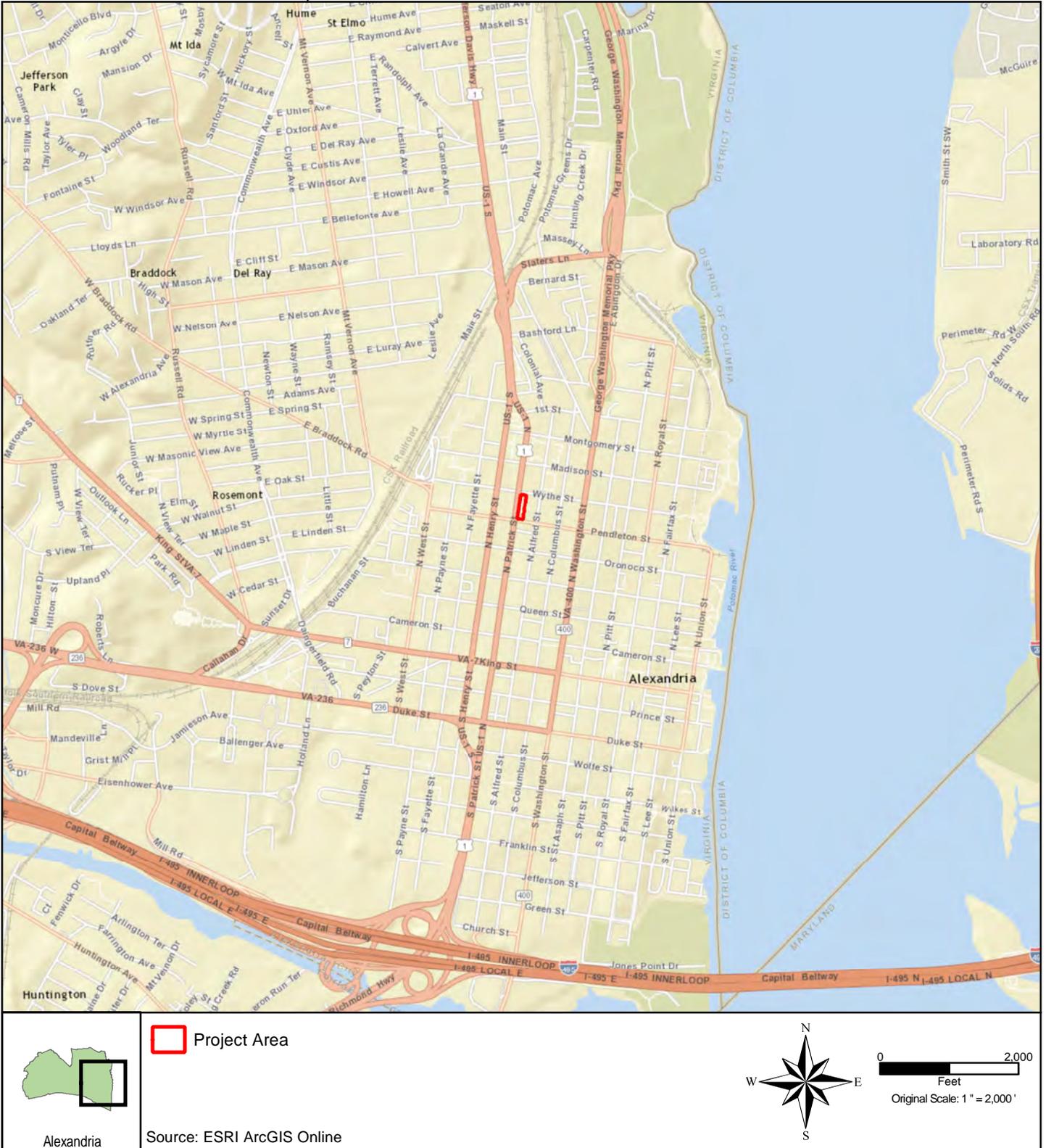
The Project includes four buildings with 15 units, labeled I, II, III, and IV north to south (Figure 2). The buildings were previously recorded as seven resources in 2006 in anticipation of nominating the “Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District” (DHR No. 100-0133) to the VLR and NRHP.

Building I.	912 and 914 Wythe Street (DHR No. 100-0133-1328) 625 and 627 Patrick Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0754)
Building II.	619, 621, and 623 Patrick Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0751)
Building III.	609 and 611 Patrick Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0747) 613 and 615 Patrick Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0749)
Building IV.	605 and 607 Patrick Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0745) 913 and 915 Pendleton Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0948)

Each resource contributes to the VLR district listed in 2008 and the NRHP district listed in 2010.

One previously recorded archeological site has been recorded at DHR within the study area; site 44AX0160 represents a probable Civil War-era military barracks site that was investigated by Alexandria Archaeology in 1991. According to the DHR site record, the resource has not been evaluated for eligibility to the NRHP. In addition to this report, Thunderbird Archeology has, at the request of Ramsey Homes, LP of Alexandria, Virginia, prepared a Scope of Work (SOW) for a Documentary Study and Archaeological Assessment. The SOW was approved by Alexandria Archaeology and Thunderbird Archeology has completed a draft Documentary Study and Archaeological Assessment of the property.

Principal Archeologist Boyd Sipe, M.A., RPA; Principal Architectural Historian Anna Maas, MUEP and Associate Archeologist David Carroll, M.A. conducted archival research and prepared the report. Geospatial Analyst Michael Bowser prepared the map exhibits. Research was conducted at the National Archives and Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., the National Archives at College Park, Maryland, the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library in Williamsburg, Virginia, the Office of Alexandria Archaeology, the Alexandria Archives and Records Center, the Alexandria Courthouse, and the Barrett Branch of the Alexandria Library (Special Collections). Catalogs for the Nimitz Library and Navy Department Library were searched for relevant collections. Previously collected research data from the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Library in Washington, D.C. and oral histories from several 20<sup>th</sup>-century occupants of public housing in the city were consulted. Additionally, specific research questions



 Project Area

Source: ESRI ArcGIS Online



**Figure 1**  
**Vicinity Map**



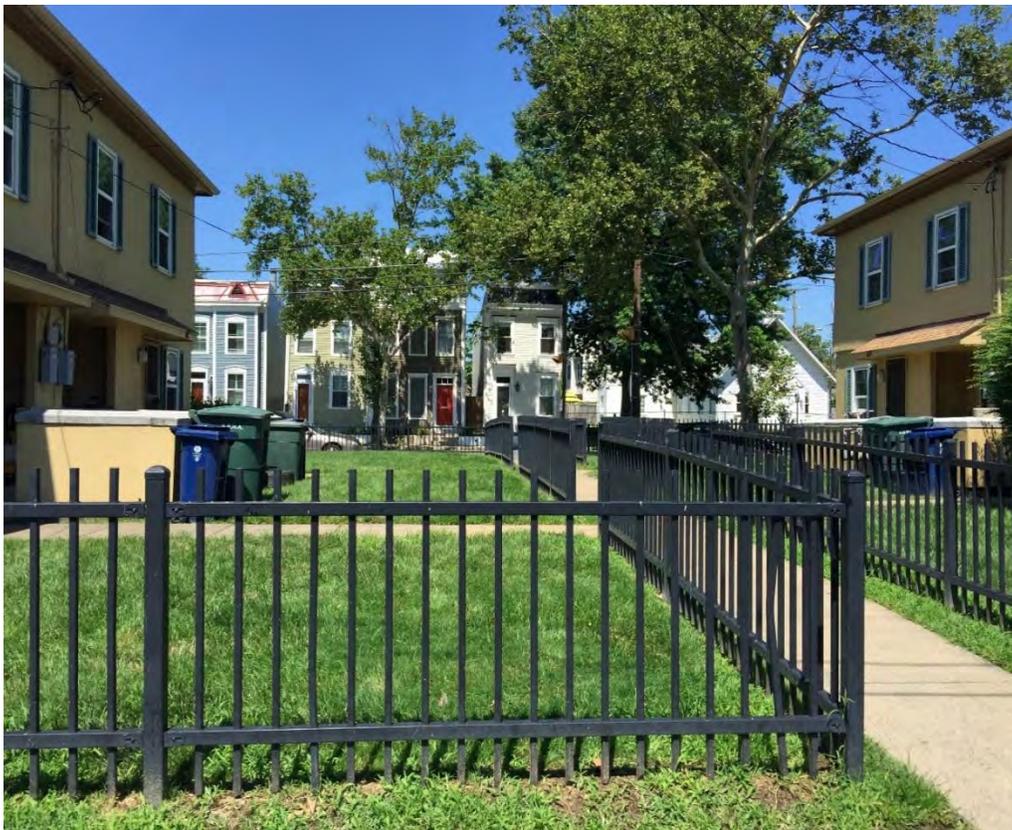
were discussed with staff at Alexandria Archaeology, the City of Alexandria Fort Ward Park Museum, and the Jackie Robinson Foundation.

## RESOURCE DESCRIPTION

### Setting

The Ramsey Homes are located in the northwestern quadrant of the 1797 street grid in the Parker-Gray District. The complex includes four buildings that occupy over one-third of a city block on the east side of North Patrick Street between Pendleton and Wythe Streets. The grass lawns are enclosed by a modern metal picket fence, which steps in around mature oak trees lining the Patrick Street sidewalk. Buildings are set back 10 to 35 feet from the right-of-ways and spaced around 40 feet apart.

The block is surrounded by small row houses and town houses, local businesses, converted warehouses, and community buildings most of which have very little setback from the curb. The area is dense with two- and three-story buildings from a variety of periods. The landscape and architecture of Ramsey Homes are out of character and scale with other historic resources in the study area (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Ramsey Homes, View to West from the Alfred Street Alley to North Patrick Street, Showing Difference in Scale between the Housing and Historic Homes

## Buildings

As noted, the Ramsey Homes site includes four buildings with 15 units (see Figure 2).

Building I.	912 and 914 Wythe Street (DHR No. 100-0133-1328) 625 and 627 Patrick Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0754)
Building II.	619, 621, and 623 Patrick Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0751)
Building III.	609 and 611 Patrick Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0747) 613 and 615 Patrick Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0749)
Building IV.	605 and 607 Patrick Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0745) 913 and 915 Pendleton Street (DHR No. 100-0133-0948)

Buildings I (Figure 4), III (Figure 5), and IV (Figure 6) are identical two-story quadruplexes (45' x 43'6.5") with low-pitched hipped roofs. Building II is an L-plan two-story triplex (43'6" x 36'5") with a cross-hipped roof (Figure 7). The nearly square shape of three of the buildings and the replacement of flat roofs with hipped ones after 1964 altered their style from vernacular Modernist to vernacular Prairie style. Alterations made in 1995 introduced Colonial Revival elements with metal paneled doors, vinyl windows, and inoperable aluminum shutters.

Each building consists of a poured concrete foundation and Fabcrete building units used to construct the floors, walls, and roofs. A painted stucco-like material sheaths the exterior. The roofing is either a continuous membrane or a bituminous asphalt product. The low-pitched hipped roofs are capped by a metal flues at each center.

Entrances are inset and paired side-by-side such that each quadruplex has two facing north and two facing south. The triplex has one facing south and two facing north. Paneled metal doors are roughly centered on each unit. Paired one-over-one windows with brick aprons are situated next to the doors towards the interior dividing wall on the north and south elevations. Larger one-over-one windows are situated on the opposite side of the door towards the corner of each building. The elevations facing the east and west contain two one-over-one windows on each floor of each unit, for a total of eight symmetrically positioned windows. They are all vinyl replacement double-hung sashes flanked by decorative aluminum louvered shutters.

The interiors of the buildings are minimalistic with vinyl composition tile or carpet added by the tenants, painted walls and very simple trim. There is a small living room (17'7" x 11'7") with a closet under the stairs and a kitchen (9' x 9') with open utility closet on the first floor of each unit. Two small bedrooms (14'5" x 9'5") and one full bath (8' x 10') are located on the second floor. Fixtures throughout date to the 1990s. There is a gas heating unit and window-unit air conditioners.



**Figure 4:** Ramsey Homes, Building I



**Figure 5:** Ramsey Homes, Building III



**Figure 6:** Ramsey Homes, Building IV



**Figure 7:** Ramsey Homes, Building II

## PROPERTY HISTORY

The Ramsey Homes property is situated outside of the original 1749 boundaries of Alexandria and remained undeveloped until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. George and Teresa Blish, immigrants from Germany, owned the block from at least 1834 until 1849 and operated a market garden on the property that supplied fruits and vegetables for the needs of residents of Alexandria. Henry Daingerfield, one of the wealthiest men in Alexandria, purchased it and erected several houses which were rented primarily to Irish immigrants who worked in various industries and businesses in and near Alexandria. During the Civil War, the Union army commandeered the lot for the headquarters, barracks, and hospital of Battery H of the Independent Pennsylvania Artillery, which served garrison duty in Alexandria from 1863 until 1865. Following the war, Henry Daingerfield's heirs continued to rent out deteriorating houses on the block until the 1890s, by which time the property was likely vacant of habitable buildings.

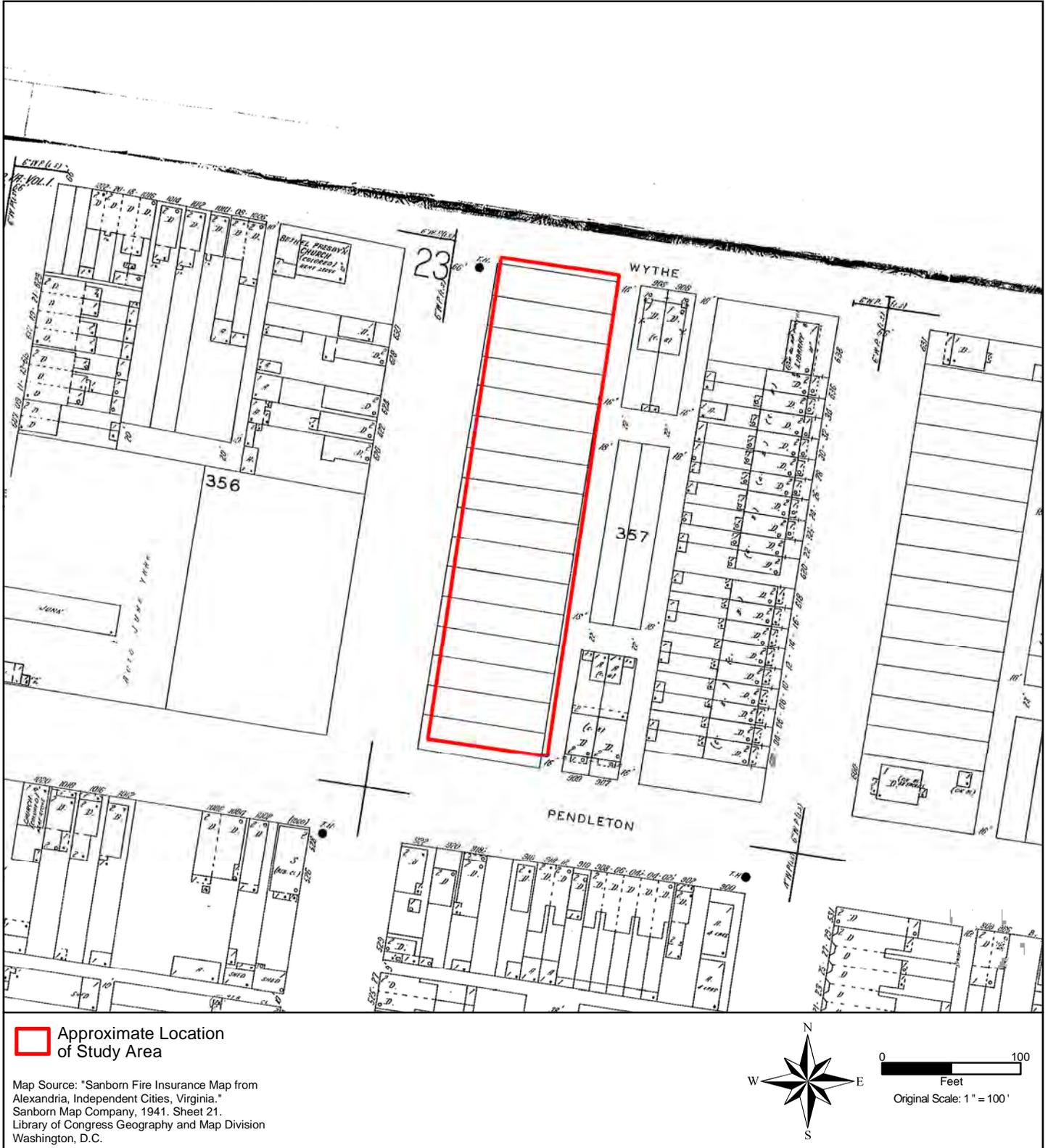
Noble Lyndsey maintained ownership of the study area until 1914, when a decree was issued in chancery during the settling of his estate to sell the block for cash. The property was sold to the Real Estate and Investment Corporation of Virginia for \$5,500 (Alexandria Deed Book 63: 553). The Real Estate and Investment Corporation in turn sold the property to Charles W. King in 1919 for \$8,000 (Alexandria Deed Book 69: 135). By 1921, the block was vacant (Sanborn 1921). In 1923, Charles King sold the property to his grocery wholesale company, Chas. King & Son (Alexandria Deed Book 76: 110). Also in that year, the block was surveyed for subdivision and soon thereafter lots were sold for development (Alexandria Deed Book 76:242). Although the eastern and central portions of the block were developed, the western third of the block comprising the study area was sold to four buyers who left it vacant (Figure 8).

By 1941, the United States Housing Authority (USHA), Nathan Strauss Administrator, under the Federal Works Agency (FWA), John M. Carmody Administrator, began to plan for the construction of permanent housing for African-American defense workers in the Uptown neighborhood. Then known as the Lanham Act Alexandria Defense Housing Project VA-44133, Ramsey Homes (or Ramsay as it was sometimes spelled) was developed and maintained in the following sequence:

1941 March 3, the Lanham Act Alexandria Defense Housing Project VA-44133 received Presidential or Administrative Approval.

1941 April 16, Edward S. Holland, Jr., Certified Land Surveyor, 624 King Street, Alexandria, completed a "Property Line Map" for the Housing Authority of the City of Alexandria (the predecessor of ARHA established by law in 1939). This plan showed 16 lots on the south side of Patrick Street between Pendleton and Wythe. Labeled 19-34, each measured 22 ft. wide and 87 ft. deep. Parcel 1 included Lot 19, Parcel 2 included Lot 20, Parcel 3 included Lots 21-33, and Parcel 4 included Lot 34.

1941 July 8, the United States Federal Government purchased four vacant parcels from Edward E. Lawler, R. S. Reynolds, Marguerite F. Graham, and Julian M. Dove (Alexandria Deed Book 176:7).



**Figure 8**  
**1941 Alexandria Sanborn Fire Insurance Map**

1941 July 15, Smith, Werner, and Billings Architects, 220 King Street, Alexandria, Virginia; Robert K. Thulman, Mechanical Engineer; and Associated Engineers Inc. Site Engineers completed the first set of plans for the Ramsay Homes (Figure 9 and Figure 10). The firm's architects were Delos H. Smith, FAIA, junior partner J. M. Billings, and engineer Sheldon Werner. The original plan submitted was for three buildings. Building A and C were to contain four units, including a living room and kitchen on the first floor and two bedrooms and a bathroom on the second floor. The architects described Building B as flats and included one three-room unit, three four-room units, and three five-room units. Each were to have shiplap siding, brick accents, and large cupolas. The landscape plan called for plantings, alley parking, patios, hexagonal clothes lines, play area, and a spray basin (On file at ARHA).

1941 October 10, Smith, Werner, and Billings Architects submitted a second design, which was used by USHA (Figure 11 and Figure 12). The second option prescribed three four-unit Modernist foursquares and a three-unit L-shaped building with more economical materials such as "Fabcrete", a pre-cast unit of cementitious material that did not require interior framework for support and to which composition board, laths, and other material could be attached to achieve desired finishes. Joseph E. Hines of the Fabcrete Corporation, Richmond, Virginia applied for its patent on March 4, 1939, Serial No. 259,885. Utility lines and electrical wiring were outlined. Exterior elevations show coal chutes were once located on the north and south walls and interior plans note the plenums for "coal fired" heating and plumbing. The plan shows the elimination of large cupolas in favor of small skylights over each bathroom as they were located in the core of the buildings and could not have windows. It included parallel parking in the alley, hexagonal clothes lines labeled "yard clothes dryers", and a simple paved play area within the L of the triplex. Sheet 8 contains a "List of Plants", including 4 Trees of Heaven, 3 Honey Locust trees, 18 Black Locust trees, 15 Van Houtte Spirea flowering shrubs, 15 Arrow Wood flowering shrubs, 57 Regals Privet hedge plants, 85 Wash. Thorn hedge plants, 8 Japanese Creeper vines, 30 Evergreen Bittersweet vines, and 8 English Ivy vines. Historic aerials show mature trees between each building and that the landscape design was generally followed (RG 196, Records of the Public Housing Administration, Architectural and Engineering Plans, the National Archives at College Park Maryland).

1941 November 22, the construction contract was awarded (NHA 1942a).

1942 February 24, the U.S. Housing Authority was moved under the National Housing Authority of FWA and became the Federal Public Housing Authority (PHA). The PHA published a directory, Report SD-102, containing information on all war housing, including "Ramsay Homes", and slum-clearance projects financed in whole or in part by Federal funds during 1942 (NHA 1942a).

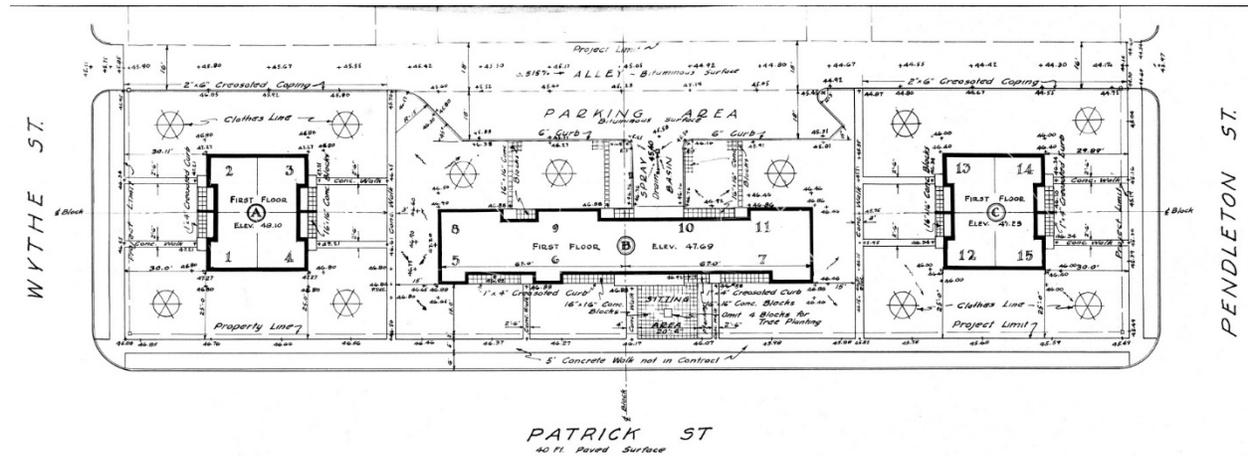
1942 July 31, the Project was under construction and 95 percent complete with an estimated cost of \$78,590 (NHA 1942a).

1942 September 18, the Project was under construction and 97 percent complete with an estimated cost of \$79,940 (NHA 1942a).

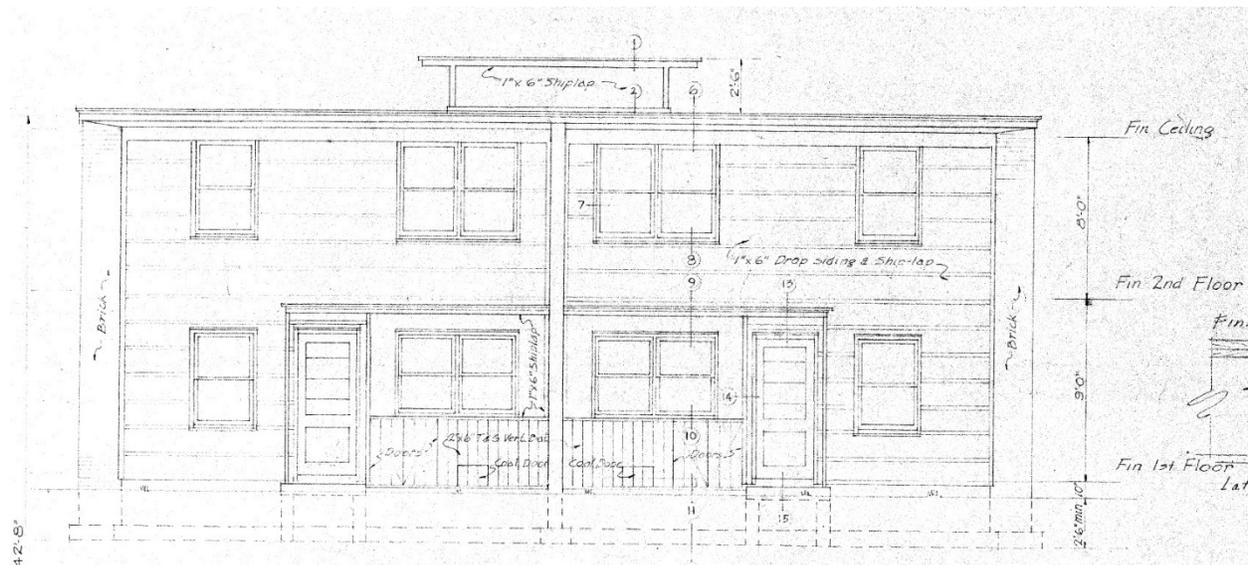
1942 October 2, the Project was under construction and 99 percent complete with an estimated cost of \$79,940 (NHA 1942a).

1942 October 30, the status of the Project had not changed (NHA 1942a).

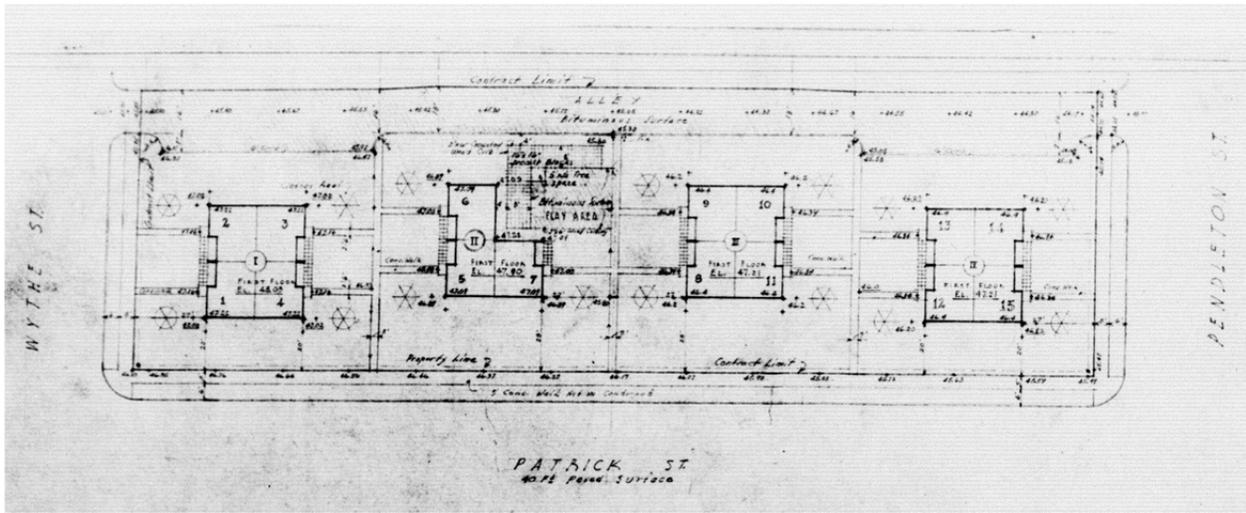
1942 November 30, six units were occupied, eight units were available, and one unit was incomplete (NHA 1942a).



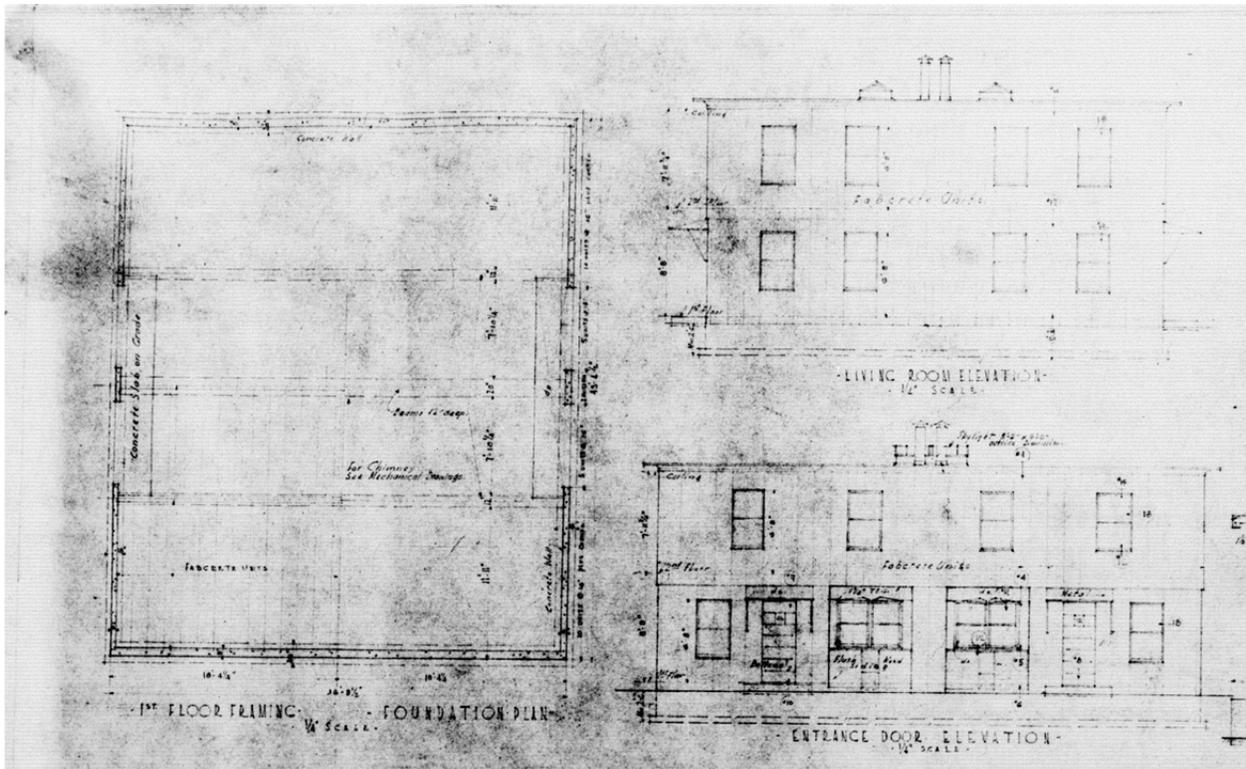
**Figure 9:** First Draft Site Plan July 7, 1941 Lanham Act Alexandria Defense Housing Project VA. 44133 (ARHA)



**Figure 10:** First Draft Elevation July 7, 1941 Lanham Act Alexandria Defense Housing Project VA. 44133 (ARHA)



**Figure 11:** Final Site Plan Selected by USHA October 10, 1941 Lanham Act Alexandria Defense Housing Project VA. 44133 (National Archives at College Park, Maryland)



**Figure 12:** Final Elevation and Plans Selected by USHA October 10, 1941 Lanham Act Alexandria Defense Housing Project VA. 44133 (National Archives at College Park, Maryland)

1946 October 6, the Washington Post reported, “Three large war housing projects in Alexandria-elected at a cost of \$2,712,000-are now up for sale.” PHA gave the city the first chance to buy Chinquapin Village, Cameron Valley, and Ramsey Homes, all of which housed 2,000 people. While the PHA designated the buildings permanent, city officials contended that they were temporary, and the Mayor claimed the housing did not meet city building codes and were thus substandard.

1947, the Negro Yearbook contained a table of Permanent Public Housing Projects Making Provision for Negro Tenants as July 31, 1945, which included Ramsey Homes (Guzman et. al.). Alexandria City Directory listed the residents of the Ramsey Homes for the first time, including Carneal Coffee, USA (perhaps the Army); Cleveland B. Tivy, Clerk War Dept.; Will Daniels, barber; George W. Witherspoon, auto mechanic; and Charles E. Smith, janitor. All were noted as African American.

1951 July 26, PHA entered into a contract with the Alexandria Housing Authority for conveyance of low-rent housing “after the termination of the use of the project as defense housing during the Korean emergency” (United States 1956:48).

1953 April 30, the Alexandria Housing Authority became the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing and purchased the Ramsey Homes from the PHA (Alexandria Deed Book 356:407).

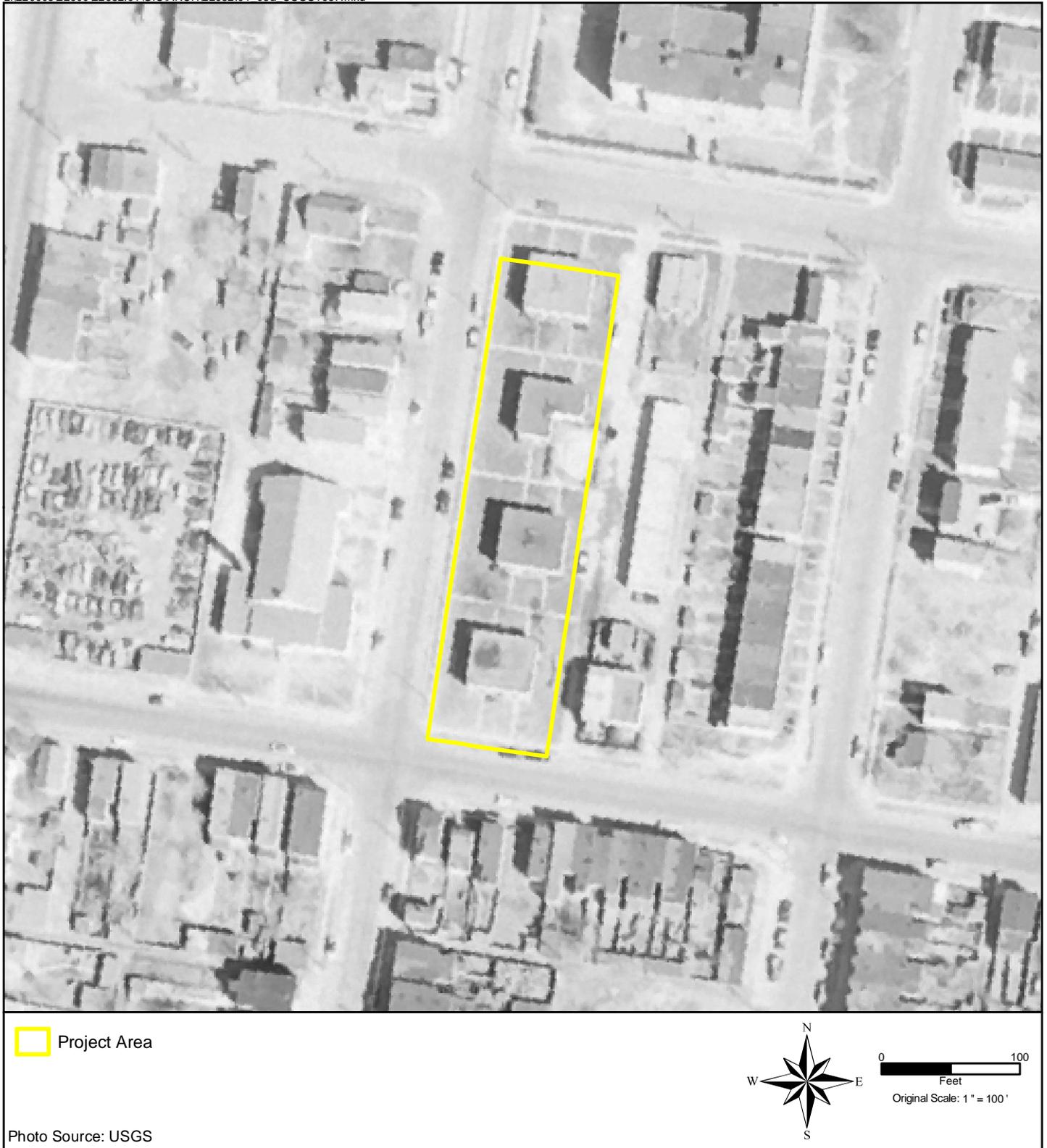
1957-1964, historic black and white aerial imagery from these years show the specified play area next to the triplex, plantings, and buildings with flat roofs and skylights over the bathrooms (Figure 13).

1959, ARHA noted that its 4,942 tenants, occupying 1,247 dwelling units across eight development projects including the Ramsey Homes, “...almost all came from dismal, substandard, or overcrowded quarters,” were “generally happy in their surroundings” and had greatly benefitted from public housing (ARHA 1959:2). The Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from this year shows the buildings and notes the use of pre-cast concrete and flat roofs (Figure 14).

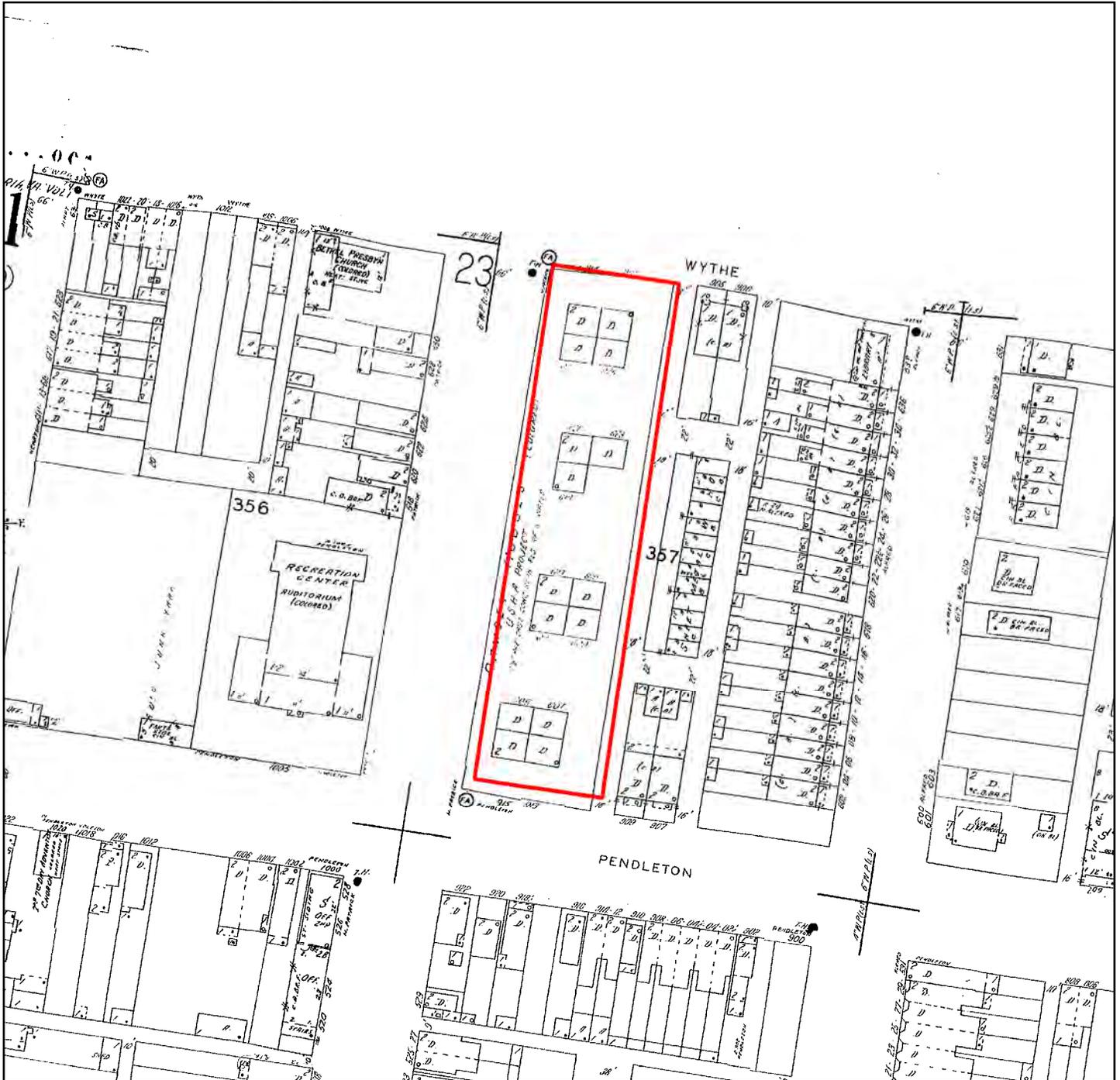
1979, aerial imagery shows that ARHA removed the skylights and constructed hipped roofs.

1995 August 15, Sorg and Associates prepared plans for Interior, Exterior, and Site Improvements at VA 4-5, The Ramsey Community (Figure 15 and Figure 16). The plan called for a Colonial Revival makeover, showing vinyl replacement windows with clip-on six-over-six muntins, the addition of inoperable aluminum shutters, and replacement metal paneled doors. The BAR approved the plans for exterior renovations with the stipulation that the doors and shutters be hunter green and that the faux muntins not be used, leaving the windows one-over-one. Stucco and brick were patched and repaired. The kitchens and bathrooms were renovated. Chain-linked fencing was replaced with metal picket fences and the paved play area removed and sodded with grass. The plan notes that English Ivy was to be removed from the property. Any other historic plant material left at that time was removed.

The current location and type of trees and fencing is different from the original (Figure 17). Shrubbery and plants around the buildings are nursery stock and likely added by residents.

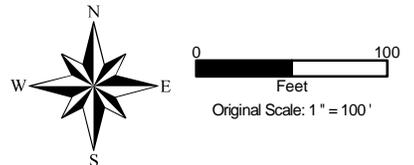


**Figure 1'**  
**March 1957 Alexandria Black and White Imagery**

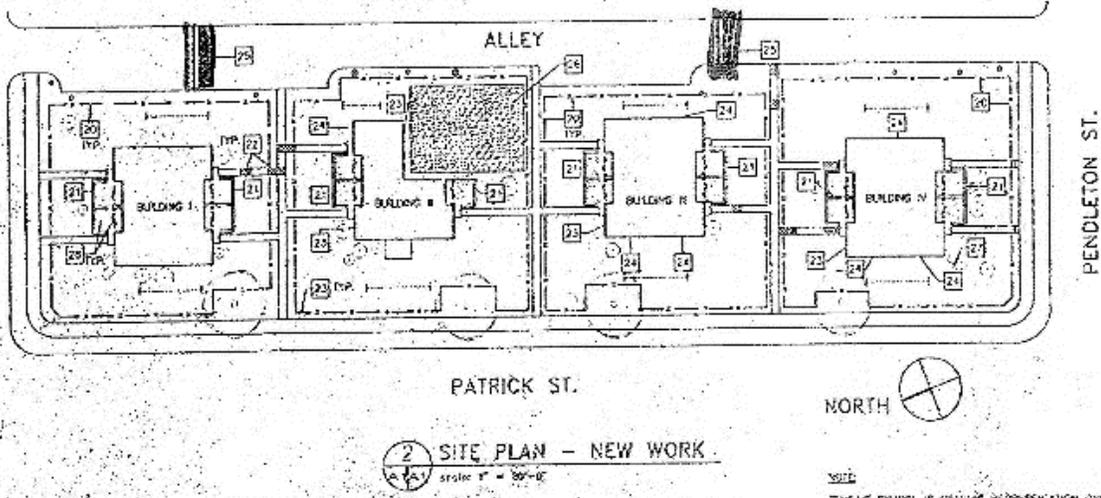


 Approximate Location of Study Area

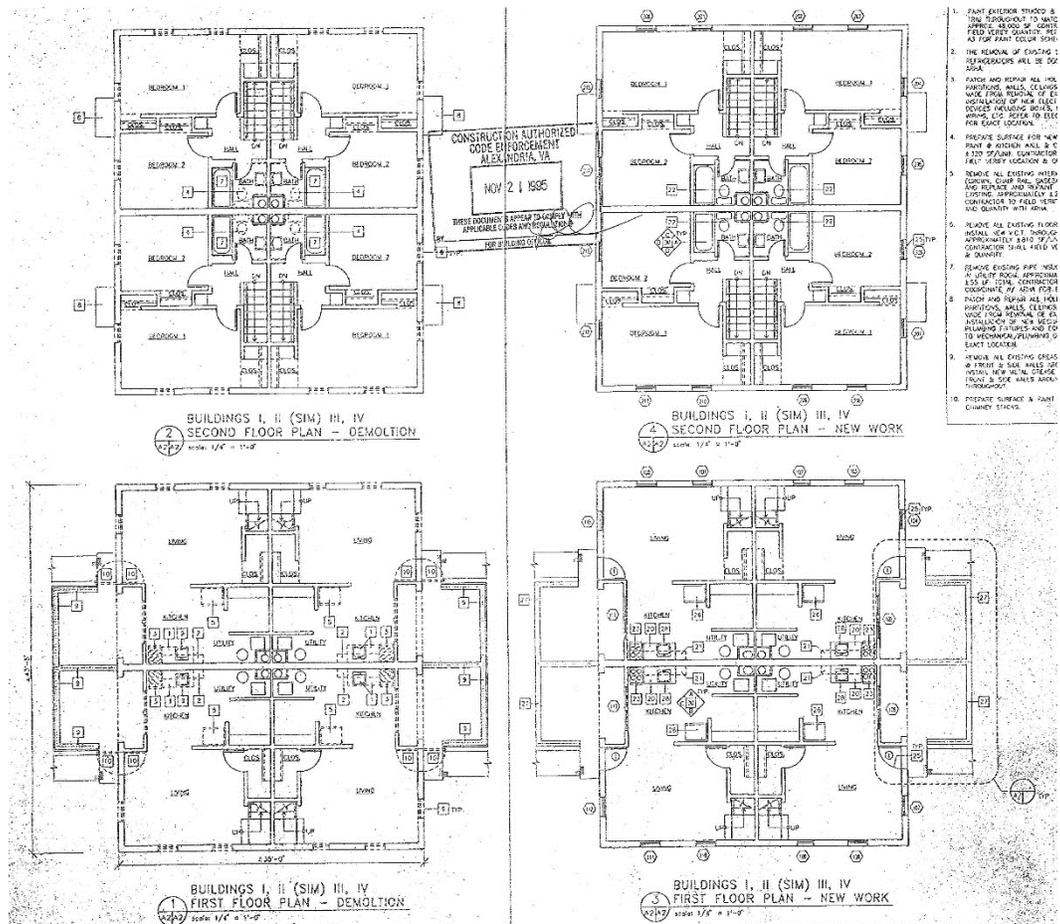
Map Source: "Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from Alexandria, Independent Cities, Virginia." Sanborn Map Company, July 1959, Sheet 21. Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C.



**Figure 4**  
**Sanborn Fire Insurance Map - Alexandria 1959**



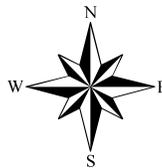
**Figure 15:** August 15, 1995 Plans for Interior, Exterior, and Site Improvements at VA 4-5, The Ramsey Community (ARHA)



**Figure 16:** August 15, 1995 Plans for Interior, Exterior, and Site Improvements at VA 4-5, The Ramsey Community (ARHA)



 Project Area



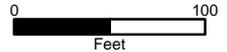
  
Original Scale: 1" = 100'

Photo Source: Virginia Base Mapping Program (VBMP)

**Figure 17**  
**March 2013 Natural Color Imagery**

## HISTORIC CONTEXT

The history of public housing in the United States provides a context in which to analyze the architectural design and styles of the built environment at the Ramsey Homes project site, as well as the situation of the historic and modern residents of the Project. A neglected area in the writing of urban history is the physical environment. It is very likely that the built environment reflects and shapes human behavior (Gardner 1981: 64). Most literature on low end housing has concentrated on tenements and urban reform in the late 19th century (Gardner 1981: 66). In recent years, interest has shifted to the evolution of public housing policy and design.

### Public Housing in Early America

In rural or agrarian socio-economic milieus, such as much of the United States prior to the 20th century, families typically built houses for their own use. Industrialization in the 19th century radically altered the social relations of building, working and living. Increasingly over time, dwellings were built by hired labor and sold at market prices; those who could not afford such housing collected in slums.

In the early stages of our history, settlers built their own homes, good or bad, with their own hands and some help from their neighbors. Much of our farm and rural housing is still in this stage. When we came to town building and industrialization, private business enterprise took over the job. It has had no competition until recently, and the result is a larger acreage of worse looking slums than can be found in any other allegedly civilized country. Private enterprise rise can offer no alibi. That is simply what happened as a result of laissez faire and the free working of supply and demand (Wood 1940: 83).

Prior to the American Revolution (1775-1781), responsibility for caring for Virginia's poor rested with Anglican parishes. However, after the British were defeated, the Anglican Church was disestablished, and the responsibility shifted to the local governments (U.S. Department of the Interior 1937; Ward 1980; Watkinson 2000; Roach 2002). Public housing, with its current connotations, is a product of the early 20th century, in the 18th century the term "public house" referred to an *ordinary*, an inn or tavern.

#### *The Alms House*

Circa 1800, the town of Alexandria erected a poor house and work house at the northwest corner of present-day Monroe Avenue and Route 1. Inmates and the keeper of the poor house likely lived in the main building, which was a large, two-and-a-half-story, seven-bay, Federal-style brick structure (U.S. Department of the Interior 1937; Ward 1980; Watkinson 2000; Roach 2002). The building displayed Flemish bond brickwork and featured a hipped roof with pediment, dormers, and four interior chimneys. The symmetrical façade was arranged around a two-story, projecting center pavilion. The center pavilion contained an arched entrance that incorporated a fan light and sidelights; a Palladian window occupied the second story of the projecting pavilion. The interior displayed a rectangular, longitudinal-hall plan with central entrance.

The ledger of Robert Hodgkin, who became keeper of the Alexandria Poor House in 1861, provides valuable information about the operation of the Poor House between 1861 and 1863 (Miller 1989; Ward 1980). Hodgkin's record of the operations of the Alexandria Poor House documents that, despite the disruptions to the local economy, he was still able to purchase a variety of foodstuffs, including fresh meat, salt beef, flour, butter, bread, molasses, cornmeal, herring, and pickled codfish. He also purchased "20 bushels rye for coffee" (Ward 1980: 65). These purchases supplemented the vegetables produced on the Poor House farm. In January 1862, the livestock on the farm included "three horses, two cows, one bull, and nineteen hogs" (Ward 1980: 66).

In January 1862, Robert Hodgkins prepared a list of the people, livestock, furnishings, and agricultural implements at the Poor House for submission to the "committee on the poor," which oversaw the institution. At that time, thirty-eight inmates lived at the Poor House, along with eight members of Robert Hodgkins's household. The Poor House ledger for 1861-1862 contains two sections, one for the alms house and one for the work house. According to local historian Ruth Ward, who analyzed the ledgers, "The ledger entries dealing with the work house indicate that most inmates were sent there for thirty days, although some were sentenced to six months." During the period covered by the ledger, at least two inmates of the work house, John Crisman and Kate Thompson, ran away (Ward 1980: 66). In January of 1863, one inmate delivered a child at the Poor House. The ledger also mentions three deaths in 1862: James Buckhannon, an unnamed boy who drowned, and a "German who died at poor house" (Ward 1980: 65-66).

### *Philanthropic and Limited Dividend Housing*

Until the Depression, most American leaders believed that the private market, with a helping hand from private philanthropy, could meet the nation's housing needs. The antecedent of public housing, philanthropic and limited dividend housing of the late 19th century, though privately built and operated, shared some similarities with later public housing. For instance, philanthropic and limited dividend housing was also faulted for plain appearance (Gardner 1981: 67). In the early 20th century, a few unions and settlement house reformers built model housing developments for working class families, mostly in the northeastern United States and without government subsidy.

## **Public Housing in the New Deal**

### *Overview*

The Great Depression began on October 29, 1929, when the stock market crashed on what became known as Black Tuesday. By 1932, at least one-quarter of the American workforce was unemployed. President Franklin Roosevelt took office in 1933 and began a series of experimental projects and programs, known as the New Deal, focusing on Relief, Recovery, and Reform. Prior to the 1930s, the Federal Government had no role in housing private citizens; the social welfare of the public, in terms of housing, was left entirely to local governments and private charities (Robinson et al: 1999b: 5). The Depression focused the nation's attention on

"the inequities of the housing market and on the smoldering slum problems ... devastated home ownership and the residential construction industry" (Robinson et al: 1999b: 1:12).

Public housing in the United States was first implemented after many Americans lost their homes and livelihoods as a result of the economic crises. One of Roosevelt's responses was the Federal Housing Act of 1934, which established the basic format for public housing in which the government subsidizes the market value of the housing, and the creation of the Federal Housing Association (FHA) (Trotter 1958; Gotham 2000: 296). Public housing in the New Deal was also an employment program, as under the National Industrial Recovery Act, the formation of the Public Works Administration (PWA), which developed and built the first housing projects in the United States, led to the creation of many jobs in the construction industry (Aiken and Alford 1970).

The socio-political environment during the early years of the Great Depression accommodated reformers who believed that that the federal government should subsidize social housing and build a noncommercial alternative housing sector. Many American housing activists envisioned public housing for the middle-class workforce as well as the poor.

#### *The Emergency Relief and Construction Act of 1932*

The first significant New Deal measure targeted at housing was the Emergency Relief and Construction Act of 1932. This act created the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), a federal agency authorized to make loans to private corporations providing housing for low-income families. Also in 1932, the Federal Home Loan Bank Board was established to make advances on the security of home mortgages and establish a Home Loan Bank System. The act did little to assist individual homebuyers. The average home loan at that time required very short-term credit, with terms generally ranging from three to five years. Large down payments, second mortgages, and high interest rates were commonplace.

#### *The Housing Act of 1934*

As the economic situation worsened, the National Housing Act of 1934 was passed to relieve unemployment and encourage private banks and lending institutions to extend credit for home repairs and construction. Under the Act of 1934, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was created. The responsibilities of the FHA, now a federal agency under the Assistant Secretary for Housing-Federal Housing Commissioner, are to improve housing standards and conditions; to provide an adequate home financing system through insurance of mortgage loans; and to stabilize the mortgage market. Two mortgage insurance programs were established under Title II of the Act of 1934: Section 203 mortgage insurance for one to four family homes; and Section 207 multifamily project mortgages. The Act of 1934 also authorized the FHA to create the Federal National Mortgage Association, or Fannie Mae, which was chartered in 1937.

Helen Alfred, Executive Director of the National Public Housing Conference, summarized the rationale for the act, its means, and its goals:

Recognizing the social importance of housing to all the people, and the value of a home construction program as a medium of reemployment in a great key industry, the Federal government has taken a hand. The removal of blighted areas and rehousing of the lower-income groups at rents which they can afford to pay has not been accomplished by speculative builders or limited dividend corporations. This new policy of the Federal government, as expressed in the terms of the National Industrial Recovery Act, presents an opportunity to make rapid progress toward the solution of our housing problem. In conformity with the provisions of the Act, the Government has made large sums of money available for the purpose of clearing slums and erecting low-rent dwellings. These funds will be advanced in the form of loans and outright grants. Private corporations, including limited dividend companies, can merely obtain loans for their projects. Public agencies, in addition to loans, can obtain subsidies amounting to thirty percent of the cost of labor and materials (Alfred 1934: 23).

Alfred also summarized the necessity for states and local communities to pass legislation and charter local authorities that would make implementation of law possible:

The policy of the Government presents an opportunity for a vigorous battle against indecent housing conditions. The Government is doing its part; the next steps must be taken by local communities. As stated above, the outright grants will be given only to public bodies. Only five States now have the power to create housing boards or authorities with full power to acquire unhealthy areas, clear slums, and construct and operate dwellings. These States are California, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Enabling legislation is pending in a number of extraordinary sessions of State Legislatures ....civic and welfare groups, members of the clergy, women's organizations and progressive labor leaders are uniting to promote sentiment in their local communities favorable to the creation of municipal housing authorities. Most of the municipal legislation is being patterned after a bill prepared in New York City under the supervision of the National Public Housing Conference. Under the terms of this bill, it is recommended that a municipal housing authority be created and that a board be appointed by the Mayor. This board is to have power to issue its own bonds and to sell them to the Federal government. It will have placed at its disposal an effective procedure for acquiring land by condemnation or purchase, for clearing, replanning and rebuilding unhealthy and blighted areas, and finally to manage and operate dwellings when completed. The Government loans will be repaid out of the rents collected (Alfred 1934: 23).

Critics of the Housing Act of 1934 have pointed to the act's failure to assist lower income families most in need of housing aid and feel it did little to improve inner city housing; it promoted the single family detached dwelling as the prevailing mode of housing, which perpetuated suburban sprawl and it intensified racial segregation. Critics of the FHA have seen racially discriminatory policies and practices of the agency associated with mortgage insurance and lending, appraisal guidelines, and home building subsidies (Gotham 2001: 309).

Many New Dealers, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Harold Ickes, Aubrey Williams and Harry Hopkins acknowledged and worked to mitigate the effects of race on public policy; for instance, it was mandated that African Americans, who comprised about 10% of the total population, and 20% of the poor, would collect at least 10% of welfare assistance payments and various New Deal relief programs such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) allocated 10% of their budgets to African Americans (Leuchtenburg 1963:244-246). President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed an unprecedented number of African Americans to second-level positions in his administration; these appointees were collectively called *the Black Cabinet*. These efforts were largely responsible for the transition of black political organizations from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party by 1936, forging the political alliance between African Americans and the Democratic Party that still exists. Few efforts were; however, extended to ending racial segregation or guaranteeing the civil rights of racial minorities. The CCC was organized in racially segregated units; however, pay and working conditions were equitable (Leuchtenburg 1963: 256-257).

### *Reformers and Housers - Ideals and Designs for Social Housing*

Even before the onset of the Great Depression, a cadre of progressive American architects and planners had come to believe that fundamental restructuring of national residential patterns was needed. These design professionals and other reform-minded citizens, including urban and labor activists, envisioned the development of attractive and affordable alternatives to single-family suburbanization, which had become endemic by the 1920s (Mayer 1935: 400). Mayer, among other advocates of the rethinking of the American domestic landscape, saw new social housing not only as a solution for the problems of impoverished slum dwellers but a necessary step toward providing better lives for all Americans:

The slum and the blighted district -- urban and rural - are only the most spectacular manifestations of the bad conditions under which almost all of us live. The people who live in slums can't afford to live in decent places. Those who can afford to don't get anything really satisfactory, unless they shift around with the shifting, sprawling city and suburb. Lack of play spaces and convenient parks, noise, exposure to traffic accidents, encroachment of business, overcrowded roads and streets and subways -- these affect the well-to-do only in less degree than they afflict the poor. The well-to-do shift to new areas, and the poor move into the abandoned unsatisfactory areas. If this sounds an exaggeration to anyone, let him simply visit the derelict areas that were good neighborhoods twenty, fifteen, ten years ago.

...the housing problem is twofold. First, there is the lack of reasonable planning and stability which makes our entire physical environment unsatisfactory. Then there is the problem for something like two-thirds of our population who haven't the money to pay for physically decent housing--whose income or relief wage or relief dole is not enough to pay the sum of real-estate taxes, current interest and amortization on cost of land and building, and adequate maintenance. On top of these permanent elements there is the impending housing shortage, which will affect both groups. The problem of the two-thirds is bluntly one that involves

redistribution of wealth. The physical solution is similar for all: planning and construction of projects on a sufficiently large scale so that they can be free from traffic dangers and extraneous noise, can contain facilities for recreational and community life, and can achieve the economies of large-scale planning and its amenities of proper orientation to air and sunlight. Such projects must be so related to the larger community of which they are a part that they are within convenient reach of daily work, of shopping districts, of larger recreational and park areas (Mayer 1935: 400).

Catherine Bauer [Catherine Krause Bauer Wurster], born May 11, 1905 in Elizabeth, New Jersey, was a leading member of a group of early 20th century idealists known as *housers*, social reformers, mostly women, committed to improving housing for low-income families. On the basis of her belief that social housing could produce good social architecture, and impressions made on her by the wide spread suffering during the Great Depression, she became a great advocate for the poor in the struggle for housing. Bauer was a charismatic figure in the reform movement, and one of its greatest theorists. Her classic *Modern Housing* (1934) made her an authority on social housing and she co-authored the Housing Act of 1937.

Bauer was significantly influenced by American urban critic Lewis Mumford and European and expatriate American artists and architects in Europe including Fernand Léger, Man Ray, Sylvia Beach, and the architects of change group; Ernst May, André Lurçat, and Walter Gropius.

European ideals and designs for social housing that had developed in the 1920s were adopted and implemented in the United States in the 1930s. The goal of the houser movement, beyond the creation of a supply of adequate, low-rent Government-built housing for the urban poor, was the establishment of an ordered environment for the urban poor that would eventually lead to the elimination of urban slums. European urban planning concepts such as *Zeilenbau*, or a plan that arranged buildings in parallel rows, to take advantage of maximum light and ventilation, were adopted for many projects. Limited traffic flow with planned circulation patterns, pedestrian walkways, courtyard areas and open spaces with park-like settings were also emphasized in the designs (Robinson et al: 1999a: 18). Most projects were designed to a human scale and were well landscaped. Some included private or semi-private garden spaces.

Ultimately, the uninspired, sterile, and institutional designs that began to characterize American public housing fell far short of the communitarian, European-style projects that the housers envisioned.

### *The PWA - Public Housing Design and Construction*

The United States Public Works Administration (PWA) was created as a federal agency under the National Industrial Recovery Act in June 1933. The agency's mission was to provide employment, stabilize purchasing power, improve public welfare, and contribute to a revival of American industry through management of the construction of public works and housing (Figure 18).

Horatio Hackett, a Chicago architect and engineer with limited experience in housing reform issues, was placed at the head of the PWA's Housing Division; consultants on staff included architects, Alfred Fellheimer and Angelo R. Clas (Robinson et al: 1999a: 21-23).



**Figure 18: PWA Steam Shovel**  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, National Archives)

Several subordinate units were organized within the Housing Division of the PWA; the Branch of Land Acquisition which handled property acquisition and supervised site development; the Branch of Plans and Specifications, staffed by architects, engineers, landscape architects, and cost estimators, who worked closely with local architects and engineers; and the Branches of Construction and Management, which were responsible for the final aspects of project development, including slum removal, construction supervision, and administration of tenant services.

In the first years of its existence, the PWA Housing Division oversaw all phases of site development for public housing projects, excepting the style in which the buildings were built; which was, at least theoretically, left to the local architects (Robinson et al: 1999b: 19).

As PWA public housing scholars Michael W. Strauss and Talbot Wegg wrote:

...the style of buildings, whether they should be "modern," colonial, Spanish, or what-not, was on the whole left to the decision of local architects. They had only one watchword, simplicity. As a result there is, to the layman's eye, great variety in the exterior design of projects. New York, Chicago, Camden, Cleveland, and some others are modern; Jacksonville and Miami are of typical design; Charleston recalls the graciousness of its heritage; Boston is in keeping with the New England tradition; Dallas suggests the distinctive architecture of the Southwest (Strauss and Wegg 1938: 68).

The autonomy of local architects in design decisions proved problematic; PWA officials determined that most American builders were incapable of designing large-scale public housing projects that met the high standards of the Housing Division. Months before the first federal government funded public housing project, First Homes, opened in Manhattan's lower east side on December 3, 1935, the Plans and Specifications Branch began the preparation of a series of plans for the basic units of public housing complexes, including apartments and row houses of all types and sizes. These plans were published in May 1935 as *Unit Plans: Typical Room Arrangements, Site Plans and Details for Low Rent Housing*, were adopted by most local architects involved with public housing projects, and became the standard for PWA public housing design (Robinson et al: 1999b: 19). Such publications were updated from year to year. Public housing design in Alexandria, Virginia seems to have been informed by these plans with considerable flexibility in final site plan development.

Over time, the use of standardized plans and model unit designs became more and more evident. Although the original rationale for this approach stemmed from observed deficiencies in the design skills of local architects, the ultimate effect was a net loss of freedom of design and architectural innovation. Further, economy increasingly dominated other considerations of design and construction.

Typical American public housing projects of this period included multi-family, low-rise residential buildings and an ordered site plan that arrayed the buildings around open spaces and recreational areas; buildings generally occupied less than 25 percent of the site (Figure 19 and Figure 20). The most common building forms were several-story walk-up apartments and row houses, often constructed of brick, simply designed and generally well-built (Robinson et al: 1999b: 21-22). Attached dwellings were popular with designers of public housing complexes, being more economical in both construction and operating costs (Robinson et al: 1999b: 21-22).



**Figure 19:** K Street Projects in Washington, D.C.  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, National Archives)



**Figure 20:** Cedar-Central Project in Cleveland, Ohio; June 1937  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, National Archives)

A community center, typically a one-story building containing management offices, recreation rooms or classrooms, and a hall for community functions such as dances or meetings, was usually integrated into the project. Management offices, maintenance buildings, garages, nursery schools, and buildings originally containing retail or office spaces comprised a non-residential component at some sites (Robinson et al: 1999a: 18-19, Robinson et al: 1999b: 21-22). Larger projects often included multiple commercial and community buildings and manifested as almost self-contained communities within the surrounding neighborhoods. These sometimes included heating plants, generally characterized by a tall smokestack (Robinson et al: 1999a: 18-19).

Spartan utilitarian design characterized the interior spaces of the individual residential units (Figure 21). Most units included one to four bedrooms, a kitchen, living room, and bathroom. Room sizes were minimal and the shapes generally regular. Walls were most often painted concrete block or plaster partitions; floors typically asphalt tile or linoleum over concrete, with the occasional use of wood parquet where costs and availability permitted. Units included modern conveniences; a gas range and electric refrigerator in the kitchens and full bathrooms (Robinson et al: 1999a: 19-20).

Each project was subject to both strict cost controls and minimum standards of appearance and livability. Various cost and space saving strategies were employed including open cupboards and closets and suite type plans as interior hallways were considered wasted space. Units were almost always situated to take advantage of maximum natural sunlight and ventilation, and arranged to maximize the privacy of residents (Robinson et al: 1999a: 19-20).

Factors in determining the location of public housing projects within local communities included proximity to employment opportunities, slum clearance, existing transportation and infrastructure development, and availability of suitable land. City blocks were often combined to form superblocks (Robinson et al: 1999b: 21-22) (Figure 22 and Figure 23).

Designers sought to invest the project's residents with a sense of communal identity, distinct from its surrounding neighborhood, through the deliberate site plans and the design and form of the buildings. Public art was also an important component of early PWA-era projects and some later designs. The earliest PWA projects successfully integrated European design theories and contemporary American housing reform philosophies; the best of these achieved very high standards of design, site planning, and construction (Robinson et al: 1999a:19).



**Figure 21:** Public Housing Unit Interior, Hillside Homes, Bronx, New York  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, National Archives)



**Figure 22:** Aerial View, PWA Built Hillside Homes, Bronx, New York  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, National Archives)



**Figure 23:** Aerial View of Williamsburg Houses in Brooklyn, New York  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, National Archives)

## *Slum Clearance*

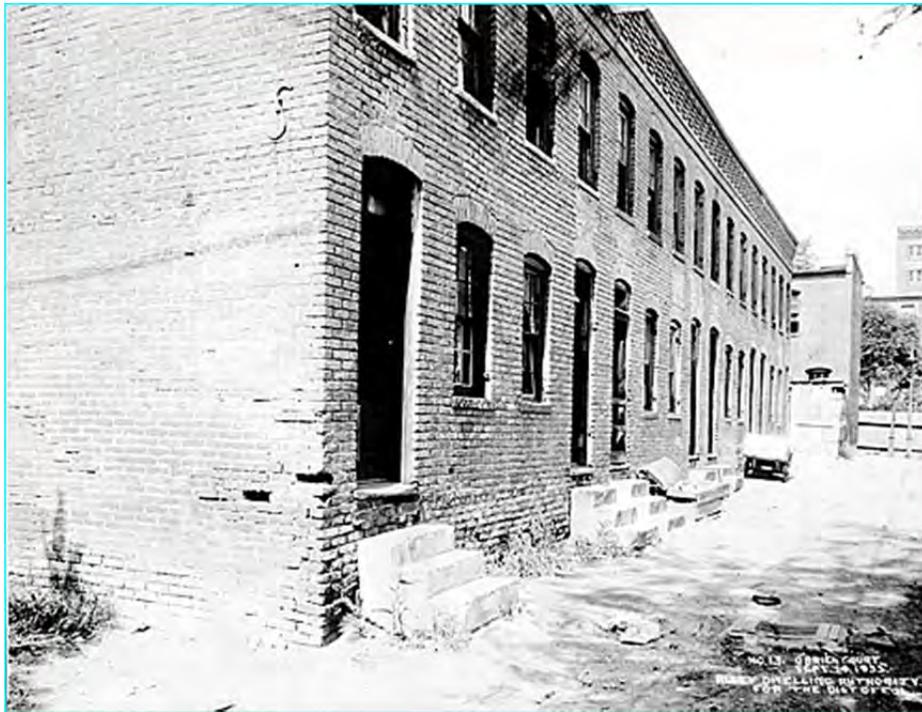
Housing reformers during this period were divided over the issue of slum clearance. In the 1930s, most American cities included slum areas, neighborhoods characterized by substandard housing of various types, occupied by the very poor, often ethnic or racial minorities (Figure 24 and Figure 25). Many believed that slums were breeding grounds for crime and a major public health problem (Figure 26 and Figure 27). Traditional reformers believed that slum clearance served to eliminate blighted and overcrowded neighborhoods while the building of new low-income housing on former slum sites allowed the poor to continue to live near their places of employment. Others, including Bauer and many housers, believed that slum clearance was a waste of time and money that primarily benefited the real estate industry. Opponents of slum clearance contended that new housing built on former slum sites, even with public financing, would often be too expensive for the dispossessed tenants. Lewis Mumford, an icon of the houser group, wrote: "if we wish to produce cheap dwellings, it is to raw land that we must turn... The proper strategy is to forget about the slums as a special problem.... When we have built enough good houses in the right places, the slums will empty themselves" (Robinson et al 1999b: 29).

Legal issues related to slum clearance proved to be a major obstacle for the PWA Housing Division projects. Early on, the PWA was determined to prove the feasibility of combining slum clearance with the construction of low-rent housing (Figure 28). Numerous PWA acquired sites that had been slum neighborhoods were condemned under the power of eminent domain. As some slum sites had hundreds of owners with whom the PWA had to negotiate, acquisition was sometimes very complicated. As a result of various legal challenges to condemnation proceedings before 1936, the PWA built all subsequent housing on vacant land or in sites for which it could negotiate clear title (Robinson et al 1999b: 37).

## *United States Housing Act of 1937*

As previously discussed, the Housing Act of 1934, although responsible for several major public works housing projects, was quite limited in scope. In December 1935, Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York began a campaign to push a broader housing bill through Congress (Robinson et al 1999b: 33). In a speech before the NPHC, he defended his stand on public housing against attack from the political right:

The object of public housing ... is not to invade the field of home building for the middle class or the well-to-do ... Nor is it even to exclude private enterprise from participation in a low-cost housing program. It is merely to supplement what private industry will do, by subsidies which will make up the difference between what the poor can afford to pay and what is necessary to assure decent living quarters (Robinson et al 1999b: 33).

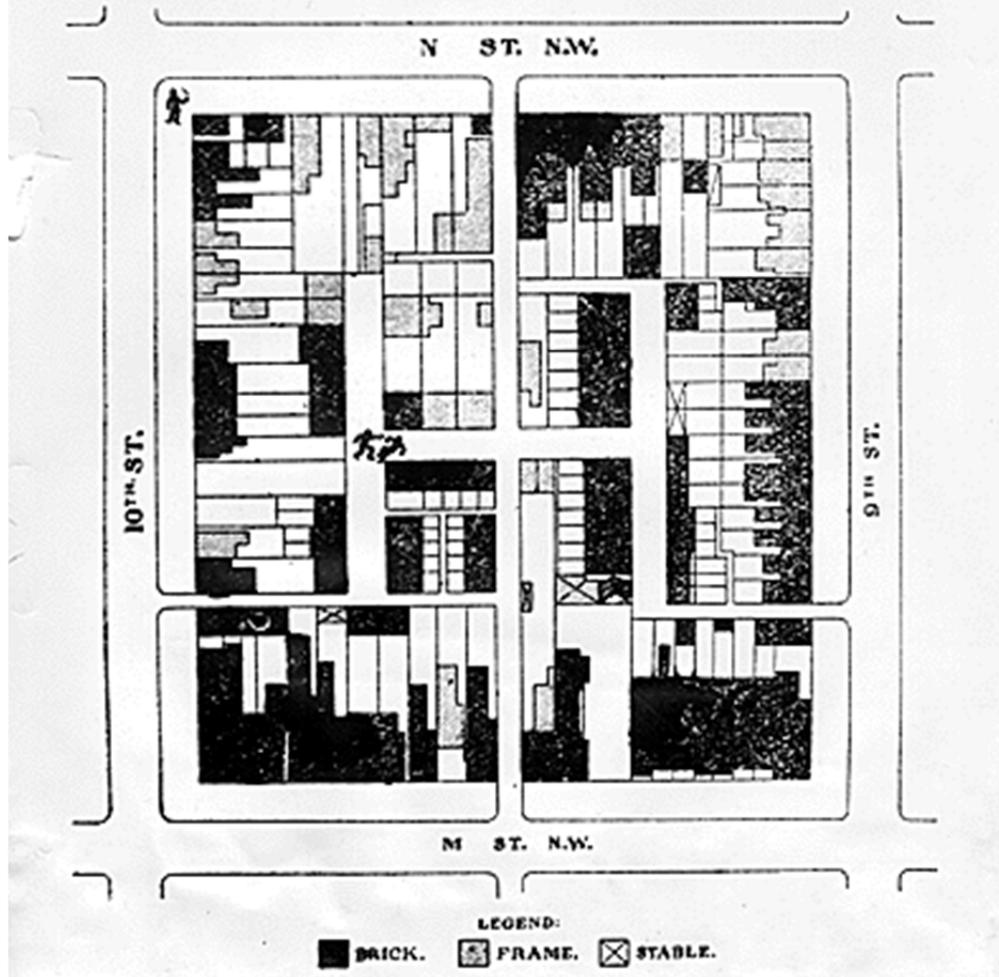


**Figure 24:** O'Brien Court Slum Dwellings, Washington, D.C., 1934-1936  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library)



**Figure 25:** Canal Street in the Yamacraw Section of Savannah, Georgia, 1936  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library)

**THE  
BLIND ALLEY OF WASHINGTON, D.C.  
SECLUSION BREEDING CRIME AND DISEASE  
to kill the alley inmates and infect the street residents.**



**Figure 26:** Propaganda for Slum Clearance in Washington D.C.  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library)



**Figure 27:** Slums Breed Crime; USHA Poster from the 1930s  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library)



**Figure 28:** Slum Clearance in Washington, D.C., 1934-1936  
(Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, National Archives)

Lobbyists for the private sector housing industry, amongst other groups, organized opposition to the new bill. One of the strongest and most vocal rebuttals to the philosophy of Wagner and his allies came from the president of the National Association of Real Estate Boards (NAREB), Walter S. Schmidt, of Cincinnati:

It is contrary to the genius of the American people and the ideals they have established that government become landlord to its citizens ... There is sound logic in the continuance of the practice under which those who have initiative and the will to save acquire better living facilities, and yield their former quarters at modest rents to the group below (Robinson et al 1999b: 33).

Other business organizations followed suit, with the National Association of Retail Lumber Dealers, the U.S. Building and Loan League, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce also expressing fierce opposition to public housing legislation (Robinson et al 1999b: 33). The public housing activists responded by painting a bleak picture of the state of American housing:

...AT LEAST A THIRD OF OUR HOUSING IS BAD ENOUGH TO BE A health hazard, but not all in the same way or to the same degree. The coverage of moral hazard is less than that of physical hazard, which is fortunate, as its effects

are worse. About two fifths of our housing is rural, divided more or less evenly between farm and non-farm. The Farm Housing Survey made in 1934 shows an appalling lack of modern sanitation and conveniences, except in a few favored regions. To call 80 percent of our farmhouses substandard is an understatement (Wood 1940: 83).

Wood found data on urban housing conditions in the 1930s, derived from the *Real Property Inventories* housing field surveys conducted from 1934-1936, also disturbing. The structural condition of only 39% of urban homes was considered good, 44.8% needed repairs, and 16.2% was considered poor; 4.4% of urban dwelling units had neither gas nor electric lighting, 14.6% lacked a private indoor toilet, 19.9% had no bathtub or shower, and 17.4% of occupied dwellings were crowded or overcrowded (Wood 1940: 83). According to Wood, "to call a third of the nation or a third of those who live in urban communities 'ill-housed' can hardly be an exaggeration (Wood 1940: 83)." "One-third of a nation" became a rallying cry for the public housing movement (Robinson et al: 1999b: 34).

Enacted as law, the 1937 United States Housing Act, with the objective of providing affordable housing to the poorer segments of the population, provided stringent new cost guidelines to public housing projects that led to an increased emphasis on economy and greater standardization in American public housing:

It is the policy of the United States to promote the general welfare of the Nation by employing its funds and credit, as provided in this Act, to assist the several States and their political subdivisions to remedy the unsafe and unsanitary housing conditions and the acute shortage of decent, safe, and sanitary dwellings for families of lower income and, consistent with the objectives of this Act, to vest in local public housing agencies the maximum amount of responsibility in the administration of their housing programs (United States Housing Act of 1937, Sec. 2; 42 U.S.C. 1437).

The new legislation revived the failing Red Hook housing project in New York City; however, it also tightly controlled the project's budget. The total cost per room was cut to nearly half that of earlier PWA efforts in New York City, and the project density far exceeded that utilized in earlier public projects in the city (Robinson et al: 1999b: 40-41).

The issue of slum clearance was also revisited in the 1937 act. Senator David I. Walsh, a proponent of slum reform from Massachusetts, added the "equivalent elimination" provision to the bill, which required the local authority to remove substandard slum units from the local housing supply in a "substantially equal number" to the public housing units it built. The local authority could meet this requirement by "demolition, condemnation, and effective closing" of substandard units, or through rehabilitation by "compulsory repair or improvement." This provision was supported by many commercial landlords, who feared that expanded housing supplies would lower the rents that could be charged for their rental properties (Robinson et al: 1999b: 37).

### *United States Housing Authority*

The United States Housing Authority, or USHA, was created under the 1937 Housing Act. This federal agency was designed to lend money to the states or communities for construction of low-cost public housing. Unlike the centralized organization of the earlier PWA Housing Division, which was responsible for every component of project planning and administration, operations at the newly established USHA were increasingly decentralized.

Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes successfully lobbied Congress to place the USHA within the Department of the Interior; however, President Roosevelt appointed Nathan Straus, a man strongly disliked by Ickes as the USHA administrator. This appointment resulted in Ickes distancing himself from the public housing program (Robinson et al: 1999b: 39).

Under the USHA, responsibility for initiating, designing, building and managing housing projects was given to local Public Housing Authorities (PHAs), while the Washington bureaucracy provided program direction, financial support, and consulting advice. In effect, site analysis, land acquisition, tenant distribution, and project design were handled by PHAs under the relatively strict constraints of the Federal program and the USHA furnished technical guidance, design assistance, project review, and issued program standards, management guidelines, design models, architectural standards, and building prototypes (Robinson et al: 1999b: 45).

Regarding the impact of increased standardization and restrictive budgets under the USHA on architectural style in public housing, it is clear that design creativity suffered during this period, continuing a trend that had actually begun under the PWA. Economy of materials and design trumped experimental and new design alternatives, resulting in what some critics have labeled an "unnecessarily barracks-like and monotonous" look. The social-psychological elements of project planning that had formed the core of the housers' vision were replaced by the goal of meeting minimum human needs of clean air and light within increasingly limited budgets. Although many new modern housing units were built, most were devoid of the artistic or aesthetic styling of earlier projects (Robinson et al: 1999b: 45).

As with the PWA projects, attempts were made to instill a sense of community in the public housing projects financed by the USHA. PHAs were encouraged to organize a variety of social, educational, and recreational events for the residents of the local complexes, most of which included a neighborhood community center. Choirs, nondenominational children's Bible schools, card clubs, dancing classes, nursery schools and neighborhood newsletters were amongst the activities and programs employed (Robinson et al: 1999b: 43). The USHA also attempted to increase public support for its programs and the new housing projects using city newspapers and government printed material, ground breaking and dedication ceremonies, tours of model homes, and radio broadcasts (Robinson et al: 42).

### *Criticism of Public Housing in the New Deal*

In its earliest phase, the American efforts in public housing were inspired by modern architectural theory, progressive social ideals and the praxis of urban activists; however, it soon

founded due to political squabbling, pressures from private sector builders, racial prejudice, classism, and uninspired design. Although a high degree of technical excellence was mandated by USHA for public housing design after 1937, the buildings generally showed investment in healthier and safer designs over aesthetic considerations. There was also long standing social bias toward plain public housing (Gardner 1981: 67). Bias of this type might be supported by identification with property values as an expression of socio-economic status and a zeal for protection of private property rights (Hooks 2001:139).

Some historians, including Richard Pommer, have blamed the failures of public housing in the United States almost entirely on the architecture and design. Pommer explained that modern architecture was not embraced by the architects of American public housing projects due to the separation of housing designs, which remained traditional, from other building forms. Pommer added, "...the degradation of public housing in [the United States] resulted as much from the contempt of it and its inhabitants expressed by these purely architectural values as from the political-economic compromises necessary to sell it to the real estate owners, the rural politicians and the bureaucrats (Pommer 1978: 264)."

Housing and urban planning scholar John F. Bauman noted that the private housing market has long undermined government programs in public housing. This antagonism from the private sector, together with factors associated with racism and classism, such as the resistance of the middle class to living in proximity to the poor or racial minorities, the idea of public housing as transitional and the failed aesthetics of public housing design have resulted in the current state of public housing. Bauman stated, "The nexus of privatism and racism has foreclosed serious attempts by either public or private agencies to make low income housing into more than a poor house..." (Gardner 1981: 66).

## **Public Housing in the 1940s**

### *Overview*

As President Franklin D. Roosevelt moved industry toward war production and abandoned his opposition to deficit spending, the PWA became irrelevant and was abolished in June 1941. Although Congressional interest in public housing had begun to diminish in the late 1930s, the onset of World War II would lead to renewed interest, redirection and expansion of Federal housing efforts. As the United States increased industrial capacity in response to the expanding conflict, established manufacturing centers such as Chicago and Detroit, as well as new manufacturing sites, experienced a great influx of population which again drew attention to the inadequate stock of urban housing. Good quality and inexpensive housing for defense workers and their families became a component of the war effort, leading to the revivification of the American public housing program after 1941. The goal of the program was; however dramatically altered from the provision of housing for low-income families to housing for defense workers on the home front (Robinson et al: 1999b: 46).

Despite the patriotic rationale of the new public housing efforts, private enterprise and its supporters in Congress again formed opposition, arguing that federal involvement in housing should be limited to loans and mortgage guarantees to support private construction and, at most,

the public construction of temporary housing. Political battles continued between public housing advocates and business interests and their allies, which included Congressional conservatives such as Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia and Republicans from rural constituencies. Opponents of public housing tried to derail defense housing funds being appropriated to the USHA and feared that public housing would emerge after the war to compete with private enterprise. The success of such attacks on government-built defense housing severely limited the extent of the public housing program during the war (Robinson et al: 1999b: 46).

### *The Lanham Act of 1940*

In opposition to the USHA, a new housing bill that would severely restrict Federal efforts to build public war housing was sponsored by Republican congressman Fritz Lanham of Texas. The Lanham Act, enacted as law on October 14, 1940 (54 Stat. 1125) was designed to provide relief for defense work areas found by the President to be suffering from an existing or impending housing shortage. In such cases, the Federal Works Administrator was empowered to acquire "improved or unimproved lands or interests in lands" for construction sites by purchase, donation, exchange, lease or condemnation. The Lanham Act provided \$150 million to the Federal Works Agency to provide federally built housing quickly and cheaply in the most congested defense industry centers. It emphasized both speed in construction and economy of materials.

The Lanham Act represented a radical departure from previous federal public housing policy. It waived the low-income requirement for tenancy and made defense housing available to all workers facing the housing shortage. It also ordered local authorities to set fair rents at variable rates to be within the financial reach of all families employed in defense industries. The act exempted local authorities from the "equivalent elimination" clause, no longer requiring the demolition of an equal number of slum housing units for all public housing units built. Interestingly, the new policies conformed to the vision of earlier housers, such as Mumford and Bauer; public housing was becoming available to a more diverse section of American society, not only the most impoverished, and expensive, time consuming, and wasteful slum clearance was no longer mandated (Robinson et al: 1999b: 47).

Between 1940 and 1944, about 625,000 units of housing were built under the Lanham Act and its amendments with a total appropriation of nearly \$1 billion.

### *War Trailer Projects*

During World War II, the great majority of the public housing units, over 580,000, were of temporary construction, such as plywood dormitories and trailers (Robinson et al: 1999b:52). Government built trailer camps became a common sight on the home front landscape during World War II:

Across the length and breadth of America at war can be seen compact colonies of strange little cottages on wheels. These vehicles, each boasting all the comforts of home on a miniature scale, are known as trailers. A group or colony of them is a trailer camp. They are used to house workers in American war industries and

other plants which have sprung up like giant mushrooms all over the United States. An owner, with his auto, which. pulls his trailer, may journey 500 to 1,000 miles to join some trailer camp near the factory where he intends to work ...

People do not live in trailers because they like the idea of being gypsies, but generally because there are few houses to rent in the big war industry centers. So as a last resort they buy or rent a trailer, or even make one. Each trailer is built on two or four wheels and towed behind the owner's automobile. There are thousands of these trailers gathered in colonies near the nation's war plants.

There were not quite 200 trailers in the camp. There were four neat rows of them and a few more scattered under the trees in front of a wooded ravine. Two white, roughly macadamized roads let through the trailer village. In about the middle of the camp stood the office and utility buildings. The office building was a bare room with a concrete floor and on the wall was a poster advertising war bonds. At the end of the room was a small office which served as renting bureau and post office. Stretching down one side of the room was a store where one could buy everything with the exception of fresh fruit and vegetables; fish and fowl. There was every kind of delicatessen -- sausages, salami, cheeses and potato salad and great stocks of sardines and canned salmon, canned goods and groceries. There was a small selection of such meats as chopped beef, pork chops and stew meats. There were oranges, bananas, cakes and bread (Vorse n.d.).

As early as 1940, war trailers were being distributed to areas in need of housing for defense workers. In the National Housing Agency publication, *Standards for War Trailer Projects* (NHA 1942b), it was stated that trailers were to be used as expedient and temporary housing for defense workers, were to be transferred to other locations once adequate housing facilities became available, and were to be held to minimum construction standards due to their temporary nature. Additional guidelines suggested site selection in consultation "with local housing authorities, planning agencies, municipal officials, military authorities, industrial experts, and other persons in a position to give information and advice" (NHA 1942b:1). The primary criterion for site selection was proximity and convenient access to the war activity, usually a defense plant of some type.

Sites were to be, when possible, within walking distance to the war activity, "2 miles for men and 1 mile for women" (NHA 1942b:i). "For economy and speed of construction," site layout conformed to existing topography and utilized existing drainageways; water lines and sanitary sewers were installed on-site; storm sewers were not built (NHA 1942b:5, 15). Construction of paved roads accessing the site if not already present and sidewalks within the site were mandated (NHA 1942b:6). Acceptable site density was considered to be "12 to 18 trailers per acre of usable land" (NHA 1942b:i). Example site plans were included in the manual.

Service trailers or buildings ancillary to the residential trailers and their arrangement in the site plan were also specified in the standards. Community Facilities included "Community Toilets," to be located within 200 feet of the residential trailers; "Community Laundries," within 300 feet; and "Collection Stations" for "refuse, garbage, sink waste, water supply, and ashes" within 150

feet. Outdoor lighting was recommended to "supplement street lighting" on walkways between the residential and ancillary structures (NHA 1942b:7). Larger trailer camps, sites with 50 or more dwellings, were to be provided with on-site management and maintenance services, social or activity centers, outdoor recreation areas, health service facilities, and commercial facilities unless it could be demonstrated that adequate off-site facilities of these types were available to camp residents. Reduction or omission of such facilities required the approval of the Washington office of the Federal Public Housing Authority (NHA 1942b:9).

With the end of the war in 1945, the PHA was required, under the Lanham Act, to dispose of the temporary housing units, over 320,000 extant family dwelling and dormitory units at that time (NHA n.d.). The agency experimented with the reutilization of temporary war housing, in whole or in part, as barracks, utility buildings, and even rural dwellings and actively promoted the sale of such structures in domestic and foreign markets (NHA n.d.). The success of this program and the number of such structures that continued in use after the war is not known.

Following is a series of photographs documenting one or more war trailer camps in the vicinity of Alexandria, Virginia in 1941 (Figure 29-Figure 30). These photographs were probably taken at Spring Bank Trailer Camp located on U.S. 1, in Fairfax County, south of the City of Alexandria (Netherton et al 1992:622). A segregated Farm Security Administration (FSA) Trailer Camp for African Americans was present in Arlington, Virginia by 1942 (Figure 31). Although few details relevant to this facility have been located at this time, a community building including "a well laundry" supplied with new aluminum Maytag Commander washing machines was located within the camp (Lupton 1996: 21).



**Figure 29:** "Trailer Occupied By War Department Employee and Wife from Pennsylvania. Trailer Camp near Alexandria, Virginia; March 1941" (Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection; Library of Congress)



**Figure 30:** "Showers and Toilets for Trailer Camp Occupants; Trailer Camp near Alexandria, Virginia; March 1941" (Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection; Library of Congress)



**Figure 31:** "Arlington, Virginia. FSA (Farm Security Administration) Trailer Camp Project for Negroes. Single Type Trailer; April 1942" (Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection; Library of Congress)

## *The Housing Act of 1949*

After World War II, any effort to extend public housing policy was vigorously contested by special interest groups, sometimes referred to as the real estate lobby, including the National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB), the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the U.S. Savings and Loan League, and the National Association of Retail Lumber Dealers.

In 1945, legislation to extend the public housing appropriations of the 1937 Housing Act, which had been suspended before the war, was introduced in Congress. This legislation reached the U.S. House of Representatives as the Taft-Ellender-Wagner (T-E-W) Bill in 1948. Although it was bitterly fought by the real estate lobby and its political allies, after the election of Harry S. Truman as President of the United States in 1948, a popular mandate for passage of the bill was perceived. The T-E-W Bill was signed into law in July of 1949 as the Housing Act of 1949. The Act called for the production of more permanent public housing across the United States. Under Title I of the Act, the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA) was authorized to provide capital grants and loan guarantees to local agencies for use in urban renewal; large scale land acquisition and slum clearance; under Title III, the Public Housing Administration (PHA) was authorized to allocate federal funds to local housing authorities for the construction of 810,000 public housing units over a six year period (Robinson et al: 1999b: 100).

Although the Housing Act of 1949 was nominally an extension of the United States Housing Act of 1937, it was also a great compromise between advocates of housing reform and the real estate lobby (Robinson et al: 1999b: 100).

### **Public Housing After 1949**

#### *Overview*

In the perceived prosperity of the postwar years, public housing remained an integral part of Federal housing policy but received limited attention and funding. The rapid growth of population in the United States in the latter half of the 20th century and the concentration of this population in urban areas led to new problems in housing and the need for government to address these problems. Under the Housing Act of 1949, beginning in the 1950s, numerous massive public housing projects, typically high-rise complexes were constructed in urban areas across the country (Robinson et al: 1999b: 57).

In terms of design, public housing projects after 1949 were characterized by a simple, unified appearance. Standardization and economy became the most important elements of design; the "stripped modern" exterior architectural detailing of most public housing resulted in an institutional appearance. These later complexes also had much higher site densities than earlier projects, having both taller buildings with more units, and a greater number of buildings per site. The interiors of later public housing complexes also contrasted with the earlier ones, typically having smaller units with smaller rooms, connected by long hallways. Also, unlike earlier small-scale projects that were designed to blend with their surroundings, public housing in the second half of the 20th century tended to stand out in the urban landscape (Robinson et al: 1999b: 57).

Many critics of the public housing system in the 1950s considered it tied to humanistic sentiments and not focused on practical methods of assisting the poor. They claimed that the bureaucracy involved in the public housing system was inefficient and significantly decreased the funds that were actually used for housing, that public housing tended to result in more racially segregated communities within cities, and that the demand on collective cooperation and unity necessary in public housing, due to the close quarters in which tenants lived, was often unreasonable. The most significant federal housing legislation to be enacted between 1949 and the 1970s was the Housing Act of 1959, which established a direct loan program for senior citizens in need of housing aid.

Although local housing authorities continue to be supported with federal funding through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the federal government no longer pays to build new housing projects. HUD organizes all public housing in the United States. Federal programs begun in the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Section 8 Housing Program, and HOPE VI involved government encouragement of and partnership with private sector entities to provide low cost housing and to redevelop distressed public housing projects as mixed-income communities. Since 2001, HUD has increasingly diverted funds from public housing toward home ownership programs. Many such programs including the "Renewing the Dream" tax credit work to encourage private sector housing developers to construct housing for low income residents. HUD has also formally recognized the persistence of inequalities in the conditions of housing for racial minorities and persons with disabilities.

### *Section 8*

In reaction to the problems associated with the aging stock of public housing and increased requirement for low cost housing for those in need, the U.S. Congress passed legislation enacting the Section 8 Housing Program in 1974, which Richard Nixon signed into law. Section 8 encourages the private sector to construct affordable homes and assists poor tenants by giving a monthly subsidy to their landlords. This assistance can be 'project based, "which applies to specific properties", or "tenant based," which provides tenants with a voucher they can use anywhere vouchers are accepted. Since 1983, almost no new project based Section 8 housing has been produced. Effective October 1, 1999, existing tenant based voucher programs were merged into the Housing Choice Voucher Program, which is today the primary means of providing subsidies to low income renters.

### *HOPE VI*

In 1989, a National Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing was named and charged with proposing a National Action Plan to eradicate severely distressed or obsolete public housing by the year 2000. The HOPE VI program, also known as the Urban Revitalization Demonstration Program, was authorized by the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development and Independent Agencies Appropriations Act of 1993. It was also authorized, with slight modifications (amending Section 24 of the 1937 Housing Act), by Section 120 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992. The program focused on the concept of mixed-income New Urbanist developments, which better blended with existing neighborhoods

than previous public housing developments. PHAs on HUD's Troubled Housing Authority list were eligible to apply for HOPE VI funds. In 2009, HOPE VI received a \$120 million budget. By the following fiscal year, it received no funds while the new Choice Neighborhoods program received \$250 million. According to HUD, while functional, HOPE VI grants were used to demolish 96,200 public housing units and produce 107,800 new or renovated units. 56,800 were to be affordable to the lowest-income households.

## **Public Housing in Alexandria**

### *Overview*

The history of public housing in the City of Alexandria may be traced to the last years of the 1930s, beginning with the establishment of the Alexandria Housing Authority and planned USHA slum clearance efforts in the city. In the early 1940s, several temporary public housing projects for defense workers - war trailer camps - were established in the city. Several permanent public housing projects, including Ramsey Homes, were constructed by 1945. Segregation of the city's public housing appears to have been a constant component of the system. In 1965, with the integration of two African American families into the previously "whites only" Cameron Valley Homes, project efforts to remedy this situation were made (WP 1965: C1).

### *The Alexandria Housing Authority*

In June of 1939, the Alexandria Housing Authority was formally established as a public agency under the Housing Authority Law, Chapter 1, Title 36 of the Code of Virginia of 1938, as a result of work done by the local Council of Social Agencies and the Woman's Club. Reportedly, the municipal authorities were originally opposed to the creation of the agency; however, the city appropriated \$3,000, granted as a loan, to fund the Authority, pending anticipated financial assistance from the USHA. In 1940, the agency had one permanent full-time employee, the executive director, two part-time typists and an architect hired on a contingent basis. Its first mission was clearing slums and creating new affordable housing in the Berg and Parker-Gray neighborhoods where little investment had occurred since before the Depression (Woodbury 1940: 140).

During the 1940s and 1950s, it constructed new units and acquired ones built for the war effort. The Authority was renamed the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) by 1956 as it was granted authority to issue bonds. New developments continued in throughout the coming decades. The City established a Housing Office in 1975, as ARHA increasingly received federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), which funded infrastructure development and anti-poverty programs in affordable housing areas. Though ARHA received no funding from the City, in 1972, ARHA agreed upon Resolution 99 with the city agreeing that it must maintain units or engage in one-for-one replacement for any units that are removed from its affordable inventory. This was enacted because public development or redevelopment activity made the elimination of existing housing desirable. Resolution 830 superseded Resolution 99 in 1982 to incorporate publicly assisted housing occupied by the elderly and disabled persons.

Today, the primary mission of the agency has been to provide sanitary and safe dwelling accommodations to persons of low income at affordable rents in the city. ARHA's annual operating cost and capital funding for the upkeep and maintenance of ARHA properties are primarily funded by the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The City appoints the nine members of the ARHA Board of Commissioners.

### *Slum Clearance in Alexandria*

In a letter to the editor of the Washington Post in December 1935, a citizen of Alexandria expressed outrage at the paper's hostility to the emerging federal housing program and its contention that local government could handle the housing crisis:

In my own hometown I know of no present or past attempts to remove the slum dwellings or even discuss the possibility of removing them. Shacks that were formerly grog shops and houses of worse repute are now renovated with a coat of paint, brass door-knockers [sic], green shutters, foot scraper, and a tub and are rented to the stupid petit bourgeois for fabulous sums while the former inhabitants are turned out to shift for themselves and develop bigger and better slums by their shifting...your "local government" is a non-entity and has failed to alleviate conditions... (WP 1935: 8).

In October 1939, the USHA earmarked \$900,000 for use by the Alexandria Housing Board in a program of slum clearance and the construction of "200 family units that may be individual dwellings, row houses or single apartments." Provisions for slum clearance mandated that for each unit constructed an existing unit would be renovated or razed. The units were expected to rent from between \$14 and \$18 monthly and were to be made available to families earning less than \$75 per month (WP 1939:12).

According to a letter to the editor of the Washington Post, slum clearance in Alexandria was underway by the beginning of 1941, the author informed:

...of a situation which exists in the town of Alexandria...about the close of the year notices went out to various colored families living in Alexandria, in that area near the railroad tracks between Oronoco and Princess Streets, that because of the slum clearance in charge of the Housing Authority, these families must vacate the shacks in which they then lived and move to other homes so that better houses might be erected there.

...However, they did not move...and on January 2, 1941 the wrecking crews came...Today I received word that the houses on Princess Street are having their roofs taken off...all those people living in that row of houses, including a child with a broken neck, will be entirely homeless, without even the shelter usually given to animals...Alexandrians are content to allow people to be treated worse than animals.

It seems that the Housing Authority should have...ascertained whether there were enough places for these people to move... (WP 1941:10).

In a 1944 interview, Virginia Representative Howard Smith noted "the extremely pressing problem of District slums and the dire need here for proper Negro housing." Smith remarked on the recent efforts toward slum clearance and public housing in Alexandria:

Over in Alexandria we can see in a small way the blessings of slum clearance. There are two blocks down there of fine brick dwellings for Negroes, with backyards and plenty of air and sunlight. They replaced former slums. It is deeply gratifying to see the pride and self-respect which a decent place to live has engendered in the occupants of these homes. They are beautifully kept (WP 1944a:B1).

Proponents of the Taft-Ellender-Wagner housing bill of 1948 noted that Alexandria, with a population of about 75,000, had available only 421 rental housing units for low income families (130 units for white families, 291 units for African-American families), not including those allotted for military personnel (WP 1948:15). Former defense housing, including Ramsey Homes, was acquired by ARHA for use as public housing in the 1950s, and additional public housing was constructed in the 1950s and throughout the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to address the housing needs of low-income families.

In 1985, a group called "The 16th Census Tract Crisis Committee" accused city officials of deliberately reducing and eliminating housing opportunities for African Americans in the city, beginning in the 1960s (Washington Post 1985: F1). They filed a complaint with HUD, that the constitutional rights of African Americans were violated by city actions. Backed by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, The 16<sup>th</sup> Census Tract Crisis Committee singled out the following city actions as violating the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Washington Post 1985:F2). Among other things, they complained that the city was:

Using zoning code, code enforcement or condemnation to demolish homes occupied by African Americans without providing affordable alternatives;

Rejecting planned urban renewal projects and renovating housing units that were generally too expensive for African Americans;

Closing the historically African-American Parker-Gray High School and reselling the property for commercial and upper end housing use rather than low income housing; and

Enacting a 1984 ordinance that designated the Parker-Gray African-American community as a special preservation district.

Residents of the primarily African-American Parker-Gray neighborhood opposed the extension of the Old Town Historic District into the neighborhood as it would increase property values and property taxes and force them from their homes (Washington Post 1984:C1).

### *Ramsey Homes Defense Housing*

During the Second World War, the United States Housing Authority (USHA) constructed Ramsey Homes, then known as Lanham Act Alexandria Defense Housing Project VA-44133, as permanent housing for African-American defense workers. Alexandria architect and architectural historian, Delos H. Smith, FAIA, of Smith, Werner, and Billings Architects, proposed two Modernist designs for the project. The first option consisted of three buildings comprising 19 units, while the second option consisted of three four-unit foursquares and a three-unit L-shaped building constructed of more economical materials complex. The final plan included landscaping and a simple paved play area within the L of the triplex.

According to documents related to his nomination as a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, Delos Hamilton Smith was born in 1884 in Willcox, Arizona, but graduated from high school in Washington, D.C. He received his bachelor's degree in architecture from George Washington University in 1906 and his M.A. from the same school in 1916. Smith concentrated heavily on ecclesiastical structures and was also an authority on early American architecture, presenting a study of over 250 colonial churches to the Library of Congress, publishing numerous articles on historic architecture, and serving on the Alexandria Board of Architectural Review for several years beginning in 1947. He and his firm also designed 440 public housing units, including the Ramsey Homes, for the U.S. Housing Authority in the late 1930s-early 1940s. Smith was made a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects in 1952.

Approval for construction of Ramsey Homes was attained in November 1941. It was completed in November 1942. Some units were already occupied prior to the entire project's completion. The original residents of the complex were African American defense workers, but their identities were kept secret as a matter of national security. The 1945 Alexandria City Directory does not list the odd-numbered addresses on the 600 block of N. Patrick Street as a result of this policy. Similarly, photographs and information concerning the Naval Torpedo Station on the waterfront, which employed an integrated work force and where residents of Ramsey Homes may have worked, were similarly withheld from public access until after World War II (Washington Post 2014).

The Alexandria City Directory for 1947 listed the residents of the Ramsey Homes project in that year. Two of the listed residents, Carneal Coffee and Cleveland B. Tivy, appear to have been associated with the defense industry, their occupations listed as "USA" (perhaps the Army) and "Clerk War Dept." respectively. Other residents listed include Will Daniels, barber; George W. Witherspoon, auto mechanic; and Charles E. Smith, janitor. All of the residents were noted to be African American. The appearance of listings for the Ramsey Homes residents in 1947 reflects the end of the policy of secrecy that likely caused their omission from the war-time city directories, and the listed occupations of the residents suggests that the housing was no longer restricted to defense workers.

After World War II, the Federal Public Housing Authority sought to sell the Ramsey Homes; the City of Alexandria contemplated the purchase of the site, and the Washington Post reported that the Mayor of Alexandria claimed the wartime housing did not meet city building codes and were therefore "substandard" (Washington Post 6 October 1946:5). The property did not leave federal

hands until 1953, when the ownership of Ramsey Homes was transferred to the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (Alexandria Deed Book 356:407), which remains the owner and manager of the property.

### *Other Housing Projects in the Vicinity of the Ramsey Homes*

Several other public housing projects have been constructed in the vicinity of the Ramsey Homes and the Parker-Gray District. The earliest projects were built in the 1940s, as either defense housing or slum clearance public housing. The following brief descriptions of public housing projects are presented in chronological order by construction date.

#### John Roberts Homes

The first public housing project completed in the Uptown/Parker-Gray area was the segregated "whites only" John Roberts Homes, built in 1941 in the block bound by Oronoco Street, E. Braddock Road, N. West Street, and the RF&P Railroad line. John Roberts Homes consisted of twenty-one wood-frame buildings each of which contained between four and ten units. The projects were razed in 1982 and replaced by the Colecroft residential development. Ninety units were replaced by ground lease at the Annie B. Rose House.

#### Cameron Valley

Originally built in the 1940s around the same time as Ramsey Homes, Cameron Housing became the focus of a replacement-housing program in 1987. ARHA sought to build and acquire and rehabilitate a variety of housing types to replace all 264 homes. Sixty homes were rebuilt onsite, 30 units were New Construction Public Housing, 55 were Rehabilitation projects, 152 units were located in Glebe Park, 38 condominiums were located in Park Place, and 41 units were at scattered housing sites. The project received a CDBG and was required to consider size, scale, materials, and setback of the existing neighborhood, induced traffic, minority economic participation, affirmative action goals, and job training.

#### George Parker (Hopkins-Tancil Courts)

George Parker Homes, renamed Hopkins-Tancil Courts in the 1980s, are located on two blocks bounded by Fairfax Street, Royal street, Pendleton and Princess Streets. The housing consists of two-story brick buildings constructed for military housing circa 1942 and later turned over to ARHA for use as public housing units for low-income African-American families. When renamed, they were rehabilitated under the Moderet Rehabilitation program and provided with PBV subsidies.

#### Samuel Madden Homes (Downtown) or the Berg

The Samuel Madden Homes (Downtown), also known as the Berg, was a 100-unit public housing complex, built between ca. 1942 and 1959. It was built adjacent to the George Parker Homes and, together, the projects occupied two contiguous blocks, bounded by Pendleton Street to the north, Princess Street to the south, North Royal Street to the east, and North Pitt Street to

the west. The earliest units were two-story brick row buildings constructed for military housing circa 1945. The project, named for the first African-American pastor of the Alfred Street Baptist Church, was initiated as part of a program of slum clearance, with the "blighted" area extending well beyond the site of the public housing units, and including areas north of Madison Street and west of N. Fairfax Street. After clearance, some of the land became the location of temporary houses built to provide displaced families a place to live while the Samuel Madden Homes were under construction. It was ultimately replaced by Chatham Square, a mixed-income community of 52 units on site and 48 scattered units.

### Samuel Madden Homes (Uptown)

Samuel Madden Homes (Uptown) were built in 1945, in the 900 blocks of Patrick and Henry Streets and the 1000 block of Montgomery Street, and are a non-contiguous element of the Samuel Madden (Downtown) project several blocks to the east of the Parker-Gray District. The Samuel Madden Homes and the later James Bland project were all the work of architect Joseph Saunders, and are very similar in design. Each project includes side-gabled brick row town houses, sometimes with six or more repeated in a row, and placed around landscaped garden areas that are oriented to face into the north-south streets. Through oral history interviews with residents who lived in the neighborhood and in the Samuel Madden Homes and James Bland Homes public housing projects in the 1940s and 1950s, it has become apparent that little distinction was made by the residents between the Samuel Madden Homes (Uptown) and the later and adjacent James Bland Homes projects. Typically, both were known as "the projects." Perhaps due to confusion associated with Samuel Madden Homes (Downtown), Samuel Madden (Uptown) is frequently referred to as James Bland by area residents.

### James Bland and James Bland Addition

The James Bland Homes occupied two entire and three partial city blocks bounded by First, N. Patrick, Madison, N. Alfred, Wythe, and N. Columbus Streets. Constructed in 1954 and 1959, the project was named for James Alan Bland, a 19<sup>th</sup>-century African American musician and songwriter. Although formally integrated, the complex became almost entirely African American after the completion of the project. The James Bland project was redeveloped as a mixed-income community with both affordable rent and market-rate housing units.

### Jefferson Village

The Jefferson Village affordable housing complex was built in 1968 at the corner of Princess and N. West Streets. The buildings are brick row houses and apartment structures built in a late Modern Movement style. Purchased by ARHA in 1980 as temporary replacement housing for the Cameron Valley redevelopment effort. It has since been disposed of as affordable housing.

## **SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE**

As noted, the Ramsey Homes are located in the "Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District", listed to the VLR in 2008 and the NRHP in 2010, and in the locally zoned "Parker-Gray District". The Period of Significance for the NRHP district is ca. 1810 to 1959. The Period of Significance for

the locally zoned district ends in the “early twentieth century” (roughly 1900 to early 1930s) before the New Deal and World War II housing and the Ramsey Homes were built. Frequently, the boundaries and Period of Significance of a local district is different from a NRHP district. They may overlap, but have different priorities, standards for eligibility, and associated laws. The NRHP often includes longer Periods of Significance, does not dictate changes to the exterior of buildings, and has a low bar for eligibility, particularly for buildings contributing to a district or associated with minority groups. Though the primary concern of this project is the local zoning, a discussion of NRHP eligibility follows.

### **National Register of Historic Places Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District**

The earliest example of public housing in the Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District, Ramsey Homes contribute to the district in the areas of social history and architecture as "an example of the housing constructed with public funds, between 1940 and 1945, for defense workers during World War II". As codified in *36 CFR 60.4*, the four criteria applied in the evaluation of significant cultural resources to the NRHP are as follows:

- A. Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. Association with the lives of significant persons in or past; or
- C. Representative of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master; or
- D. Have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

The Ramsey Homes may be determined individually eligible for listing based on Criteria A of the NRHP due to its association with African-American defense workers, the history of affordable housing, and the history of wartime housing, discussed in the historic context above, despite a significant loss of integrity.

It does not appear to be individually eligible under Criterion B because there is no evidence of association with significant people. Efforts to identify significant historic personages that lived at the Ramsey Homes public housing site have not been successful. Although some local sources reported that baseball legend Jackie Robinson once lived in Ramsey Homes, a representative of the Jackie Robinson Foundation confirmed that Robinson was never a resident of the site (Mirielle Stephen personal communication 2015). Basketball pioneer Earl Lloyd; sometimes referred to as the “Jackie Robinson of Basketball” was a native of Alexandria, Virginia but did not reside at Ramsey Homes (Alexandria Gazette Packet 2015).

Though the homes were designed by a Delos H. Smith, a prominent fellow of the AIA, and his partners, they are not recommended eligible under Criterion C, because they were altered dramatically by the removal of Modernist flat roofs, skylights, and landscape features. The post-1964 hipped-roof foursquares were neither innovative nor distinctive of their period and do not reflect the period of significance (1941-1942) or articulate the social significance of affordable housing. The 1995 addition of Colonial Revival elements further diminishes the property’s significance.

The property may be found eligible under Criterion D dependent upon future archeological investigations.

Other areas considered in determining eligibility are the evaluation of a property's integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association as related to its area of significance in architecture and period of significance. The buildings have lost integrity of design, setting, feeling, and association due to the alteration of style and landscape, which is integral to listing under Criterion C, but less so to listing under Criterion A, particularly in association with resources related to minority groups.

### **City of Alexandria Parker-Gray District**

As discussed, the primary concern of the Project is local significance, as defined in the City of Alexandria Historic District Guidelines, BAR Application Criteria, and the Zoning Ordinance Article X. Section 10-200 of the City of Alexandria, rather than NRHP significance. The Parker-Gray District was established "to protect community health and safety and to promote the education, prosperity and general welfare of the public through the identification, preservation, and enhancement of buildings, structures, settings, features and ways of life which characterize this nineteenth and early twentieth century residential neighborhood". Note that the establishment of this district emphasizes resources that predate or date to the early twentieth century (1900 to the early 1930s), not the mid-twentieth century (late 1930s to late 1960s), thus the local district's Period of Significance ends before the homes were built in 1942. In addition, much of the language in the local Historic District guidelines emphasizes respecting scale and setback of historic resources that pre-date the mid-twentieth century and are dramatically different from the Ramsey Homes site. The BAR demolition permit application poses the following questions. Answers follow in italics.

1. Is the building or structure of such architectural or historic interest that its removal would be to the detriment of the public interest?

*The buildings are not of such architectural or historic interest that their removal will be a detriment of the public interest. The buildings and landscape were altered so dramatically after 1964 that they do not reflect their period of significance (1941-1942), the Modernist economy with which they were built, or for what they were built. The buildings have lost integrity of design, setting, feeling, and association due to the alteration of style and landscape.*

2. Is the building or structure of such interest that it could be made into an historic shrine?

*The buildings do not merit becoming a shrine because they have lost integrity of design, do not reflect their period of significance, nor do they convey the original purpose as wartime housing.*

3. Is the building or structure of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty?

*The American foursquare with Prairie features is ubiquitous in American cities from the 1910s through the 1940s. Adapted to this style after 1964, this is a very late example, not original to the site and therefore not worthy of reproduction as they now stand.*

4. Would retention of the building or structure help preserve and protect an historic place or area of historic interest in the city?

*Retention of the property does not protect an historic place as defined by the local Zoning Ordinance because the Period of Significance for the “Parker-Gray District” ends in the “early twentieth century” before the Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal and World War II. The Period of Significance of the “Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District” is not relevant to decisions made by the BAR. In consideration of the NRHP district, their retention is not essential to the viability of the district’s listing because it represents less than one percent of the contributing resources. The NRHP nomination form incorrectly states that architectural significance is related to the Prairie style, which is not original to the building and which is not listed in the list of significant styles under the architectural classification section of the nomination form on page two.*

5. Would retention of the building or structure promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage and making the city a more attractive and desirable place to live?

*Retention of the building will not promote general welfare because its declining condition may decrease neighboring real estate values and the residents’ quality of life. Retention will generate less business because there will be fewer residents to patronize local venues and learn, live, and work in the area. The buildings do not convey what they were or offer inherent or visual educational opportunities to non-professional historians. The introduction of more housing units in the vicinity of the local museum and community center will expose more residents to local American history. Their removal will result in a more attractive block, more desirable place to live, and a higher quality of life for current residents.*

6. Would retention of the building or structure help maintain the scale and character of the neighborhood?

*The Ramsey Homes and landscape are out-of-scale in the neighborhood as they lack the density of their neighbors. Their demolition would allow for buildings more consistent with the BAR Historic District guidelines and the neighborhood in design, height, and setback.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Since settlement, the project area's land use has evolved from vacant land to farmland (pre-1849) to Union Army military housing and hospital during the Civil War (1861-1865) to affordable tenant housing for European immigrants (1865-1914) to vacant land (1914-1941) to military housing during World War II (1942-1945) to affordable public housing (1946-present). The property as a whole has significance in social history rather than architecture, and while they contribute to the NRHP-listed historic district, their listing does not preclude them from demolition. As noted, their integrity and ability to convey the depth of their history is not evident and does not meet the Alexandria BAR criteria for protection.

Appropriate mitigation of their loss is the introduction of more units of affordable housing within this block. Preservation of the resource is not absolutely necessary as there is ample opportunity for public interpretation and commemoration of the site's public housing legacy. Mitigation for the demolition of a similar historic African American school in Loudoun County, Virginia involved educational and commemorative components ( Figure 32). In our opinion, such efforts would be appropriate mitigation for loss of the resource. The possibilities for such mitigation are broad and, in our opinion, preservation of the Ramsey Homes buildings, in comparison with appropriate mitigation, offers fewer opportunities to celebrate and inform the public about the social history of public housing in the city.

ARHA has experience in developing such exhibits. It funded the "Mural and Hall of Fame: Stony the Road We Trod" at the nearby Charles H. Houston Recreation Center, formerly the Parker-Gray School. The Hall of Fame was spearheaded by Robert Dawkins and Julian Haley Jr. who, with an ad hoc committee, reviewed nominations to "honor and memorialize the achievements of history makers in Alexandria's African American community and document the contributions of the community to Alexandria's history." Adrienne T. Washington, Ferdinand Day, Harry Burke, Nellie Brooks Quander, and Lillian Patterson were among 40 figures appearing on the wall when dedicated in 2013 (Figure 33).

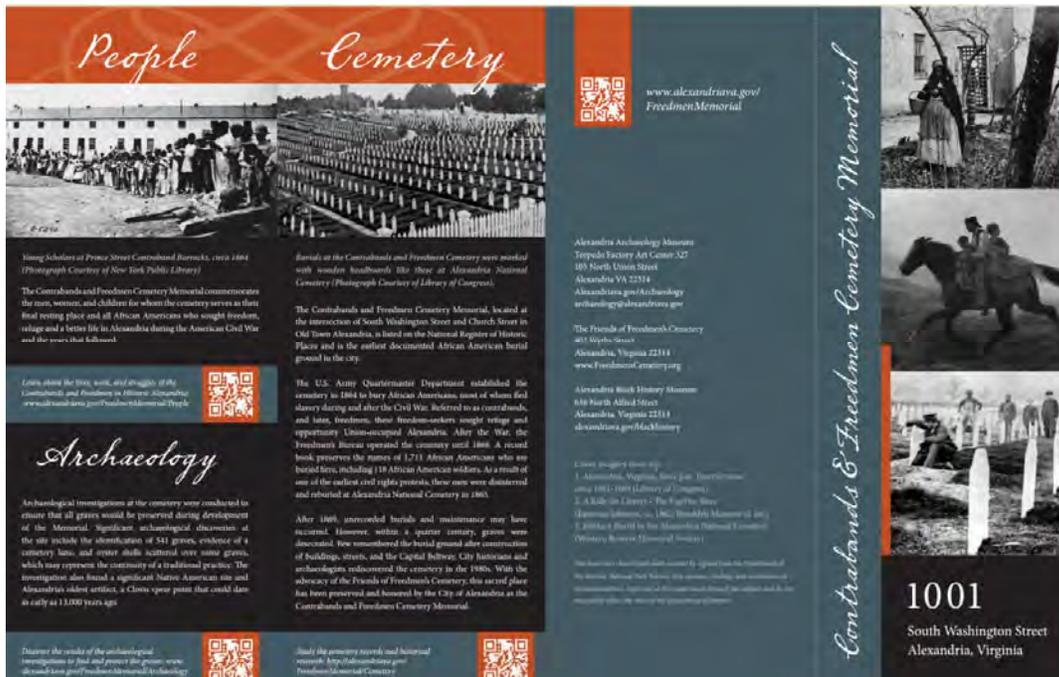
The Virginia Department of Transportation, the Federal Highways Administration, and the City of Alexandria, Virginia, with the assistance of Thunderbird Archeology and other consultants, employed various creative strategies in order to mitigate for adverse effects to the historic Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery site under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In addition to Phase III archeological excavations aimed at ensuring that no graves would be impacted during construction of the memorial, mitigation efforts involved preparation of public interpretation materials including the establishment of a public park and memorial features on the site, preparation of content and design for the City of Alexandria's planned Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial web site, and the design of an historic site brochure with text, graphics and QR codes that would link to relevant portions of the website (Figure 34).



**Figure 32:** Mitigation for Demolition of the Frederick Douglass Elementary School in Loudoun County, Virginia included Student-Conducted Oral History Research and a Memorial Exhibit



**Figure 33:** Dedication of Hall of Fame at Charles H. Houston Recreation Center, June 22, 2013, Funded by ARHA (<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/photos/galleries/2013/jun/27/hall-fame-dedication/5612/>)



**Figure 34:** City of Alexandria Contraband and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial Historic Site Brochure Designed by Thunderbird Archeology.

The former 1940 Robert H. Robinson Library on Wythe Street now serves as the Alexandria Black History Museum. It houses a permanent exhibit, *Securing the Blessing of Liberty*, which examines early African-American life in Alexandria, and the Parker-Gray Gallery, where rotating exhibits are displayed. Mitigation for the loss of the Ramsey Homes could include the development of an exhibit for this space and a corresponding electronic media, commemorating and informing the public about the history of public housing in Alexandria. Exhibits may be interactive and tie in activities for children. Possibilities include the replication of the Ramsey Homes floor plans and the war trailers in the exhibit, activities related to defense workers in World War II and other occupations associated with residents of the Ramsey Homes as revealed in city directories and oral history. Further illustrated interactive timelines of the local architectural and land use history may be made available as part of the local history curriculum in schools. Additional interpretation may be appropriate on the street with a traditional historical highway marker developed in coordination with the City of Alexandria, the DHR, and ARHA.

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# Request for Non-Smoking Policies in Units and Common Areas of Ramsey Homes Redeveloped Multi-Unit Housing

Jim Scott <jscott@appliedpolicy.com>

Fri 2/5/2016 4:55 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>;

Cc: Karl Moritz <Karl.Moritz@alexandriava.gov>; Helen McIlvaine <Helen.McIlvaine@alexandriava.gov>; Robert Kerns <robert.kerns@alexandriava.gov>; Dirk Geratz <Dirk.Geratz@alexandriava.gov>; Nathan Imm <nathan.imm@alexandriava.gov>; Allen Lomax <Aclomax@aol.com>;

 1 attachment (2 MB)

FINAL CHIP Jan 2015(2).pdf;

Dear Planning Commission,

I am the Deputy Chair of the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria and the acting chair of this Clean and Smoke-Free Air Coalition of Alexandria. I am writing regarding the Commission's consideration of the following item considered at last night's meeting:

Master Plan Amendment #2015-0003  
Rezoning #2015-0003  
Development Special Use Permit #2014-0035  
Transportation Management Plan SUP #2015-0081  
699 North Patrick Street - ARHA Ramsey Homes

To continue to address our community's public health needs, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, in collaboration with the Alexandria Health Department and other community partners, has developed the [2014 - 2019 Community Health Improvement Plan \(CHIP\)](#). The CHIP aligns with the City of Alexandria's strategic goals as well as the goals of other relevant city plans and provide a framework to achieve optimal community health and well-being for all Alexandrians. The CHIP aims to create opportunities for all Alexandrians to live long, healthy lives, regardless of their income, education, race, ethnic background, or where they live in Alexandria.

Environmental health quality, particularly air quality impacts community and individual health. Clean and smoke free air results from policies and supports that lessen the use of contaminants, like tobacco. Tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke are the leading causes of preventable death and disease in the United States.

One of the goals of the CHIP is to reduce the proportion of residents who currently smoke and reduce the proportion of residents exposed to second-hand smoke.

**As you consider the redevelopment of the ARHA Ramsey Homes, I encourage the Commission to require the inclusion of comprehensive smoke-free air policies in any leases, covenants and/or other appropriate documents applicable to all residents and visitors to the planned multi-unit housing. It is important that both common areas, areas around the buildings and inside the individual units remain smoke free to protect and improve the health of Alexandrians. The best time to implement the policies is before the multi-unit housing is built and occupied.**

A copy of the CHIP is attached and available online:

<http://healthieralexandria.org/uploadedFiles/healthieralexandria-wwwroot/FINAL%20CHIP%20Jan%202015%282%29.pdf>. The section on Clean and Smoke Free Air begins on page 28.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. Please contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Jim Scott



James G. Scott | President & CEO  
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# Community Health Improvement Plan

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*City of Alexandria, Virginia*  
*2014-2019*



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On behalf of the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, I'm pleased to present the Alexandria Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for 2014-2019. Over the past several years, members of the Partnership have worked with representatives of various sectors of the Alexandria community including residents, health care providers, nonprofit organizations, businesses, community organizations, public school system, government organizations and City boards and commissions, to assess the health needs in our community, identify community health priorities and develop a strategic, action-oriented plan to improve the health and well-being of everyone who lives, works and plays in Alexandria. This CHIP is a result the commitment of hundreds of hours of thoughtful analysis, assessment, and creativity by everyone involved in our community health needs assessment and planning process. Thank you everyone who participated in the many meetings, discussions and reviews during the development of the CHIP and as a result, added to the value of this plan.

This CHIP is intended to be a roadmap for eliminating barriers to and creating opportunities for improving the health and well-being of everyone who lives, plays and works in Alexandria. To do so, the CHIP contains three broad goals, eight priorities and multiple strategies and key activities.

This CHIP is not intended to be solely the Partnership's plan nor the Alexandria Health Department's plan; it is intended to be our community's health improvement plan. As a result, we all need to continue to work collaboratively, engage new partners, and leverage our limited resources to successfully implement this CHIP. This CHIP is a "living" document and thus, will be modified and adjusted as conditions, resources and other factors change.

Please read this community health improvement plan and consider how you or your organization can join the Partnership in improving the health of everyone in our community. If you have any questions about this CHIP or would like to be involved in its implementation, please contact me at [Aclomax@aol.com](mailto:Aclomax@aol.com).

Sincerely,

Allen C. Lomax  
Chair  
Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria



## ALEXANDRIA HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Stephen A. Haering, MD, MPH, FACPM  
Health Director

I am excited about the release of the 2014 – 2019 Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The Alexandria Health Department has worked with the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria and other community partners and stakeholders to put forth a plan that lays the framework for equitable health outcomes in Alexandria, Virginia. All Alexandrians should have the same opportunities to lead healthy lifestyles regardless of income, background, race, or education level, and the 2014 – 2019 CHIP addresses this right.

This CHIP is intended to serve as a targeted, data driven guide for the Alexandria community to improve community health and well-being. As stated throughout the document, one of the goals of the CHIP is to make sure health equity becomes a primary focus of Alexandria policies, programs, and funding. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) maintains that health equity is achieved when every person has the opportunity to “attain his or her full health potential” and no one is “disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances.” With this in mind, factors that impact health equity are highlighted in each priority area of the CHIP.

The Alexandria Health Department is committed to CHIP implementation by providing public health policy development, public health program planning, data analyses and interpretation, as well as public health project and program implementation, management, and evaluation.

It is an honor to be Alexandria’s health director and I am proud of the work of the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, of community partners and of Health Department staff in bringing this forward. I look forward to continuous collaboration with the Alexandria community to improving everyone’s health and well-being.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Haering, MD, MPH, FACPM  
Alexandria Health Director



## Executive Summary

Over the past several years, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria has facilitated a community-wide strategic planning process called Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP). The MAPP process was developed by the Centers for Disease Control and endorsed by the National Association of City and County Health Officials for community organizations to use to identify the most pressing community health needs and develop goals, objectives and strategies to address those needs. This Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is a result of using the MAPP process in Alexandria.

To ultimately develop this CHIP, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria used the MAPP process to hold a series of community conversations designed to:

- Provide a description of health outcomes in Alexandria and how well the City's public health system coordinates to support a healthier community;
- Outline key forces that impact health; and
- Identify key health priorities.

In collaboration with non-profit organizations, schools, City agencies, relevant City Boards and Commissions, local businesses, community leaders, and concerned residents, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, in conjunction with the Alexandria Health Department identified three broad goals and important strategic issues that both address and improve community health. These strategic issues provided the framework for developing this CHIP. The Partnership also reviewed and used local public health data to develop goals, objectives, and strategies around the identified key community health priorities. These goals, objectives, and strategies were shared with a variety of community and city organizations to obtain their thoughts, concerns, ideas, and suggestions on the themes' goals, objectives and strategies.

As a result of this community engagement, the Partnership has produced this comprehensive and strategic CHIP to achieve optimal health and well-being for all Alexandrians. To do this, the CHIP has three overarching goals:

- Ensure all people in Alexandria have access to appropriate resources that support health and well-being;
- Motivate positive change by mobilizing community participation and improving the exchange of information; and
- Make certain all Alexandrians will have equal opportunities to live healthy and productive lives.

To achieve these three goals, the CHIP includes eight priority areas to guide its implementation over the next several years. These priority areas are:

- Access to Care

- Adolescent Health and Well-being
- Aging Well in Place
- Clean and Smoke Free Air
- Healthy Eating and Active Living
- HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care
- Maternal and Child Health
- Social Stigma of Mental Illness (Mental Health, including Social Stigmatization)

A key element to successfully achieving these goals and priorities will be to address all social, economic and environmental factors that provide everyone in Alexandria an opportunity to live a healthy life. Therefore, this CHIP uses a health equity lens to identify those factors that may have significant impacts on each priority area (such as, income, race, education, employment, housing, and transportation).

This plan is not intended to be solely the Partnership's CHIP or the Alexandria Health Department's CHIP; it is intended to be the Alexandria community health improvement plan. This CHIP was developed through collaboration and conversations with a wide variety of nonprofit, government, and business organizations as well as community members. Successful implementation of this CHIP will need at least the same level of collaboration and conversations. No single need or priority identified in this CHIP can be completely addressed by one organization or the City government. The Partnership will actively reach out to and work with Alexandria residents, community coalitions, boards and commissions, businesses, nonprofits, City agencies and other organizations to implement this important plan to improve the health and well-being of everyone who lives, plays and works in Alexandria.

## Introduction

The City of Alexandria places emphasis on improving public health outcomes and quality of life for all of its residents. This emphasis is highlighted in the City Council's Strategic Plan, Goal 2, which states, "The City of Alexandria respects, protects and enhances the health of its citizens and the quality of its natural environment."

To continue to address our community's public health needs, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria, in collaboration with the Alexandria Health Department (AHD), developed this Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). The CHIP is structured to align with the City of Alexandria's strategic goals as well as the goals of other relevant City plans and provide a framework to achieve optimal community health and well-being for all Alexandrians. The CHIP aims to create opportunities for all Alexandrians to live long, healthy lives, regardless of their income, education, race, ethnic background, or where they live in Alexandria.

The CHIP consists of three overarching goals, eight priority community health areas and goals, objectives strategies and key activities related to each of the priority areas. These priority areas were identified as a result of an analysis of local community health data as well as numerous discussions, meetings and forums with Alexandria residents, nonprofits, businesses, community organizations, City Boards and Commissions and City government agencies. This analysis is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) planning process for communities called Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP).

Successful CHIP implementation will rely on community collaborations and partnerships within the City of Alexandria's public health system. This system involves the inclusion of a diverse group of public health partners, including multiple city agencies, the Alexandria City Public Schools, City Boards and Commissions, businesses, nonprofit and community organizations and residents, working together to support community health. [See Figure 1]

Full implementation of the CHIP will result in improved health outcomes and quality of life for all residents of the City of Alexandria.

## The City of Alexandria – Broad Overview and Demographics

The City of Alexandria is an independent city in the Commonwealth of Virginia. It is the most densely populated city in the Commonwealth, with an area of nearly 16 square miles and a population estimated at 139,966 residents.<sup>1</sup> Alexandria welcomes large numbers of tourists and visiting workers daily. The city is bounded on the east and northeast by the Potomac River, directly across from the District of Columbia and Prince George's County, Maryland; on the north and northwest by Arlington County, Virginia; and on the south and southwest by Fairfax County, Virginia. Adjacent to the city and minutes away, in the District of Columbia, are the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the federal government and dozens of federal offices, national landmarks, tourist attractions, and international embassies; several federal facilities are located in Alexandria.

Alexandria is a diverse, multi-ethnic community. In 2012, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that the Alexandria population was 67% white, 22% Black or African American, 7% Asian, and 4 % other racial minority groups; 17% of the population is Hispanic or Latino.<sup>1</sup> Approximately one in four Alexandria residents were born outside of the United States and nearly one in three speak a language other than English in the home.<sup>1</sup> Families in the Alexandria City Public Schools system speak 103 different languages.<sup>2</sup> Among residents over the age of 25, 92% have completed high school, while more than 60% have earned at least a bachelor's degree.<sup>1</sup> While median household income in Alexandria exceeds state and national averages, 8% of residents live below the Federal Poverty Level.<sup>1</sup> Most commonly, Alexandria residents work in the management, business, science, and arts occupations (59%).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, State and County QuickFacts ([quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/51/51510.html](http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/51/51510.html))

<sup>2</sup> Alexandria City Public Schools ([www.acps.k12.va.us/fastfact.php](http://www.acps.k12.va.us/fastfact.php))

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Selected Economic Characteristics, 2008-2012 ([factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/12\\_5YR/DP03/0400000US51|0500000US51510](http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/12_5YR/DP03/0400000US51|0500000US51510))

## Alexandria Health Department

The Alexandria Health Department is one of 35 district offices of the Virginia Department of Health's Division of Community Health Services and serves the City of Alexandria. While a part of a state agency, AHD maintains a particularly close relationship with the City of Alexandria and the communities of people which compose Alexandria.

Its mission is "Protecting and Promoting Health and Well-Being in Our Communities." AHD works on this mission through public health activities that include monitoring population health status; diagnosing and investigating public health problems; informing, educating and empowering individuals, families and organizations about health issues; nourishing community partnerships; developing policies and supporting systems and environments that encourage health; enforcing public health laws and regulations; providing targeted public health clinical services and linking people to personal health services; assuring a proficient public health workforce; evaluating population-based health services; and researching and developing innovative solutions to health problems. Inherent in AHD's mission is that there are multiple, and evolving, "communities" within Alexandria and that "health" is used in the broadest sense.

AHD's vision is "Healthy People, Healthier Communities." This vision is broad and encompassing, and it indicates that the communities of people in Alexandria are on a path of continuous improvement of health.

Along with targeted public health clinical services, AHD provides public health emergency management, environmental health services, and prevention and control of communicable disease and outbreaks. AHD provides public health leadership to residents, community organizations and businesses through outreach and technical assistance. AHD supports research, policies, systems and environments that provide the opportunity for all Alexandrians to enjoy complete physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being.

## Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission

The Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission consists of 14 members who are appointed by the City Council. The Commission advises and supports the City and the City Council by

- Evaluating and advising on all health matters in Alexandria
- Planning, coordinating and prioritizing public health needs, services and programs in Alexandria
- Providing information and evaluating public health related matters at the request of the City Council
- Investigating specific public health issues and providing advice and recommendations for addressing such issues
- Providing a forum for discussing public health matters for Alexandria residents and public health officials
- Providing advice and recommendations concerning the advantages and disadvantages of specific health care practices and services to the public

## Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria

The Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria is a citizen-led coalition of non-profit organizations, schools, municipal agencies, local businesses, government, community leaders, and concerned citizens who come together to promote and preserve a healthy Alexandria.

The Partnership emerged in 2006 to address major health priorities that were identified from the first community health assessment done in Alexandria. This assessment was a collaborative project conducted by the AHD in consultation with the Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission and other community partners. Today, these entities work closely to address and provide action-oriented, evidence-based solutions to public health concerns within the city.

To date, the Partnership's efforts have been primarily completed by its four work-groups:

- Alexandria Childhood Obesity Action Network (A-COAN)
- Clean and Smoke-Free Air Coalition of Alexandria
- Mental Health Anti-Stigma HOPE Campaign
- Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria (SAPCA)

The Partnership works alongside its community partners to raise awareness and implement change, as well as improve and build coalitions to advance public health interventions, initiatives and programs.

## Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria Mission and Vision

### *Mission:*

To promote a safe and healthy Alexandria through coalition building, collaborative planning and community action.

*Vision:*

The City of Alexandria embraces the belief that health is more than merely the absence of disease. A healthy community provides all of its members with the opportunities and support for achieving and maintaining physical, mental, social, and spiritual wellness.

The Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria believes that a healthier Alexandria is:

An Alexandria where building a sense of community and helping one another -- especially in meeting basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, accessibility, and affordable housing -- is a priority for each individual.

An Alexandria where racial, ethnic, and gender diversity are celebrated and supported.

An Alexandria where people of all ages and abilities are supported.

An Alexandria where all residents, regardless of their ability to pay, can access quality health care that focuses on prevention, treatment, and wellness.

A walkable Alexandria where everyone has access to transportation options, trails, parks, open space, and recreation opportunities.

An Alexandria where people are safe in their homes and walking in their neighborhoods, unafraid of crime, violence, and domestic abuse.

An Alexandria where safeguarding emotional and mental health is a priority and there is adequate provision of mental health services.

An Alexandria where its residents support and are engaged in efforts to prevent the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and where treatment for substance use problems is readily available.

An Alexandria where all residents can access safe and healthy foods and are able to practice healthy eating habits.

An Alexandria where our houses, streets, neighborhoods, and parks are clean and well-kept, free of garbage, environmental hazards, and pests so that everyone can fully enjoy our beautiful city.

An Alexandria where meaningful employment opportunities are available for all, since health is linked to financial stability.

## **The City of Alexandria Public Health System**

The City of Alexandria Public Health System is comprised of a diverse group of community partners and stakeholders. The Public Health System includes, but is not limited to, citizens, childcare services, boards and commissions, schools, community centers, parks, recreation and cultural activities, healthcare providers, mental health advocates and providers, nursing homes, environmental health, civic groups, employers, mass transit, health department, human services, and law enforcement and public safety.

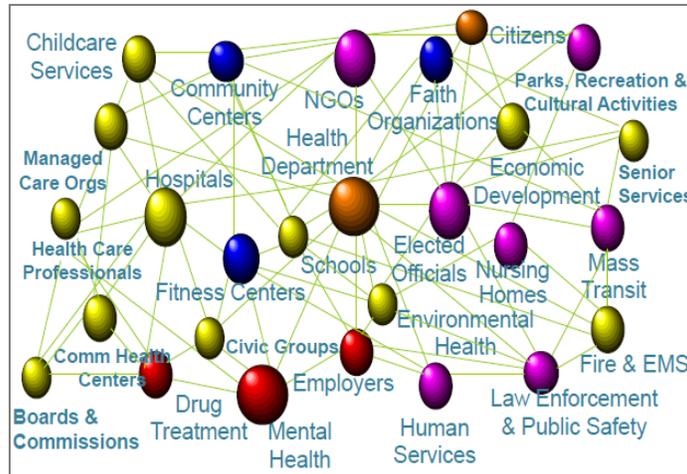


Figure 1: City of Alexandria Public Health System

Figure 1 demonstrates the inter-connectivity of the City of Alexandria Public Health System. The network in its entirety is crucial to creating and supporting an environment that fosters positive health outcomes throughout the City of Alexandria.

### Community Health Improvement Plan Development

Extensive work went into the development of the CHIP. This work included community outreach, and local public health data analysis which resulted in the development of eight public health priority areas.

### Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships

The Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) process was developed by the CDC and endorsed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The tool was developed to be used by community organizations to identify community health needs and develop strategies and tactics for improving health and well-being. MAPP is designed to engage the community, and the larger public health system, in laying out a broad vision for health, assessing community health status, and developing a plan to improve community health. MAPP is being used by over 1,200 communities across the United States, including many jurisdictions in the D.C. metro region.



Figure 2 MAPP Process

Figure 2 provides an illustrative diagram of the different assessments and community planning processes that comprise MAPP.

### MAPP in the City of Alexandria

The Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria used the MAPP process to guide the community through a series of conversations that were designed to:

- Provide a description of health outcomes in Alexandria and how well the City’s public health system coordinates to support a healthier community;
- Outline key forces that impact health; and
- Identify key health priorities.

In conjunction with the City of Alexandria Public Health System, the AHD, and the Partnership identified three broad goals and important strategic issues that both address and improve community health; these strategic issues provided the framework for CHIP development.

The Partnership’s Steering Committee reviewed and used local public health data to develop goals, objectives, strategies and key activities around the key community health priorities. The Partnership engaged a variety of residents and representatives of numerous community and City government organizations to obtain their concerns, thoughts, ideas and suggestions on these goals, objectives, strategies and key activities and made changes to them as necessary.

### Community Health Improvement Plan Goals

In an effort to improve community health in Alexandria, the CHIP has three overarching goals:

- Ensure all people in Alexandria have access to appropriate resources that support health and well-being;
- Motivate positive change by mobilizing community participation and improving the exchange of information; and

- Make certain all Alexandrians will have equal opportunities to live healthy and productive lives.

In order to achieve these three goals, the CHIP includes eight priority areas to guide its implementation over the next several years. These areas were identified based on the results of the MAPP process and analyses of local public health data.

## Health Equity

Health inequities are types of unfair health differences closely linked with social, economic or environmental disadvantages that adversely affect groups of people. Alexandrians should have the opportunity to make choices that allow them to live a long, healthy life, regardless of income, educational achievement, ethnic background, race, gender, age place of residence. Health Equity addresses and supports policies, research and environmental changes that give everyone in Alexandria a chance to live a healthy life.

In order to fully realize health equity in Alexandria, all factors contributing to health must be addressed. Healthy People 2020 states

Social determinants of health are conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. Conditions (e.g., social, economic, and physical) in these various environments and settings (e.g., school, church, workplace, and neighborhood) have been referred to as ‘place’...Resources that enhance quality of life can have a significant influence on population health outcomes. Examples of these resources include safe and affordable housing, access to education, public safety, availability of healthy foods, local emergency/health services, and environments free of life-threatening toxins.

The CHIP uses a health equity lens to identify those factors that may have significant impacts on each priority area (e.g., income, race, education, employment, and aspects of the built environment, such as housing, transportation, and community design/geography).

As outlined in the CHIP overarching goals (above), the purpose of the CHIP is to ensure that health equity becomes a primary focus of City of Alexandria policies, programs and funding. With this in mind, the establishment of an Office of Health Equity within the Alexandria Health Department will advocate, promote, and implement strategies for improved health equity throughout the city.

Key activities to aid in the establishment of the Office of Health Equity include:

- Work with the Public Health Advisory Commission to develop a concept plan that identifies the proposed Office’s mission, scope, staffing and costs.
- Educate the community to increase their awareness of health equity and the need for an Office of Health Equity.
- Partner with the Public Health Advisory Commission and other key community stakeholders to advocate with City Council to establish the Office of Health Equity.

Partners in these efforts include, but are not limited to:

- Alexandria Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission
- Alexandria Community Services Board
- Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services
- Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Affairs
- Alexandria Economic Opportunities Commission
- Alexandria Health Department
- Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission
- Alexandria Public Schools' School Health Advisory Board
- Alexandria Social Services Advisory Board
- Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness in Alexandria

## Community Health Snapshot

Understanding the current state of health in the City of Alexandria is important for future planning efforts to continuously improve the health of its residents. Currently, health data in the city reveal areas of progress, as well as areas for improvement.

The following are examples of selected positive health outcomes in the City of Alexandria for 2012:

- Low birthweight births made up 6.4% of all births in the city; the lowest proportion of low birthweight births in Northern Virginia (Virginia Department of Health Vital Statistics).
- The infant mortality rate in the city was the lowest out of all districts in Northern Virginia, at 1.8 per 1,000 births (Virginia Department of Health Vital Statistics).
- Alexandria City's mortality rates for cancer (all), strokes, chronic lower respiratory diseases, unintentional injuries and Alzheimer's disease were all significantly lower than rates for the state of Virginia (Virginia Department of Health Vital Statistics).

In addition, the average life expectancy in the City of Alexandria is 78.1; higher than the median for all United States (US) counties (76.5) (Community Health Status Indicators, 2009).

While striving to maintain existing positive health outcomes, there are also a number of areas in need of improvement. The following are examples of health indicators with less than optimal outcomes for 2012:

- While the Alexandria teen pregnancy rate has continued to go down over the last few years, it is still one of the highest in Northern Virginia at 30.9 per 1,000 females aged 10-19. (Virginia Department of Health Vital Statistics).
- Only 70.1% of pregnant women initiated prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy (Virginia Department of Vital Statistics)
- The rate for newly reported cases of HIV disease was 33.3 per 100,000, the rate for early syphilis was 24.3 per 100,000; both among the highest rates in Northern Virginia.

Although there are clear areas for improvement, the City of Alexandria’s overall health is considered to be among the best in the state. While this is encouraging, health outcomes vary depending on a number of determinants, such as race, ethnicity, educational attainment and income. Such differences highlights the need to look at health data using a “health equity lens” when considering priority areas for improvement.

## Priority Areas

The priority areas of the 2014-2019 CHIP include:

- Access to Care
- Adolescent Health and Well-being
- Aging Well in Place
- Clean and Smoke Free Air
- Healthy Eating and Active Living
- HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care
- Maternal and Child Health
- Social Stigma of Mental Illness (Mental Health, including Social Stigmatization)

The strategies and key activities of the CHIP provide opportunities for resident, partner, and stakeholder engagement and participation. The CHIP is a tool to improve health equity and health outcomes: it is imperative that the entire Alexandria Public Health System take ownership of the CHIP and work collaboratively to advance community health throughout the City of Alexandria.

## Priority Areas

### Priority Area: Access to Care

#### Overview

Access to care means Alexandria residents have access to affordable care, insurance coverage, and quality healthcare providers. Access to comprehensive, quality, care allows individuals to achieve better health outcomes.

Through the **Health Equity Lens**, the following may contribute to health inequities as they relate to Access to Care

- Cultural competence of healthcare providers
- Educational attainment
- Geography and access to transportation
- Income
- Limited awareness of community supports
- Mistrust
- Perceptions of health risks

#### Goal: Improve access to care for all residents of Alexandria

<p><b>Objective:</b> By 2019, increase the proportion of Alexandria adults with any kind of healthcare coverage. by 5%.</p>	
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 77.3% of Alexandria residents have health insurance (private or public) (BRFSS 2011/12)</p>	<p><b>Target:</b> At least 80.8 % of Alexandria residents will have health insurance (private or public)</p>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Promote and support efforts within Alexandria to educate and enroll residents in insurance programs under the Affordable Care Act.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insurance Navigators provide Alexandria residents information and guidance on the Affordable Care Act.</li> <li>• Work with Insurance Navigators to enroll residents in Affordable Care Act insurance programs.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li> <li>• Alexandria Economic Opportunities Commission</li> <li>• Neighborhood Health</li> <li>• Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria Social Services Advisory Board</li> <li>• Northern Virginia Health Foundation</li> </ul>

<p><b>Strategy:</b> Assess the scope and impact of health insurance coverage gaps (e.g., Medicaid, private insurance) in Alexandria and develop recommendations for addressing these gaps in Alexandria.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the expansion of Medicaid in Virginia.</li> <li>• Work with a variety of partners to implement Medicaid expansion.</li> <li>• Engage in efforts to provide coverage options for those who currently do not have health insurance.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighborhood Health</li> <li>• Inova Alexandria Hospital</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li> <li>• Alexandria Community Services Board</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission</li> <li>• Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness in Alexandria</li> <li>• Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission</li> <li>• City of Alexandria Legislative Director</li> <li>• Alexandria’s General Assembly Delegation</li> </ul>
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<b>Objective:</b> By 2019, PACE, the Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly, expands into Alexandria.	
<b>Baseline:</b> 0 sites in Alexandria	<b>Target:</b> 1 site in Alexandria
<b>Strategy:</b> Collaborate with INOVA Hospital system to integrate Alexandria residents into their PACE program.	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In collaboration with Inova Hospital System, open a PACE site.</li> <li>• Educate Alexandrians about benefits of PACE program.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inova Alexandria Hospital</li> <li>• Neighborhood Health</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li> <li>• Alexandria Commission on Aging</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission</li> </ul>

## Priority Area: Adolescent Health and Well-being

### Overview

Adolescents in Alexandria make up 17.7% of the population (US Census, 2013 Estimate). It is essential that healthy behaviors are encouraged and promoted through environmental changes and by providing increased education and support to reduce risky behaviors.

*Through the **Health Equity Lens**, the following may contribute to health inequities as they relate to Adolescent Health and Well-being*

- *Cultural competence of community leaders*
- *Educational attainment*
- *Income*
- *Limited awareness of community supports*
- *Mistrust*
- *Perceptions of health risks and social norms*
- *Race and Ethnicity*
- *Stigmatization of differences*

**Goal:** Improve the health, safety, and well-being of adolescents in Alexandria.

<p><b>Objective:</b> By 2019, reduce alcohol use and abuse among 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade Alexandria City Public Schools students by 20%.</p>	
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 23% of 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade Alexandria City Public Schools students currently use alcohol [Source: Developmental Assets, 2013 ]</p>	<p><b>Target:</b> 19%, or fewer, 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade Alexandria City Public School students use alcohol.</p>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Reduce the availability and easy access of alcohol by using the seven community-wide change strategies (i.e., provide information, provide support, build skills, reduce barriers/enhance access, change consequences, change physical design, modify policy), referenced in the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria’s plan to reduce alcohol use among teens). [The seven strategies are discussed more fully in the Coalition’s action plan.]</p> <p><b>Strategy:</b> Raise awareness among youth about the harms of alcohol use.</p>	<p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host events discouraging alcohol use among teens during key times (e.g., April for Alcohol Awareness Month, National Drug Facts Chat Week, May for National Prevention Week, Above the Influence Day).</li> <li>• Support non-alcoholic youth events in Alexandria.</li> <li>• Conduct Preventing Risky Behavior workshops at school and community meetings for parents and other interested adults.</li> <li>• Hold Community of Concern Dinners at middle and high schools to engage youth and parents in discussing the consequences of alcohol and other drug use.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct workshops in middle and high schools explaining the effects of alcohol on brain/body and future consequences.</li> <li>• Conduct Project Sticker Shock at least once a year.</li> <li>• Send congratulatory letters to retailers that pass Alexandria Police Department alcohol compliance checks.</li> <li>• Work with law enforcement to ensure enforcement of Social Host Law.</li> <li>• Provide relevant material in multiple languages.</li> <li>• Provide training and volunteer opportunities where youth can learn leadership and marketable job skills.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria City Public Schools</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Activities</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria Job-Link</li> <li>• Alexandria Police Department</li> <li>• Alexandria Public Schools' School Health Advisory Board</li> <li>• Alexandria Sherriff's Office</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria</li> <li>• Coalition's Above the Influence Club</li> <li>• Volunteer Alexandria</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Objective:</b> By 2019, reduce the proportion of 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade Alexandria City Public Schools students who report marijuana use by 20%.</p>	
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 16% of 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade Alexandria City Public Schools students who report current marijuana use. [Source: Developmental Assets, 2013 ]</p>	<p><b>Target:</b> 13%, or fewer, 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade Alexandria City Public Schools students report marijuana use.</p>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Discourage the use of marijuana among Youth by using the seven community-wide change strategies referenced in the Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria’s action plan.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information on the harms marijuana causes to the growing brain via social media.</li> <li>• Hold discussions with middle and high school youth explaining the dangers of marijuana use.</li> <li>• Conduct workshops in middle and high schools explaining the effects of marijuana on the brain/body and future consequences.</li> <li>• Research where students are using marijuana and identify and advocate for possible changes to the environment that use decrease use (e.g., lighting, unmonitored areas).</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria City Public Schools</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Activities</li> <li>• Alexandria Police Department</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria Public Schools’ School Health Advisory Board</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria</li> <li>• Coalition’s Above the Influence Club</li> </ul>

<p><b>Objective:</b> By 2019, reduce the number of 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) students who smoke cigarettes by 20%.</p>	
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 14.1% of 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade ACPS students smoke cigarettes. [Source: Developmental Assets, 2013]</p>	<p><b>Target:</b> 12.7%, or fewer, 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade ACPS students smoke cigarettes.</p>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Create an environment where it is increasingly difficult for youth to access tobacco products.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct Operation Storefront Survey, where youth record the amount of tobacco advertising in local stores.</li> <li>• Educate and work with local retailers to reduce the amount of tobacco advertising in their store.</li> <li>• Recognize retailers that have minimal alcohol and tobacco advertising.</li> <li>• Encourage vendors to have more signage in stores about ID requirements.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Activities</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria Public Schools' School Health Advisory Board</li> <li>• Building Better Futures</li> <li>• Local Retailers</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Alexandria</li> <li>• Coalition's Above the Influence Club</li> </ul>

<p><b>Objective:</b> By 2019, reduce adolescent pregnancy rate from 30.9 to 24.8 per 1,000 females aged 10-19 years for a 20% reduction.</p>	
<p><b>Baseline:</b> Adolescent pregnancy rate is 30.9 of 1,000 teenage females aged 10-19 [Source VDH 2012 Data]</p>	<p><b>Target:</b> Adolescent pregnancy rate of 24.8 per 1,000 females ages 10-19 years.</p>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Prevent adolescent pregnancy through culturally and age appropriate education, advocacy, technical assistance, direct service prevention programs and public awareness.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with the Teen Wellness Center to provide training to Keepit360 club members for peer-to-peer education opportunities within Alexandria schools on topics related to healthy relationships, teen pregnancy and STI prevention.</li> <li>• Implement ACAP’s teen pregnancy and STI prevention evidence-based programs (<i>Be Proud, Be Protective, and Becoming a Responsible Teen</i>) at current sites with at-risk youth populations and expand to additional sites through new community partnerships.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria City Public Schools</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Collaborate with youth, their families and the community to sustain a reduction in the adolescent pregnancy rate.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and promote a list of volunteer opportunities with ACAP based on activities in Action Plans and utilize social media resources such as Facebook, Twitter, Idealist and LinkedIn to seek out volunteers and promote opportunities with ACAP.</li> <li>• Engage youth as active community partners by providing internship and leadership opportunities with ACAP to ensure the existence of a youth voice (i.e. social media and data internships and Leadership Council positions for youth).</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alexandria Campaign on Adolescent Pregnancy</li><li>• Alexandria Health Department</li><li>• Alexandria City Public Schools</li><li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li></ul>
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## Priority Area: Aging Well in Place

### Overview

As Alexandrian’s age, it is important that they have appropriate services and supports within the city that encourage healthy lifestyles. Aging well in place encompasses activities and environmental changes that improve physical, mental, social, and spiritual health.

Through the **Health Equity Lens**, the following may contribute to health inequities as they relate to Aging Well In Place:

- Geography and access to transportation
- Housing type and availability
- Income
- Social isolation
- Stigmatization of differences

**Goal:** Enable older adults to age in their place of choice with appropriate services and supports.

<p><b>Objective:</b> By 2017, complete the 7 action steps of ‘Accessible Housing’, objective from the 2013-2017 Strategic Plan on Aging.  <a href="https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/dchs/adultservices/Strategic%20Plan-%20Final.pdf">https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/dchs/adultservices/Strategic%20Plan-%20Final.pdf</a></p>	
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 5 action steps have been implemented.</p>	<p><b>Target:</b> 7 action steps will be implemented and/or completed for “Accessible Housing.”</p>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Provide easy access for older Alexandrians to information and understand ways to modify homes to enable aging at home.</p>	<p><b>Key Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and mitigate physical barriers that limit access to community resources, including absence of zero-grade entrances and accessible bathroom facilities (i.e. Universal Design).</li> <li>• Promote universal design and “visitability” by: (1) informing local builders about the Certified Aging in Place Specialist program of the National Association of Home Builders and (2) providing a brochure or web page that describes what universal design is and details the economic and safety benefits for different populations and stages of life.</li> <li>• City officials work with apartment building landlords and condo associations to make older buildings more accessible by providing ramps, widening entrance doors into the building and entrances into the individual residences.</li> </ul>

	<p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alexandria Commission on Aging</li><li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li><li>• Alexandria Office of Housing</li><li>• Alexandria Office of Planning and Zoning</li><li>• Alexandria Health Department</li></ul>
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## Priority Area: Clean and Smoke Free Air

### Overview

Environmental health quality, particularly air quality impacts community and individual health. Clean and smoke free air results from policies and supports that lessen the use of contaminants, like tobacco. Tobacco use and exposure to second-hand smoke are the leading causes of preventable death and disease in the United States.

**Goal:** Reduce the proportion of residents who currently smoke and reduce the proportion of residents exposed to second-hand smoke.

Through the **Health Equity Lens**, the following may contribute to health inequities as they relate to Clean and Smoke Free Air:

- Educational attainment
- Housing type and availability
- Income
- Limited awareness of community supports
- Perception of health risks

<p><b>Objective:</b> By 2019, reduce the proportion of adults who smoke by 10%. By 2019, reduce the proportion of residents exposed to second-hand smoke by 10%.</p>	
<p><b>Baseline:</b> 15.1% of adults reported themselves as everyday smokers [ Source: BRFSS 2011,2012]</p>	<p><b>Target:</b> 13.6%, or less, of adults report themselves as everyday smokers (10% improvement).</p>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Encourage the adoption of comprehensive smoke-free air policies in multi-unit housing in Alexandria.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate landlords, owners, and tenants of private, multi-unit residential facilities to promote the adoption of voluntary comprehensive smoke free policies.</li> <li>• Secure funding and resources for program implementation.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Apartment Complex Owners</li> <li>• Alexandria Condominium Associations</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria Landlord-Tenant Relations Board</li> <li>• Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority</li> <li>• Clean and Smoke Free Air Coalition of Alexandria</li> <li>• Neighborhood Health</li> </ul>

<p><b>Strategy:</b> Encourage employers to support employee smoking cessation.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Educate City businesses and organizations on the value of offering tobacco cessation services.</li></ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alexandria Chamber of Commerce</li><li>• Del Ray Business Association</li><li>• West End Business Association</li><li>• Alexandria Health Department</li><li>• Clean and Smoke Free Air Coalition of Alexandria</li></ul>
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## Priority Area: Healthy Eating and Active Living

### Overview

Healthy lifestyle behaviors such as healthy eating and active living can positively impact health status as well as reduce the risk of chronic disease.

Through the **Health Equity Lens**, the following may contribute to health inequities as they relate to Healthy Eating and Active Living:

- Age
- Educational attainment
- Geography and access to transportation
- Income
- Limited awareness of community supports
- Perception of health risks

**Goal:** Increase the proportion of Alexandrians who are at a healthy weight.

<b>Objective:</b> By 2019, increase the proportion of Alexandrians who are at a healthy weight by 10%.	
<b>Baseline:</b> 41% of Alexandria adults at a healthy weight.[Source: BRFSS 2012]	<b>Target:</b> 43%, or more, of Alexandria adults at a healthy weight.
<b>Strategy:</b> Collaborate with Alexandria City Public Schools to obtain and analyze aggregate to establish a childhood obesity baseline measure in Alexandria.	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with Alexandria City Public Schools to systematically collect, organize and analyze anonymous Body Mass Index data.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Childhood Obesity Action Network</li> <li>• Alexandria City Public Schools</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy:</b> Increase opportunities to prevent and control childhood obesity through physical activity.	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for opportunities for increased physical activity in schools and recreation settings.</li> <li>• Collaborate with Alexandria Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities to improve and/or build safe play spaces for children and families.</li> <li>• Implement Play Space Policy</li> </ul>

	<p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Childhood Obesity Action Network</li> <li>• Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities</li> <li>• RunningBrooke</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Increase healthy eating behaviors and increase access to healthy foods.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advance healthy food preparation knowledge among youth, and their families in schools, afterschool programs, and community recreation centers.</li> <li>• Create a policy to facilitate mobile farmer’s markets access to populations that lack convenient access to healthy foods.</li> <li>• Increase the number of farmers markets that accept SNAP benefits.</li> <li>• Implement the recommendations contained in the report, “Toward an End to Hunger in Alexandria.”</li> <li>• Encourage breastfeeding throughout the City by promoting breastfeeding friendly businesses. s to emergency rooms who also do not have a medical home.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria City Public Schools</li> <li>• Alexandria Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria Childhood Obesity Action Network</li> <li>• Alexandria Community Services Board</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria Public Schools’ School Health Advisory Board</li> <li>• Alexandria Farmers’ Markets</li> <li>• Alexandria Faith-Based Community</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inova Alexandria</li> <li>• Neighborhood Health</li> <li>• Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness in Alexandria</li> <li>• Virginia Cooperative Extension</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Encourage and provide support for breastfeeding among new mothers throughout Alexandria.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish breastfeeding friendly businesses throughout the city</li> <li>• Promote breastfeeding among all populations</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Alexandria Childhood Obesity Action Network</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Neighborhood Health</li> <li>• Inova Alexandria Hospital</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Encourage workplace wellness throughout businesses and private organizations in Alexandria.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with the Chamber of Commerce to raise awareness and promote the Healthy Workplace Awards.</li> <li>• Develop a ‘breastfeeding in business’ advisory group to advance breastfeeding in the workplace.</li> <li>• Expand healthy vending machine usage throughout the City of Alexandria (private sector)</li> <li>• Increase participation in a City-wide campaign to promote healthy lifestyles among local businesses.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Alexandria Childhood Obesity Action Network</li> <li>• City of Alexandria</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> </ul>

<p><b>Strategy:</b> Support programs and environments that encourage healthy behaviors.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with the City’s Pedestrian and Bicycle coordinator to deliver pedestrian and bicyclist safety education.</li> <li>• Work with City agencies to incorporate open and green space and sustainability standards, when appropriate, into small area plans.</li> <li>• Support Complete Streets implementation by emphasizing positive public health impacts.</li> <li>• Ensure that city recreational and sport-based program opportunities are accessible to adults with disabilities</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services</li> <li>• Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria Parks and Recreation Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> </ul>
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## Priority Area: HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care

### Overview

Increasing the awareness of risky behaviors, as well as available care and treatment options helps to ensure that the most affected populations (Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ), Men who have Sex with Men (MSM), Intravenous Drug Users (IDU), African-Americans, and Hispanic/Latinos) are not burdened by HIV disease or the increased chance of being infected with Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) and Opportunistic Infections.

*Through the **Health Equity** Lens, the following may contribute to health inequities as they relate to HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care:*

- Age
- Income
- Lack of awareness of community supports
- Mistrust
- Perception of health risks
- Race and Ethnicity
- Stigmatization of differences

### Goal: Increase HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention education.

<b>Objective:</b> By 2019, reduce the rate of new HIV/AIDS cases identified in Alexandria by 5%.	
<b>Baseline:</b> New cases identified 33.3 per 100,000 [Source: VDH]	<b>Target:</b> 31.6, or fewer, new cases of HIV/AIDS identified per 100,000.
<b>Strategy:</b> Continue to integrate HIV/AIDS prevention education into existing Adolescent Pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) prevention education curricula; thereby, increasing awareness and reducing stigmatization of HIV disease.	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify gaps in HIV prevention education in Alexandria City Public Middle and High Schools.</li> <li>• Re-engage school administrators managing the family life curriculum and encourage the integration of HIV prevention education.</li> <li>• Encourage local community health centers and the Teen Wellness Center to integrate HIV prevention education into current prevention strategies.</li> <li>• Encourage local faith communities with HIV/AIDS Ministries to incorporate a robust HIV prevention education module.</li> <li>• Develop a Commission Speaker’s Bureau that would provide HIV prevention education presentations to local community organizations, boards and commissions as requested.</li> </ul>

	<p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Alexandria City Public Schools</li> <li>● Alexandria Faith community</li> <li>● Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>● Alexandria Commission on HIV/AIDS</li> <li>● HIV/AIDS service organizations</li> <li>● Local community health centers</li> <li>● Planned Parenthood</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> To increase public awareness of the local HIV/AIDS organizations who work with and provide services to the target population.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Assist the Alexandria Health Department with continued and increased publicity regarding Rainbow Tuesday HIV testing and counseling clinics.</li> <li>● Assist the Gay Men’s Health Collaborative with community engagement and soliciting of public support for social and support group activities.</li> <li>● Increase awareness of local funding opportunities for smaller HIV/AIDS service organization that work with the target population.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>● Alexandria Commission on HIV/AIDS</li> <li>● Neighborhood Health</li> <li>● INOVA Juniper Care and Support Services</li> <li>● KI Services</li> <li>● NOVA Salud</li> <li>● Inova Alexandria Hospital</li> </ul>

## Priority Area: Maternal and Child Health

### Overview

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, addressing maternal and child health is important in that “their well-being determines the health of the next generation and can help predict future public health challenges for families, communities, and the health care system”(CDC, 2013). The importance of Maternal and Child Health for community health in the United States has a history dating back more than century and includes preconception, prenatal and postnatal care to improve the health of both mothers and babies.

*Through the **Health Equity Lens**, the following may contribute to health inequities as they relate to Maternal and Child Health:*

- *Educational attainment*
- *Housing type and availability*
- *Income*
- *Limited awareness of community supports*
- *Mistrust*
- *Perception of health risks*
- *Stigmatization of differences*

**Goal:** Improve the health and well-being of pregnant women and babies in the first year of life.

<b>Objective:</b> By 2019, increase the proportion of pregnant women who access prenatal care in the first trimester by 5%.	
<b>Baseline:</b> 70.1% of pregnant women accessed care in the first trimester [Source: VDH 2012]	<b>Target:</b> 73.5% of pregnant women accessing care in the first trimester.
<b>Strategy:</b> Support advocacy to Alexandria medical and dental providers on the need for increased access to prenatal and oral care during pregnancy.	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate Alexandria providers on the late entry into prenatal care of pregnant women in Alexandria.</li> <li>• Encourage referrals to oral healthcare among prenatal care providers.</li> <li>• Educate policy makers on the importance of oral health on mothers and babies.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria City Public Schools</li> <li>• Neighborhood Health</li> <li>• Inova Alexandria Hospital</li> <li>• Virginia Oral Health Coalition</li> </ul>

<p><b>Objective:</b> Maintain low rates of low birthweight and infant mortality in the City of Alexandria for all populations through the year 2019.</p>	
<p><b>Baseline:</b> Infant mortality rate is 1.8 per 1,000 births.</p> <p>Low birthweight births were 6.4% of all births.</p> <p>[Source: VDH, 2012]</p>	<p><b>Target:</b> Maintain, or lower, infant mortality rate of 1.8 per 1,000 births.</p> <p>Maintain, or lower, low birth weights at 6.4% of all births.</p>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Support advocacy to Alexandria medical providers on the need for increased access to prenatal care during pregnancy as well as emphasizing well-baby care in the first year of life.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate Alexandria providers on the late entry into prenatal care of pregnant women in Alexandria.</li> <li>• Encourage Alexandria providers to educate mothers-to-be on the importance of well-baby care and regular office visits in the first year.</li> <li>• Encourage and support breastfeeding-friendly policies and environments throughout the City of Alexandria.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria City Public Schools</li> <li>• Neighborhood Health</li> <li>• Inova Alexandria Hospital</li> <li>• Alexandria Childhood Obesity Action Network.</li> </ul>

## Priority Area: Social Stigma of Mental Illness

### Overview:

Social stigma related to mental illness can deter individuals from full participation in community resources and activities. Addressing, and reducing, the social stigma of mental illness throughout Alexandria will allow those with mental illness, developmental disability, or substance use disorder to more fully utilize community resources and to become more engaged and active in their community.

*Through the **Health Equity** Lens, the following may contribute to health inequities as they relate to Social Stigma of Mental Illness:*

- Educational attainment
- Income
- Limited awareness of community supports
- Mistrust
- Perception of health risks and social norms
- Stigmatization of differences

**Goal:** Increase community support and attention to reducing stigma and discrimination toward mental illness.

<b>Objective:</b> By 2019, increase participation in community events and outreach by 20%.	
<b>Baseline:</b> 592 participants in community events in 2013.	<b>Target:</b> At least 710 annual participants in community events.
<b>Strategy:</b> Increase the proportion of people with developmental disability, addiction, and mental illness who participate in social, spiritual, recreational, community and civic activities to the degree that they wish.	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make 5 presentations on the importance of inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities, addiction, and mental illness to City of Alexandria event groups, organizations, Boards, and Commissions.</li> <li>• Promote Alexandria community events to individuals with developmental disabilities, addiction and mental illness through print and social media.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Community Services Board</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li> <li>• Anti-Stigma HOPE Campaign</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> </ul>

<p><b>Strategy:</b> Increase community linkages and attention aimed at reducing stigma and discrimination toward developmental disability, addiction, and mental illness throughout the City of Alexandria.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a high school student group/club at TC Williams High School that focuses on reducing mental health stigma and bullying.</li> <li>• Develop and implement 1 City-wide pledge campaign where individuals pledge to be aware of mental illness and take steps to reducing stigma throughout the City.</li> </ul> <p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alexandria Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission</li> <li>• Alexandria City Public Schools</li> <li>• Alexandria Community Services Board</li> <li>• Alexandria Department of Community and Human Services</li> <li>• Alexandria Health Department</li> <li>• Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strategy:</b> Increase the utilization of Mental Health First Aid among businesses and organizations to meet the needs of Alexandrians with developmental disabilities, addiction, and mental illness.</p>	<p><i>Key Activities:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote enrollment in Mental Health First Aid classes throughout the City of Alexandria.</li> <li>• Present the importance of utilizing Mental Health First Aid to community organizations and businesses (private sector, non-profit, and government).</li> <li>• Make clear the importance of understanding the needs of children with mental illness and developmental disabilities by making the Mental Health First Aid Course mandatory for all school administrators, the school board, teachers and teacher’s aides.</li> <li>• Encourage all volunteers who work with children (e.g. scout leaders) to take the Mental Health First Aid Course.</li> <li>• Encourage all private licensed child care providers to take the Mental Health First Aid Course.</li> </ul>

	<p><i>Key Partners:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Anti-Stigma HOPE Campaign</i></li><li>• <i>Department of Community and Human Services</i></li><li>• <i>Alexandria Health Department</i></li></ul>
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## Community Health Improvement Plan Implementation

Addressing the community health needs and priorities identified in this plan requires a community-wide effort. No single need or priority can be completely addressed by one organization or the city government alone. Thus, the Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria will work with existing community coalitions, city residents, partnerships, Boards and Commissions, other organizations and agencies, to implement the plan.

The priority areas and their strategies and tactics will be implemented by addressing a variety of determinants of health and working to reduce and eliminate barriers Alexandria residents face in achieving optimal health. Community members face several barriers to optimal health and well-being. These barriers include lack of awareness of existing programs, illiteracy, language, cultural competency, income and education.

Another critical factor in the CHIP implementation is community engagement. We know that informed, engaged, and active community members provide meaningful contributions to local and regional issues. Also, increased community engagement and social interactions are significant contributors to overall health and well-being. Thus, the Partnership will continue to engage the community on all aspects of the CHIP during its implementation, much as it did during its development. The Partnership will rely on the principles, strategies and communication and outreach methods in What's Next Alexandria's Handbook for Civic Engagement. Through its website, social media and other communication methods, the Partnership will strive to increase the community's awareness of key issues, topics and policies that are essential to achieving the CHIP's goals and priority areas.

To best facilitate the implementation of this plan, the Partnership will work with the community and may establish action teams focused on implementing various strategies in the plan. These action teams will determine the specific action steps, resources and performance measures for executing their respective strategies. The Partnership will establish an evaluation and monitoring committee to track the action teams' progress. Annually, the Partnership will report to the community the level of progress made implementing the CHIP.

Beginning in late 2016, the Partnership will hold a community forum to obtain community members' feedback on the overall implementation progress to date. At this forum, the PHA will also determine if new community health needs and priorities have developed and to revise the CHIP, as appropriate.

Providing the community with easy access to high quality data on significant quality of life issues will remain a priority of the PHA. As a result, it will continue its work with the City government and ACT for Alexandria to develop and maintain the Alexandria Community Indicators project.

If you, your organization or group have not been asked to help implement this community health improvement plan, please let the PHA know that you want to be a part of this community initiative and your area of interest by emailing [HealthierAlexandria@alexandriava.gov](mailto:HealthierAlexandria@alexandriava.gov).

## Appendices

### Glossary of Terms

*Access to Care* - Access to health services means the timely use of personal health services to achieve the best health outcomes. It requires 3 distinct steps: 1) Gaining entry into the health care system 2) Accessing a health care location where needed services are provided, and 3) Finding a health care provider with whom the patient can communicate and trust (Healthy People 2020).

*Adolescent Pregnancy* – pregnancy in females, aged 19, or younger.

*Built Environment* - the built environment consists of the following elements: land use patterns, the distribution across space of activities and the buildings that house them; the transportation system, the physical infrastructure of roads, sidewalk, bike paths, etc., as well as the service this system provides; and urban design, the arrangement and appearance of the physical elements in a community (Handy, Boarnet, et. al, 2002) <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12133739>

*Community Health Assessment (CHA)* - Community health assessments provide information for problem and asset identification and policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation (National Association of County & City Health Officials).

*Community Health Status* - the overall level and quality of health in a community, taking into account the composite status of all individuals and groups within that community and the health services available to them, as well as the environmental conditions in that area (Stony Brook Medicine).

*Cultural Competence* - Cultural competence is having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on varying cultural and community norms (National Education Association).

*Determinants of Health* - Many factors combine together to affect the health of individuals and communities. Whether people are healthy or not, is determined by their circumstances and environment. To a large extent, factors such as where we live, the state of our environment, genetics, our income and education level, and our relationships with friends and family all have considerable impacts on health, whereas the more commonly considered factors such as access and use of health care services often have less of an impact (World Health Organization).

*Evidence-Based Practice* - Applying the best available research results (evidence) when making decisions about health care. Health care professionals who perform evidence-based practice use research evidence along with clinical expertise and patient preferences. Systematic reviews (summaries of health care research results) provide information that aids in the process of evidence-based practice (Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality).

*Health* - Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (World Health Organization).

*Health Data* - Health data provide information about the occurrence of certain diseases and health conditions (New York State Department of Health).

*Health Equity* - Health equity is achieved when every person has the opportunity to "attain his or her full health potential" and no one is "disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances" (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

*Health Risks (Risky Behaviors)* – factors that contribute to health concerns problems (i.e. underage alcohol use, excess alcohol use, obesity, tobacco use).

*Life Expectancy* - Life expectancy is defined as the average number of years a population of a certain age would be expected to live, given a set of age-specific death rates in a given year (Healthy People 2020).

*Low Birth-weight* – weighing less than 5.5 pounds at birth (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

*Mortality Rate* – the measure of the frequency of occurrence of death in a defined population during a specified interval of time.

*Public Health* - Public health is the practice of preventing disease and promoting good health within groups of people, from small communities to entire countries (American Public Health Association).

*Social Norms* – Social norms are the behaviors and cues within a [society](#) or [group](#). This [sociological](#) term has been defined as "the rules that a group uses for appropriate and inappropriate values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors (Princeton University).

## Crosswalk of National and Local Plans and Documents

CHIP Priority Areas and Goals	Healthy People 2020	National Prevention Strategy	City Council Strategic Plan	Alexandria Aging Strategic Plan	Alexandria Children and Youth Master Plan	Alexandria Environmental Action Plan	Alexandria Housing Master Plan
<b><u>Priority Area: Access to Care</u></b>							
Goal: Improve access to care for all residents of Alexandria	X		X	X	X		
<b><u>Priority Area: Adolescent Health and Well-being</u></b>							
Goal: Improve the health, safety, and well-being of adolescents in Alexandria	X	X	X		X		
<b><u>Priority Area: Aging Well in Place</u></b>							
Goal: Enable older adults to age in their place of choice with appropriate services and supports.	X			X			X
<b><u>Priority Area: Clean and Smoke Free Air</u></b>							
Goal: Reduce the proportion of residents who currently smoke.	X	X			X		X
<b><u>Priority Area: Healthy Eating and Active Living</u></b>							
Goal: Increase the proportion of Alexandrians who are at a healthy weight.	X	X	X	X	X	X	
<b><u>Priority Area: HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care</u></b>							
Goal: Increase HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention education.	X	X					
<b><u>Priority Area: Maternal and Child Health</u></b>							
Goal: Improve the health and well-being of pregnant women and babies in the first year of life.	X	X			X		
<b><u>Priority Area: Social Stigma of Mental Illness</u></b>							
Goal: Increase community support and attention to reducing stigma and discrimination toward mental illness.	X	X	X		X		

### National Plans

Healthy People 2020

<http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/default.aspx>

National Prevention Strategy

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/initiatives/prevention/strategy/>

## Local Plans

City Council Strategic Plan

<http://alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/council/info/ApprovedStrategicPlan.pdf>

Alexandria Aging Strategic Plan

<http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/dchs/adultservices/Strategic%20Plan-%20Final.pdf>

Alexandria Children and Youth Master Plan

<http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/dchs/info/ChildrenYouthMasterPlan.pdf>

Alexandria Environmental Action Plan 2030

[http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/eco-city/EAP\\_FINAL\\_06\\_18\\_09.pdf](http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/tes/eco-city/EAP_FINAL_06_18_09.pdf)

Alexandria Housing Master Plan

<http://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedfiles/housing/info/RevisedHousingMasterPlanNov2013.pdf>

# CONCERN ABOUT REDUCTION OF GREEN SPACE IN NORTHWEST OLD TOWN

## AHRA DEVELOPMENT TRADES DENSITY FOR QUALITY OF LIFE IN NORTHWEST

Paul Hamilton, resident of Old Town Commons, at 910 Montgomery St., Alexandria VA  
Email: [Pham7276@gmail.com](mailto:Pham7276@gmail.com); Tel: 978-902-5672

I have been a resident of Old Town Commons for three years. I am very supportive of AHRA efforts to create mixed use communities based on leveraging real estate value to upgrade AHRA infrastructure.

### My Issue

What I am not please about is AHRA's virtual elimination of green space for AHRA families and subsequently all other Northwest Old Town families.

### The Situation

In order to create a vibrant community, you need adequate greenspace for adults, teens, and pre-teens. This means a safe, open space with recreational facilities similar to what is available in Southeast Old Town, Northeast Old Town, Del Ray, and the new Potomac Yards. It seems the value of this green space is recognized given the green space investment at Potomac Yards. However, at this point I see no similar needs recognition for the less affluent Northwest Old Town.

My rough analysis shows that the EYA/AHRA project, as successful as it is, has reduced green space per child by over 70%. Old Town Commons has a 1/4-acre park along with a 1/3-acre green space versus my estimate of over 2 acres in the previous AHRA James Bland developments. If you adjust for the number of residences and estimate 1.5 children per unit for AHRA only (no non AHRA units) the average green space square footage has gone from 318 sqft to 147 sqft. This is completely inadequate and not at all consistent with other sectors of Old Town.

Today the "award winning" Banjo Park is overrun and will not be able to be maintained. The park was designed for 3 to 6 year olds but each day after school it is crowded with teens and pre-teens playing soccer, football, and baseball. They have nowhere else to go. The grass was already replaced once in 2015 and after one year the landscaping has again completely deteriorated. This is not the fault of the children in the park. It is the fault of shortsighted planning leveraging unit density for family quality of life.

You might offer that the Northwest has Powhatan Park. However, this park is isolated, far from the existing residences of AHRA and others, and has been known to have safety issues. No responsible parent would send their children unaccompanied to this park as you can do in other Old Town parks in the middle of residential activity.

I appreciate AHRA's effort to upgrade infrastructure. However, AHRA and the commission should not sacrifice family quality of life for residential density. If this continues in 10+ years, you will once again have a community that is heavily made up of less privileged young families with inadequate outdoor recreational space for teens and pre-teens. The outcome will be an area of Old Town that is once again not as desirable to live in because short sighted planning has not afforded the same green space considerations given to wealthier areas of town. An action needs to be taken and guidelines need to be set for green space per child in Northwest Old Town.

### My Request

1. **Hold AHRA responsible to maintain green space equivalency across all past and future projects**
2. **Stop all AHRA developments until a formal study is completed on how much greenspace has been given up per child in new AHRA developments.**
3. **Develop a set of guidelines for creation of equivalent greenspace across all past & future AHRA developments.**

Attachment: Excel Spreadsheet with Green Space Calculation Estimates.

# AHRA Reduction of Green Space for Old Town Alexandra North West Residents

Green Space Reduction Per Child Calculations at New or Proposed AHRA Developments									
	# of Units	Total Acreage	Estimated Green Space %		Estimated Children per Unit	Total Children	Green Space Acreage per Child	Sq. Ft per Child	Reduction in Green Space
			Green Space %	Green Space Acreage					
Old James Bland Public Housing	194	8.5	50%	4.25	1.5	291	0.015	636	77%
New Old Town Commons	134	8.5	8%	0.68	1.5	201	0.003	147	
Existing Ramsey Public Housing	15	0.64	71%	0.4544	1.5	22.5	0.020	880	96%
Proposed Ramsey Replacement	53	0.64	10%	0.064	1.5	79.5	0.001	35	
Existing James Bland Public Housing	40	3.1	72%	2.232	1.5	60	0.037	1620	
Patrick Henry Madison Montgomery									

## Green Space Calculation for other Existing AHRA sites

	Units	Buildings	Parking	Total Block Dimensions	Total Block Area in Sq. Ft	Total Block Acreage	Total Building & Parking		% of Green Space
							Sq. Ft	Total Acree	
Patrick Henry Madison Montgomery	40	8	2	450L x 300W	135000	3.1	37800	0.9	72%
Existing Ramsey Public Housing	15	4	0			0.64	8100	0.2	71%

**Note:**

These are all rough estimates. There needs to be a formal analysis of this situation and guidelines set before additional AHRA construction should be approved.

RAMSEY UNDERGROUND  
GARAGE

design violations

Submitted at 2/4/16 PC Hearing  
by Mykhaylo Panarin

# Calculating the Turning Radius of the Vehicle

- There are two ways to calculate turning radius of a vehicle:
- Curb-to-curb - indicates that a street would have to be this wide before a car can make a U-turn and not hit a street curb with a wheel
- Wall-to-wall - denotes how far apart the two walls would have to be to allow a U-turn without scraping the walls
- Because the Ramsey garage entrance is on the alley and “walled in” by surrounding houses, the wall-to-wall radius should be used for all Ramsey garage calculations.

# Level of Service for Vehicular Circulation

**Table 1**

<u>Level of Service (LOS)</u>	<u>Traffic Flow Description</u>	<u>Parking Condition Description</u>
A	Free Flow	Drivers can enter stall with Virtually no hesitation or delay
B	Stable Flow	Drivers have above average Freedom in entering the stall
C	Stable Flow	Drivers feel somewhat Restricted but not objectionably so
D	Approaching Instability	Drivers have little freedom to Maneuver
E	Unstable Flow	Substantial restriction and delay
F	Forced Flow	Most drivers have difficulty ; Some choose to park elsewhere Rather than attempt to park in this location

■ Landscape Architectural Graphic Standards ISBN 978-0-470-06797-0

# Design Parameters in numbers

## RECOMMENDED DESIGN PARAMETERS FOR VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

Design Standard For:  
Non-Parking Roadways  
and Express Ramps

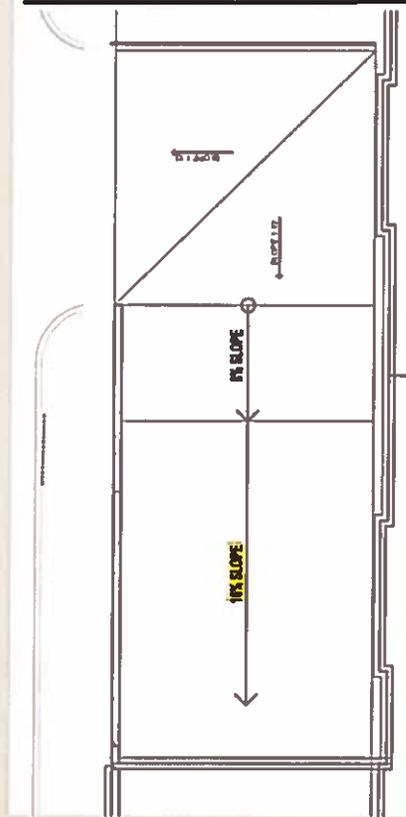
		<u>LOS D</u>	<u>LOS C</u>	<u>LOS B</u>	<u>LOS A</u>
Clearance to obstructions	2	0'6"	1'0"	1'6"	2'0"
Radius, turning (outside front-wheel)	3,4	24'0"	30'0"	36'0"	42'0"
Express ramp slope (more than 6 ft rise)		14%	12%	10%	8%

2. From edge of lane to wall, column, parked vehicle or other obstruction, per AASHTO 1990 Figure III-25
3. LOS D per AASHTO 1990 Figure II-1
4. Left turns @ radius are LOS ( )+; right turns are LOS ( )-

# Garage slope I

Proposed 16% grade

Fails to satisfy LOS D of 14%



## RECOMMENDED DESIGN PARAMETERS FOR VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

Design Standard For:  
Non-Parking Roadways  
and Express Ramps

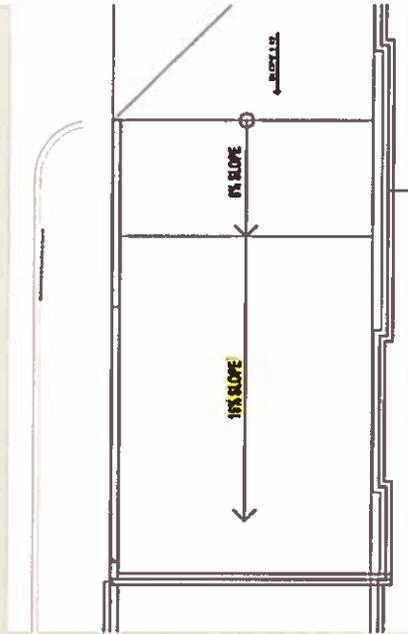
Clearance to obstructions  
Radius, turning  
(outside front wheel)

	<u>LOS D</u>	<u>LOS C</u>	<u>LOS B</u>	<u>LOS A</u>
2	0'6"	1'0"	1'6"	2'0"
3,4	24'0"	30'0"	36'0"	42'0"
Express ramp slope (more than 6 ft rise)	14%	12%	10%	8%

# Garage slope II

Proposed 16% grade

Evanston, IL allows 12% max



## Additional Design Guidelines for Parking Lots and Garages City of Evanston

These guidelines supplement the requirements found in the Evanston Zoning Code and must be followed unless exceptions are approved by the Directors of Public Works and Community Development. These do not apply to single family houses.

### **Ramp Slopes**

If there are adjacent parking stalls the slope will be 6% maximum

If there are no adjacent parking stalls:

The slope will be 6% maximum if the ramp has no snow melting

The slope will be 12% maximum if it has snow melting

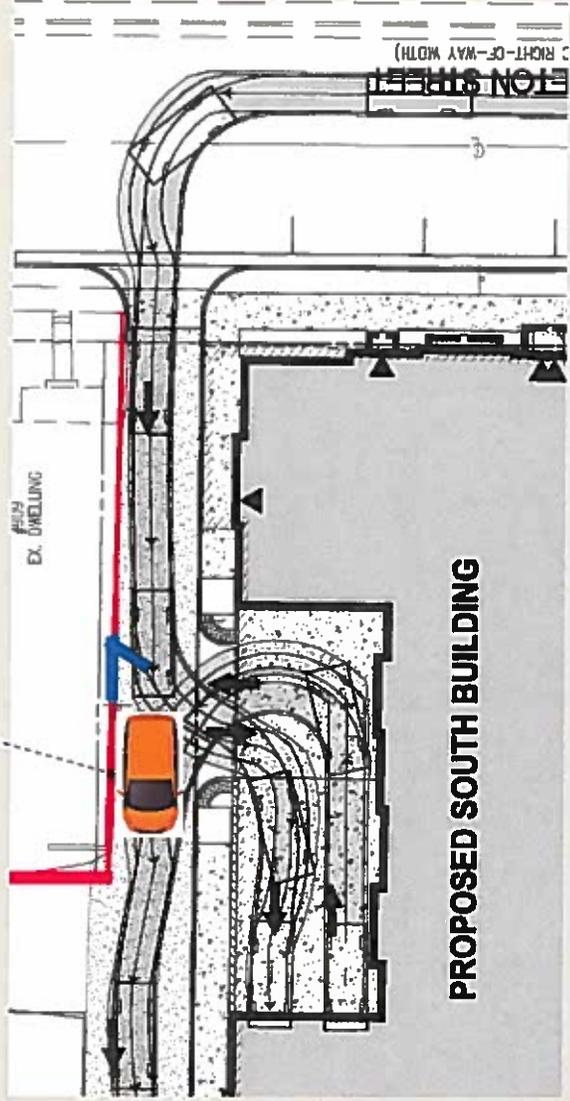
The slope will be 15% maximum if it is inside a building

# Proposed garage entrance site



# Garage entrance obstacles II

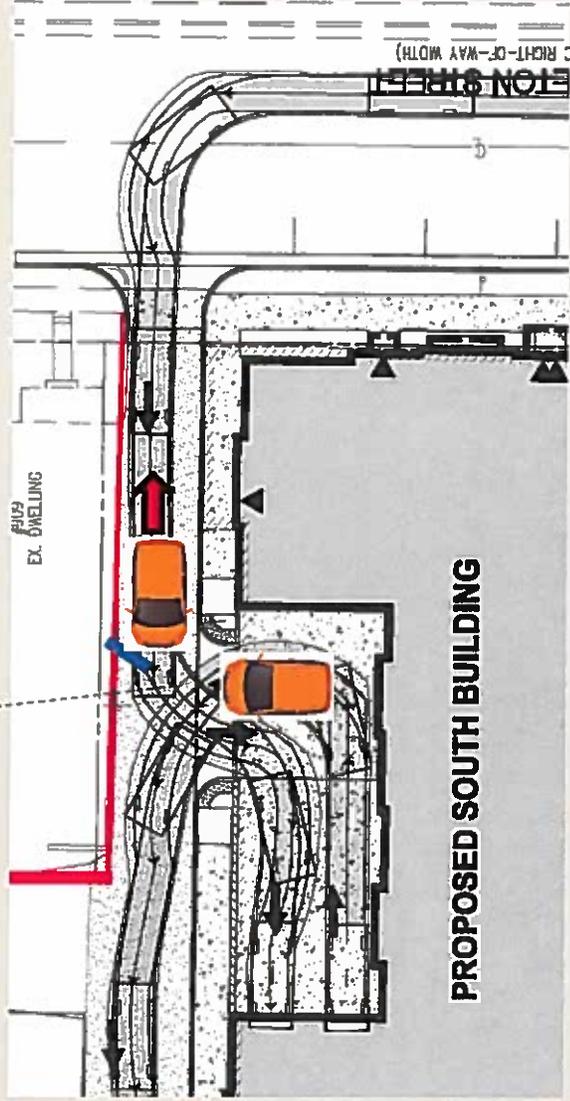
Owner of 909 Pendleton St loading/unloading belongings through side door and blocks ALL garage traffic



# Garage entrance obstacles III

Someone has to back up in this situation.

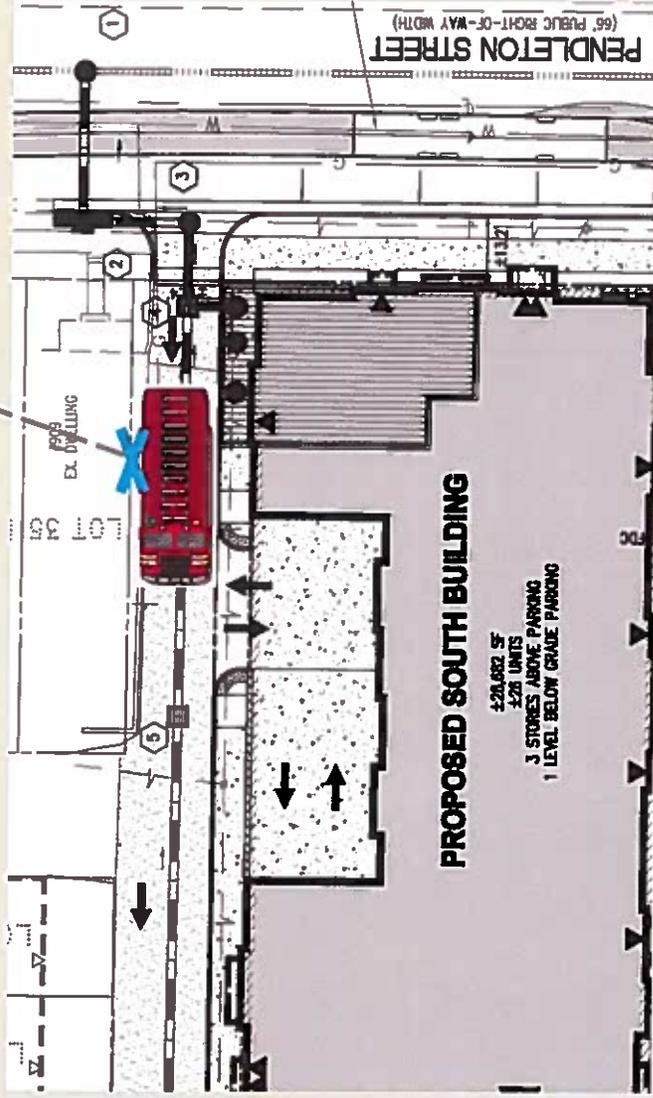
Car backing in the alley can crash in 909 Pendleton St dwelling during this maneuver



# Firetruck limitations

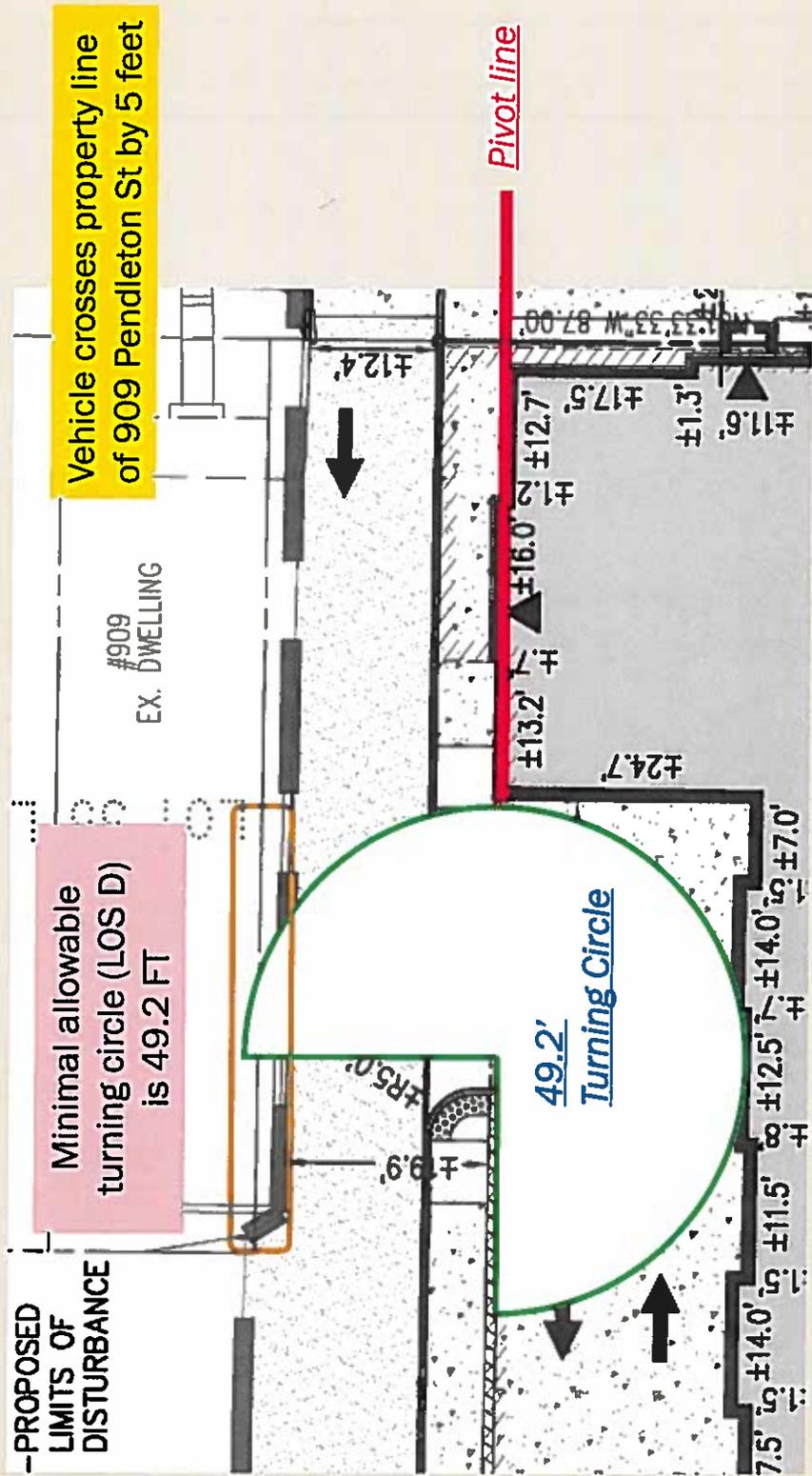
- Alley width is 12 ft between the curb and house wall at 909 Pendleton St
- Firetruck width is 9 ft
- Firemen need 5 ft access on each side of fire apparatus and access to right side of firetruck is blocked by building at 909 Pendleton St

BLOCKED ACCESS





# Entering and exiting garage

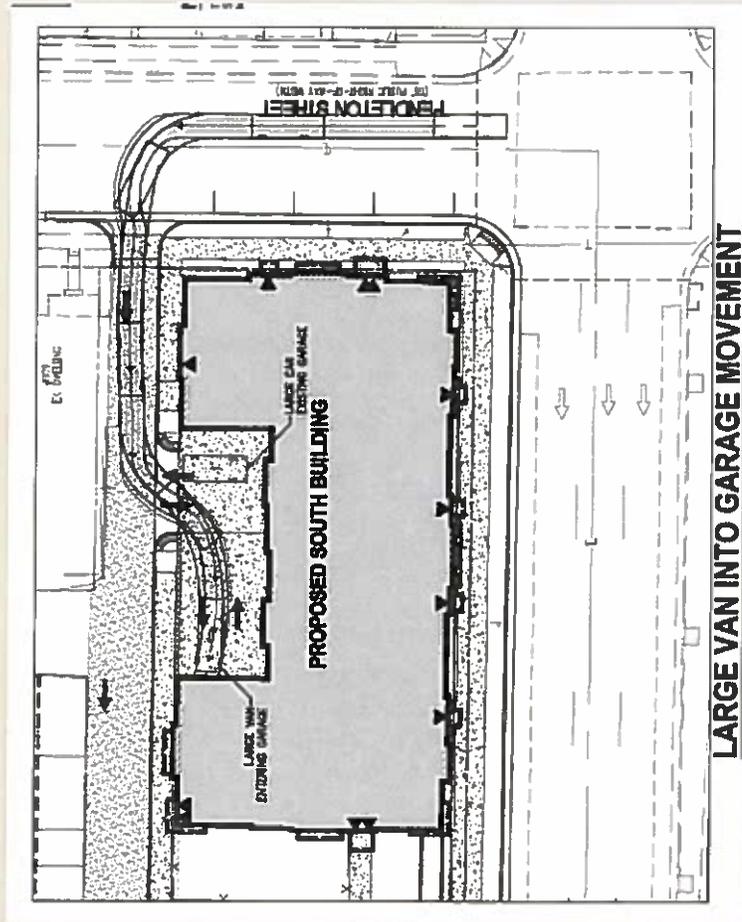


# Entering and exiting garage

There is no diagram for vans or other large vehicles exiting garage in the ARHA application

## Why?

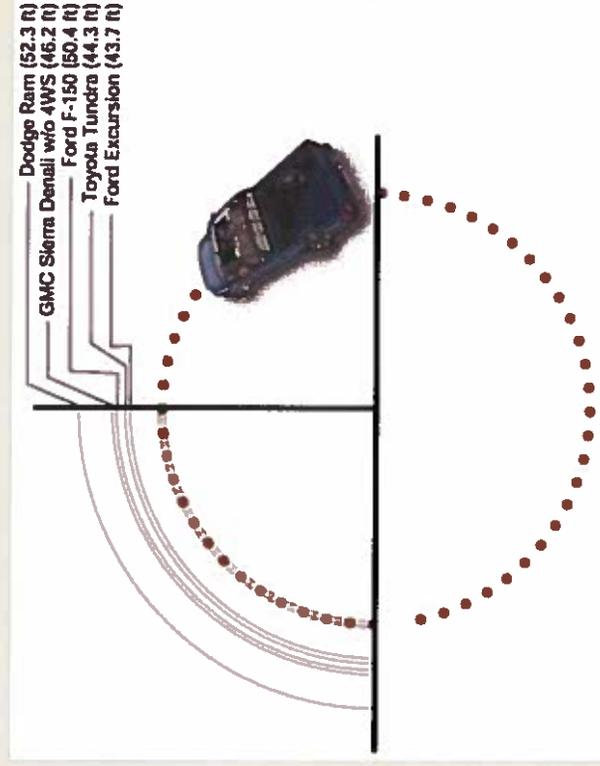
It is **NOT POSSIBLE** for large van or other vehicle to exit the garage towards Wythe St with 19.9ft turning radius (39.8 ft turning circle)



# Entering and exiting garage

- NO CAR WITH TURNING CIRCLE (wall to wall) EXCEEDING **38 FT** IS CAPABLE OF EXITING GARAGE WITHOUT BACKING UP
- Lincoln town car - 42 FT
- GMC Terrain - 42.6 FT
- Toyota Camry - 38.7 FT
- City of Piedmont, CA is using 45 FT as a minimal clearance radius for a STANDARD car

<http://www.ci.piedmont.ca.us/publicworks/docs/planning/parking.pdf>

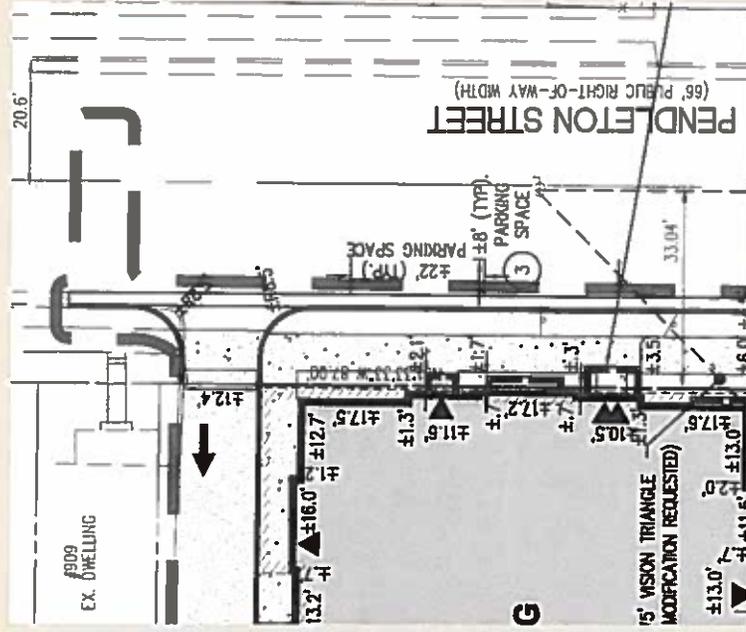


# Concerns Presented to ARHA and the City of Alexandria:

- Can ARHA demonstrate that a VAN equipped for handicapped mobility can exit the garage in a single maneuver?
- What transportation level of service was used in the garage planning and design?
- Are there other successful examples- in Alexandria, Virginia, or nationwide- of similar garage projects that exit into a narrow public alley bounded by a private property wall? If so, what are the turning circle and alley width for similar projects?

# Concerns Presented to ARHA and the City of Alexandria:

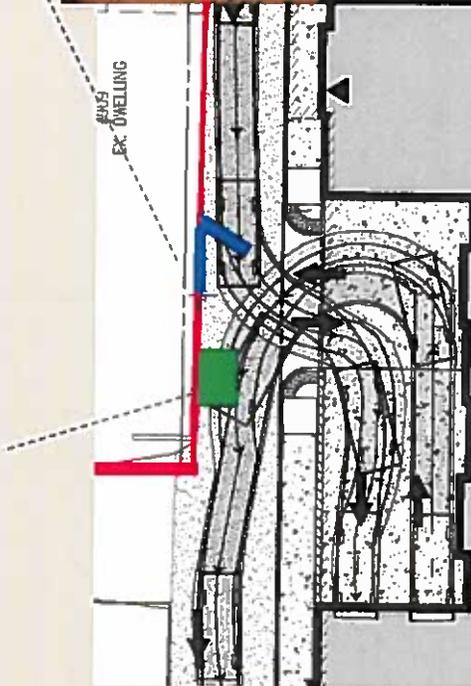
- What is the justification for removing parking space in front of 909 Pendleton St?



# Garage entrance obstacles I

Trash bin for garbage pickup placed in the alley (deduct 3 ft. from effective alley width)

Side door to the backyard opens into the alley (deduct 3 ft. from effective alley width)



**PROPOSED SOUTH BUILDING**



694 N. Patrick St., Ramsey, N.J. Submitted at 2/4/16 PC

PHOTO # NH 94111 Station Commandant and Aides inspect the "Nth" Mk. XIII torpedo built at the Alexandria Torpedo Station

