



6 November 2025

Members of the Alexandria Planning Commission,

As the Alexandria leadership team for YIMBYs of Northern Virginia, we are excited to see three housing developments on today's docket, in addition to two subdivisions and Coordinated Development District amendments to enable a forthcoming development, and we ask you to vote yes on all of them.

Together, these developments will add **676** desperately needed new homes to Alexandria.

Docket item 4, 1625 Prince St, will convert the upper floors of an office building close to the King St Metro station to 85 homes. We would like to note that you are once again being asked to approve a parking reduction for homes within a quarter mile of a Metro station. As the staff report notes, the location is a 3-4 minute walk from the station and has a walk score of 98. Legalizing parking flexibility will help homes in locations like this, where residents can choose whether or not they'd like to have a car, to be built more quickly to meet our city's needs.

Docket item 6, 2051 Jamieson Avenue, will convert an underutilized office building to 187 homes, including 17 committed affordable homes, providing more opportunities to live close to both the Eisenhower Avenue and King Street Metro stations. We'd like to note that this development required amendments to the 1990 Carlyle SUP to allow residential use and additional height at this site. We'd ask you to consider changes to the current SUP-based block-by-block land use restrictions for Carlyle to allow more flexibility for the neighborhood to change over time as it matures.

Docket item 7, 4880 Mark Center Drive, will build **402** homes adjacent to the Mark Center, the Del Pepper Building, the transit center, and a future West End Transitway stop. We'd like to note that this development also requires a parking reduction, despite its location next to a transit center and major workplaces. The development will benefit the community by improving sidewalks and allowing for a pedestrian entrance to the Winkler Preserve along Mark Center Drive if NOVA Parks chooses to add one.

Docket item 8 will amend the Small Area Plan and Coordinated Development District for Potomac Yard to legalize 561 more homes than the plan allowed previously, plus additional flexibility for residential density. We appreciate the city revisiting the land use plan surrounding our newest Metro station to reflect that there is a much greater demand for homes than there is for offices.

We hope Alexandria will continue to welcome new homes of all types, all price points, and in all parts of our city to address our regional housing crisis and make our city better for everyone.

Phoebe Coy, Alex Goyette, Peter Sutherland, Stephanie Elms and Yasir Nagi
YIMBYs of Northern Virginia Alexandria leads

[EXTERNAL]Support Items 4, 6, 7, and 8

From Peter Carlson <peter.d.carlson@gmail.com>

Date Tue 11/4/2025 11:36 AM

To PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

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Planning Commission,

Please support the proposals on your docket at items 4, 6, 7, and 8. Item 8 is particularly exciting, as it will allow hundreds more homes that were originally envisioned adjacent to Potomac Yard Metro. This is exactly the kind of project we need to see more of in Alexandria as we try to build out more transit-oriented homes. Thank you.

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[EXTERNAL]Support Items 4, 6, 7, and 8

From Lindsey Bachman <lindsey.bachman@gmail.com>

Date Tue 11/4/2025 10:57 AM

To PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

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Planning Commission,

Please support the proposals on your docket at items 4, 6, 7, and 8. Item 8 is particularly exciting, as it will allow hundreds more homes that were originally envisioned adjacent to Potomac Yard Metro. I live in Lynhaven - just across Route 1 from this project. This is exactly the kind of project we need to see more of in Alexandria as we try to build out more transit-oriented homes. Thank you.

Lindsey Bachman

City Resident

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To: Members of City Council and Planning Commission

From: Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee

Re: Eisenhower East Block 3 and 4880 Mark Center Drive Affordable Housing Plans

Date: October 31, 2025

The Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC) met virtually on October 15 to review two separate development proposals: 1) the proposed development of a 767-unit apartment building at 2425 Mill Road (Eisenhower East Block 3) and 2) a 402-unit property to be developed at 4880 Mark Center Drive. We overwhelmingly rejected the proposed affordable housing plan for the Eisenhower East project. We approved the plan for the Mark Center project, but with reservations. We are taking this opportunity to explain the reasoning behind our recommendations.

2425 Mill Road

The proposed Eisenhower East Block 3 project is subject to the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (EESAP). That plan seeks to promote affordable housing in the area by requiring any new residential development in excess of the existing 2003 base to set aside at least 10% of its units for households making 60% or less of the area median income. Per the Office of Housing's calculations, the 2425 Mill Road development therefore should include 38 units.

Citing a commissioned third-party financial analysis, the developer contends that the development is no longer economically feasible as planned with the 38 affordable units. It noted that the increase in interest rates and the cutbacks affecting the federal workforce (among other factors) made it difficult to obtain the financing required. It also assumes that it will be able to realize annual rent increases of only 2.7% or less going forward in the more difficult environment.

AHAAC members disputed these contentions as grounds for reducing the required affordable housing commitment. There remains strong and still-unmet demand for rental housing in the region, which has contributed to continued year-over-year increases in rents. In fact, the Eisenhower East area experienced double-digit percentage increases in rents for 1-bedroom and 2-bedroom apartments from 2024 to 2025. While economic and market conditions are uncertain, it seems eminently realistic that the developer would be able to realize higher rents going forward than it currently envisions. Moreover, the timing of the actual development – likely 3 years out – makes it difficult to place too much stock in any current market prognostications.

While AHAAC members appreciated the increased costs of development, several noted that such increases affect both market-rate and affordable housing. In fact, affordable housing developments are even more hindered by higher costs because such projects already require substantial subsidy to be economically viable. In an era of threatened (and quite possibly

reduced) affordable housing subsidies, it is hard to sympathize too much with a developer faced with lower potential profits on higher-end housing.

The Committee ultimately rejected the developer's affordable housing proposal because it violated both the requirement set forth in the EESAP and the calculations developed by the Office of Housing. While AHAAC appreciates the complexity of carrying out new residential development in today's market, as well as the challenges associated with the building requirements along the Eisenhower corridor, the Committee's mission is to advocate for efforts to address the city's overwhelming affordable housing shortage. In our view, rising financing and construction costs should not be an excuse to reduce a development's required affordability commitment. That affordability requirement should be viewed as a project cost that needs to be accommodated in the overall development plan.

AHAAC members are loathe to create a precedent in which affordable housing can be sacrificed to make high-end market-rate housing more feasible. Our position is that the City should adhere to the affordability requirements it has set forth – requirements the developer accepted when it initially submitted its proposal. If current conditions make the initial project design less feasible, then it is beholden upon the developer to create a new plan that accommodates the new reality – *without sacrificing the required affordable units.*

4880 Mark Center Drive

AHAAC approved the affordable housing plan set forth by the developer of the proposed 4880 Mark Center Drive complex. While we obviously would have liked to see more than the one unit required, the developer is in compliance with the area affordability regulation.

Our concern here lies more with the amount of the calculated affordable housing contribution – which we realize is voluntary. The Office of Housing calculated it as \$1.81 million, while the developer has calculated it as \$1.3 million – a difference of nearly \$520,000. The discrepancy arose due to different understandings of the appropriate base density. City staff uses the underlying “by-right” density associated with underlying zoning, whereas the applicant used a figure based on the density set forth in the Coordinated Development District in which the property is located. (A similar discrepancy arose with the Eisenhower East Block 3 proposal discussed above, with the developer proposing a contribution \$772,000 lower than what the Office of Housing had calculated.)

As Council may recall, this issue has come before AHAAC multiple times this year, beginning with the proposed development of the 1900 N. Beauregard property. As we detailed in our letter of March 11, the City Attorney has reinterpreted section 5-608 of the zoning code so that the underlying zoning – not the CDD requirements – determines the “by right” development potential of a parcel (the number of units a developer is allowed to create without being subject to any affordable housing requirements). Use of the “by right” base density as opposed to the CDD base density has implications for the recommended affordable housing contribution.

As co-chairs, we met individually with all but one of the Council members and the City Manager in the past few months to discuss this and other issues related to affordable housing in the city.

We have emphasized the need for Council to clarify which base density takes precedence for properties located in CDDs. We urge the Council to resolve the issue in a way that ensures that the City receives the maximum number of affordable units and the maximum amount of voluntary contributions.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Shelley McCabe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Shelley McCabe
AHAAC co-chair

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Sean Zielenbach". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Sean Zielenbach
AHAAC co-chair

[EXTERNAL]Support Items 4, 6, 7, and 8

From Alexandra Laney <alexandra.n.laney@gmail.com>

Date Wed 11/5/2025 7:42 AM

To PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

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Planning Commission,

Please support the proposals on your docket at items 4, 6, 7, and 8.

Item 8 is particularly exciting, as it will allow hundreds more homes that were originally envisioned adjacent to Potomac Yard Metro. This is exactly the kind of project we need to see more of in Alexandria as we try to build out more transit-oriented homes.

Thank you

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[EXTERNAL]Planning Commission Written Comments

From Ian Smith <gm.smithir@gmail.com>

Date Wed 11/5/2025 9:12 PM

To PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

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Hello,

My name is Ian Smith and I am a resident of Alexandria.

I am writing in support of the following in the upcoming November 6th meeting of the planning commission. I'm particular, I am most excited about Docket items 4 and 8 due to their close proximity to where I live in Rosemont:

Docket item 4, 1625 Prince St, will convert the upper floors of an office building close to the King St Metro station to 85 homes.

Docket item 6, 2051 Jamieson Avenue, will convert an underutilized office building in Carlyle to 187 homes, including 17 committed affordable homes.

Docket item 7, 4880 Mark Center Drive, will build 402 homes adjacent to the Mark Center, the Del Pepper Building, the transit center, and a future West End Transitway stop.

Docket item 8 will amend the Small Area Plan and Coordinated Development District for Potomac Yard to legalize 561 more homes than the plan allowed previously, plus additional flexibility for residential density. This will pave the way for a forthcoming development proposal.

Thank you!

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