

[EXTERNAL]Carpenter's Shelter support for Samuel Madden Homes project

Shannon Steene <ssteene@carpentersshelter.org>

Mon 2/6/2023 4:15 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

📎 1 attachments (47 KB)

Samuel Madden Homes ltr of supp.pdf;

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Good afternoon. As the Planning Commission considers the Samuel Madden Homes redevelopment during their Tuesday evening meeting, I wanted to share the attached letter of support that we recently sent to the city council.

If you have questions or would like any additional information, please let me know.

With appreciation for your consideration-
Shannon

Shannon Steene, Executive Director
(he, him, his)

Carpenter's Shelter

930 N. Henry Street

Alexandria, VA 22314

(703) 548-7500 ext. 206

<https://carpentersshelter.org/>



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**Carpenter's
Shelter**

At The Hubert N. Hoffman, Jr. Center for Homeless Families

930 N. Henry Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

t: 703 548 7500
f: 703 548 3167

United Way #8228
CFC #87293

CarpentersShelter.org

February 6, 2023

Mayor Justin Wilson
Vice Mayor Amy B. Jackson
Councilman Canek Aguirre
Councilmember Sarah Bagley
Councilman John T. Chapman
Councilwoman Alyia Gaskins
Councilman Kirk McPike
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mayor Wilson and Members of the Council:

As a next-door neighbor to this project, Carpenter's Shelter strongly urges approval by the Planning Commission and the Alexandria City Council of The Samuel Madden Homes redevelopment. We offer our strongest support based on the broad merits of the project, and in particular, its addition of affordable housing within the city. We bring the following points to your attention:

- Alexandria has experienced a marked loss (nearly 90%) of market-affordable housing to rising rents or demolition/conversion to luxury housing. The supply of affordable housing in the City is extremely limited.
- Approval of this project affirms the City's commitment to racial equity by supporting quality affordable housing in this neighborhood where minority communities have lived for decades. Relocating to another area of the city is not acceptable when redevelopment of this site is possible and desirable.

Living in Alexandria is becoming increasingly unaffordable to many of those who grew up and work in our City, including the vast majority of City employees. It erodes our sense of community and exacerbates traffic and parking problems when employees cannot afford to live near where they work.

Carpenter's Shelter is proud to be a community leader in preventing and ending homelessness. Homelessness is, in large part, due to the unavailability of affordable housing. One of the biggest delays to getting shelter residents rehoused is finding somewhere to live that has a reasonable rent relative to their income.

In conclusion, we ask that the City Council once again demonstrate its long-term commitment to affordable housing in Alexandria and approve the Samuel Madden Homes project as a source of increased affordable housing in our community.

Sincerely,

Shannon Steene
Executive Director

c: Carpenter's Shelter Board of Directors

[EXTERNAL]Letter to Planning Commission for inclusion in Feb 7 meeting

Shawn Eyer <shawn.eyer@gmail.com>

Mon 2/6/2023 5:44 PM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from shawn.eyer@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please see attached. Thank you!

Shawn Eyer

A.L.M. in Management, Harvard University, Class of 2021

<https://blogs.harvard.edu/seyer/> - portfolio of recent work

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/shawneyer/>

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Alexandria, Virginia

Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

220 North Washington Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2521
(703) 746-4554



February 7, 2023

Alexandria Planning Commission
Nathan Macek, Chairman

Re: Samuel Madden Homes – 899 and 999 North Henry Street
Master Plan Amendment #2022-00006
Rezoning #2022-00009
DSUP #2022-10020

Dear Chairman Macek and members of the Planning Commission:

On behalf of the City's Historic Alexandria Resources Commission (HARC), I am writing to express HARC's grave concerns regarding the proposal for redevelopment of the Samuel Madden Homes. The Samuel Madden project is located entirely within the historic Parker-Gray District and the Commission has expressed its concerns at the four concept review meetings of the Board of Architectural Review. We note that the BAR *did not* endorse the scale and mass of this proposal and must reiterate these grave concerns for your Commission to address.

While HARC recognizes the need in the D.C. region for affordable housing, the proposed 75' height, mass and scale of this project are in direct violation of the integrity of the low-scale residential character of the Parker-Gray Historic District and of a prominent gateway to Old Town. Section 10-201(G) of the Zoning Ordinance states that one of the purposes of the historic district is: "To safeguard the district's approaches and significant routes of tourist access by assuring that development in and along those transportation arteries be in keeping with the district's historical, cultural, and traditional setting." These two huge buildings within the northwestern portion of the historic district will cause serious damage to its integrity and its character.

The proposal also violates the Braddock Road East Master Plan's specific expectations previously developed by the community (1) regarding height, scale, and massing at this site (pp. 46, 51). (2) It violates the design guidelines discussed in the Braddock Road East Master Plan (p. 67 *et seq.*), and (3) it violates the Plan's guideline that "publicly accessible, ground level open space will be provided to meet the needs of residents (especially children) in the new development' (p. 52). The Planning Commission should be gravely concerned about the lack of year-round sunlight in the building's minimal open spaces.

This project has changed so little from its inception that it is clear that the very urgent and legitimate concerns about its impact on the purpose and Design Guidelines of the Parker-Gray Historic District and the historic preservation ordinance itself are being ignored. We ask, therefore, that the

Planning Commission find that this ARHA project does not establish a precedent for applying the bonus height and density provisions to other projects in either of the local historic districts.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shawn Eyer", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Shawn Eyer, Chairman
Historic Alexandria Resources Commission

cc: James Spencer, Chairman, Alexandria Board of Architectural Review
Members, Alexandria Board of Architectural Review

February 3, 2023

Alexandria Planning Commission
Attn: Mr. Macek, Chair
Alexandria City Hall
301 King St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mr. Macek:

On behalf of the Executive Board of ALIVE! please consider the following as our written testimony in support of the redevelopment of the Samuel Madden Homes.

For more than 50 years, ALIVE! has provided food, transitional housing, basic furniture and housewares, and emergency financial support to help families in crisis pay for medical bills and utilities. Founded in 1969 as Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically by 14 faith communities in response to rising levels of poverty, ALIVE! has grown to 49-member interfaith congregations. It works with many community partners, and government agencies to reach people in need.

At the end of 2021, the Alexandria Redevelopment & Housing Authority (ARHA) selected Fairstead, Mill Creek Residential, and the Communities Group to work with the agency to reimagine and redevelop the Samuel Madden public housing site to create new affordable and mixed-income housing, community resources, and public open space. Since the selection, the team has been working with ARHA, the City of Alexandria, residents of the Samuel Madden Homes, and community stakeholders to refine the development plans.

ALIVE! recognizes the redevelopment of the Samuel Madden Homes as an opportunity to extend our reach to serve more people facing poverty and food insecurity. Traditionally, ALIVE! distributes free bags of groceries (produce, chicken, eggs, bread) at three outdoors locations once a month on Saturday mornings, and through outdoor pop-up food distributions throughout the month. This proposed redevelopment will allow for the creation of a free food distribution outlet, or a “food-hub”. The food hub concept creates a safe and inviting space for people to come access food and expands the hours when people can seek assistance. It is a holistic approach to food security. In other words, this development will help us create a one-stop-shop for the community, and will put people in need first by inviting them inside to find help.

ALIVE! serves all people and this space will be available for any city resident who needs food and support services. For those who live in the neighborhood and in new development, and those in adjacent areas. Poverty impacts all people and all neighborhoods have people in need, Old-Town Alexandrians are no exception. Communities thrive when all people are welcomed and feel comfortable in their environment. Since this food hub will look similar to a traditional grocery store

it will help to reduce the stigma associated with seeking food assistance, and will create a space for service navigators and volunteers to connect with our neighbors in need.

Further, the level of food insecurity is on the rise in Alexandria, and the emergency food benefits for low-income families through SNAP that were put in place during the pandemic are about to expire. Being a part of the new vision for the Samuel Madden Homes will help ALIVE! grow its impact and reach even more families in need throughout Alexandria. Through our food hubs, ALIVE! volunteers and staff build relationships to help people thrive. This will give us a central location and allow more people to access food in a safe and welcoming environment reflective of the nature, spirit and generosity of our citizenry.

In our current location, people enter for groceries and leave connected to other support services, such as rental assistance, educational, workforce, and health care services. The space in the new development will do the same.

ALIVE! is also proud to be in a location that serves people in other ways, including having an early childcare center, Hopkins House, with adjacent space. ALIVE! imagines there will be opportunities to engage families in gardening, healthy eating and more. The need is evident. Since the pandemic, ALIVE! has expanded from serving about 400 families a month to hitting a peak of 5,000 during the height of the pandemic. For a short time, this number leveled to about 3,000 households, but the reality of decreases in SNAP benefits and increased costs are again impacting the numbers of households who need some level of assistance, and ALIVE! is once again serving nearly 5,000 households monthly. Food insecurity can be temporary, or recurrent. Our goal is to provide a place where we hope that by providing the very basics, people can focus on what will make them thrive and feel whole.

We are proud to be part of this project with Fairstead, Mill Creek Residential and support approval by this body.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Ayers, MPA
Executive Director

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 6, 2023

TO: CHAIRMAN MACEK AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: KARL MORITZ, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

SUBJECT: DSUP #2022-10020/SAMUEL MADDEN HOMES REDEVELOPMENT
(DOCKET ITEM #6)

ISSUE:

This memorandum serves as an update to the Samuel Madden redevelopment project being heard by Planning Commission on February 7, 2023. The update covers some condition updates (both acceptable to the applicant) and addresses specific questions raised during the pre-hearing briefings with Planning Commissioners.

Pedestrian/Streetscape

The following condition is proposed to be updated to reflect the phasing of the two-way street conversion on Madison and Montgomery streets:

Updated staff report condition 29 (h)

~~Install audible pedestrian countdown signals and pedestrian activated pushbuttons in accordance with City Standards. All pedestrian activated push buttons shall be accessible per ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG).~~

The design for the signal plans for the conversion of Madison Street and Montgomery Street outlined in Condition 60 shall include pedestrian-activated, accessible pedestrian signals for all crossings and approaches.

Green Building

The following condition is proposed to be updated to include reference to the proposed EUI for both buildings and requirement for EUI documentation.

Updated staff report condition 45

The project shall comply with the requirements of the current City of Alexandria Green Building Policy at the time of DSUP approval. Diligent pursuit and achievement of this certification shall be monitored through these requirements unless exempted by the certification rating systems and the Green Building Policy:

- a. Provide evidence of the project's registration with LEED, Green Globes, or Earthcraft (or equivalent) and any additional programs proposed in the Preliminary Plan submission with the submission of the first Final Site Plan and provide a draft checklist from the P&Z website showing how the project plans to achieve the certification and clearly indicate that requirements for the priority performance points are being met as defined by the City of Alexandria's Green Building Policy. *
- b. Provide an updated copy of the draft certification scorecard/checklist prior to building permit release for above-grade construction to show compliance with the Green Building Policy. **
- c. Provide updated building energy performance analysis and documentation of anticipated building energy use intensity (EUI) (energy use per sq. ft.) of 29.3 or lower for the north building and 45 or less for the south building prior to release of the building permits for above-grade construction. **
- d. Provide a draft commissioning plan and verification, if required by the Green Building Rating System and the building code, from a certified third-party reviewer that includes items "i" through "v" below, prior to receiving building permits for above-grade construction. **
 - i. A narrative describing the activities that will be accomplished during each phase of commissioning, including the personnel intended to accomplish each of the activities.
 - ii. A listing of the specific equipment, appliances, or systems to be tested and a description of the tests to be performed.
 - iii. Functions to be tested including, but not limited to, calibrations and economizer controls.
 - iv. Conditions under which the test will be performed. Testing shall affirm winter and summer design conditions and full outside air conditions.
 - v. Measurable criteria for performance.
- e. Provide updated water efficiency documentation for the priority performance points as defined by the City of Alexandria's Green Building Policy prior to building permit release for above-grade construction. **
- f. Provide updated documentation for the indoor environmental quality priority performance points as defined by the City of Alexandria's Green Building Policy prior to the release of building permits for above-grade construction. **
- g. Provide evidence that design phase credits (for the certifying party) have been submitted by the first Certificate of Occupancy. ***
- h. Provide evidence showing that the requirements for priority performance points for Energy Use Reduction, Water Efficiency and Indoor Environmental Quality are being met as defined by the City of Alexandria's Green Building Policy for Design Phase credits to the U.S. Green Building Council, Green Globes, or Earthcraft (or equivalent) prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. ***
- i. Provide documentation of actual EUI performance and applicable green building certification prior to ~~approval~~ release of the performance bond clearly indicating that the priority performance

j.	<p>points requirement for Energy Use Reduction, Water Efficiency, and Indoor Environmental Quality have been achieved as defined by the City of Alexandria's Green Building Policy. ****</p> <p>Failure to achieve the <u>green building conditions above certification level</u>, as required by the City of Alexandria's Green Building Policy, will be evaluated by City Staff to determine whether a good faith, reasonable, and documented effort was made to achieve the certification level to the satisfaction of the Director of P&Z.</p>
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Schools

ACPS has provided the following responses to the school questions raised below.

1. *ACPS lists a capacity 800 for Jefferson Houston PreK-8 School and 350 for Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School (though as a practical matter it has recently housed over 400 students), and the current enrollment at the schools is 637 at Jefferson Houston and 343 and Naomi L. Brooks. Therefore, neither school is at or above capacity as reported in Section J on p. 30 of staff report.*

ACPS response: Capacity for Jefferson Houston is 734. As of Sept 30, 2022 the enrollment is 623 which puts the school at 96% utilization. Naomi Brooks has a capacity of 350 and 329 enrollment as of Sept 30, 2022 which puts it at a 94% capacity. Between 90-110% is the goal for ACPS. Currently, approximately 62 students attend ACPS for all grade levels who live in these blocks. A potential net addition of 226 students, spread across the affected schools (NB, JH, GWMS and ACHS) would have an impact to the capacity at all schools.

2. *In addition, Jefferson Houston is a PreK-8 school, so the north block of this development is served by a different middle school than George Washington Middle School.*

ACPS response: While Jefferson Houston is K-8, not all students in the JH zone go to JH for 6-8. They have the option to go to GWMS. GWMS has capacity at 1150 and has 1367 as of Sept 30, 2022. The utilization rate is 124%, making it over-capacity.

3. *Are the projections of students at this site inclusive of existing enrolled students? Is this a projection of total students or net new students? If total, what is the current count of Samuel Madden-generated students?*

ACPS response: The student generation rate gives what the expected number of students would be for the development. If the existing students remained at their school, the site would generate net 226 students. The report states an estimated 288 students total across development blocks. As stated above, 62 students currently attend ACPS from Samuel Madden.

Parking

Will residents be able to get Residential Parking Permits?

The applicant was asked to do a study to determine if residents would be eligible for RPP but elected not do a parking study; therefore, future residents will be ineligible for a RPP.

Master Plan Conformance

How do the buildings achieve a height above what is recommended in the BEMP (60' for the south building, 70' for the north building)? Including response to HARC's concern regarding height, scale and massing.

Height in the RMF zone is established by the governing small area plan. The BEMP states the following with respect to Samuel Madden (p.51): "Maximum height ranges are shown in Section 7 of this Plan. The final building heights will be further evaluated through the DSUP process. In order to facilitate walkable streets and improve transition with adjacent residential buildings, a building 'shoulder' (an upper-level setback of the building façade) will be required where appropriate." The use of Section 7-700 allows for an additional 25' where the permitted building height is above 50'. In this case, the applicant is using an additional 15' of bonus height at the south building and an additional 7' of bonus height at the north building.

Scale and mass are also considered with each project during the development review and BAR concept review processes. The BEMP requires – and the project meets - that all new development: provide appropriate transitions in scale and massing; include architectural variety reflecting neighborhood tradition; create green edges along streets; contribute to walkable streets and provide underground parking.

It violates the design guidelines discussed in the Braddock Road East Master Plan (p. 67 et seq.).

The proposed project meets the BEMP guidelines which note "Exemplary urban design is fundamentally important to the success of the Plan and ensures that new development is compatible in this historic area. High quality urban design should pervade the entire public realm—streets, parks, plazas, transit facilities, as well as the design of building facades, ground-level uses and their interchange with the street, landscape areas, and building massing."

It violates the Plan's guideline that "publicly accessible, ground level open space will be provided to meet the needs of residents (especially children) in the new development" (p. 52).

The north open space is not significantly smaller than is shown in the BEMP. As recommended in the plan, the original proposal included a play space for children in this area but during the review process there was significant concern from residents, staff and ultimately the applicant about having an active child-friendly space at the apex of the site due to the significant traffic adjacent to the site. In addition, because the north building is funded by HUD subsidies, this open space may only have passive uses due to noise levels. A decision was made to create a protected courtyard along Montgomery Street for a children's playground. As noted in the staff report, there are several reasons why a public access easement is not being recommended for the children's play space.

The open space at the north end of the site complies with the recommendation to have "an open space/focal point...at the site's northern apex, to complement its gateway location and character of the neighborhood."

The Planning Commission should be gravely concerned about the lack of year-round sunlight in the building's minimal open spaces.

Interior courtyards are not unusual in the denser developments in Old Town and will allow for open and amenity space for residents. The Belle Pre across Henry Street has an interior courtyard similar in size to the interior courtyard in the south building. Public open spaces located nearby for use by the larger community

include the Charles Houston Recreation Center, the Braddock Interim Park and Powhatan Park, as well as smaller open spaces in Old Town Commons and at the Lineage (former Ramsey Homes).

STAFF:

Karl Moritz, Director, P&Z

Robert M. Kerns, AICP, Chief of Development, P&Z

Catherine Miliaras, AICP, Principal Planner, P&Z

Stephanie Sample, Urban Planner, P&Z

To: Members of the Planning Commission
 From: Ellen Mosher
 324 N. Saint Asaph Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
 Date: February 7, 2023
 Re: Docket Item 6 - 899 and 999 North Henry Street – Samuel Madden Homes

I have one area of concern I'm addressing in this note.

First, condition 32 states "the applicant may reduce the number of non-residential parking spaces in the South Building garage...". **Please edit condition 32 so the applicant may not reduce the number of non-residential spaces for the below reasons.**

Page 5 of the staff report states:

"The project will include 13,836 SF of retail (including an Alive Food Hub and a restaurant with outdoor dining) and a 13,540 SF Hopkins House early learning childcare center. Each building will provide underground parking. The south building will include parking for the retail and day care uses in addition to resident parking."

Page 7 of the staff report states:

"In addition to the residential component of the project, the south building includes 13,336 SF of ground floor retail uses and the applicant has requested special use permits for a restaurant with outdoor dining, a medical care facility and an athletic club/fitness center. Other uses are permitted by right in the RMF zone, including a 13,540 SF daycare center, which will be included on the ground floor of the building and operated by Hopkins House, a local non-profit established in 1939 to provide community-based learning for children, youth and families."

Page 45 of the staff report states condition 32:

"32. The applicant may reduce the number of non-residential parking spaces in the South Building garage prior to approval of the final site plan, provided the minimum required number of non-residential spaces is provided. (P&Z)"

Page 10 of the staff report chart states:

Parking	<u>North building</u> Min./Max.: 127-129	<u>North building</u> 127 spaces (7 accessible, 120 standard)
	<u>South building</u> Residential min.: 264	<u>South building⁸</u> 345 spaces, incl. 81 for retail/day care
	Restaurant/retail range: 14-41	(9 accessible, 143 compact, 193 standard)
	<u>Day care: 14-41</u> Total Min./Max.: 282-346	

Per the staff chart, the total minimum/maximum number of non-residential spaces is 81 and 28. Currently, the applicant is providing 81 spaces and Condition 32 allows them to remove 53 spaces leaving 28 spaces for employees of the daycare center, medical center, restaurant, fitness center, and customers who drive. That's over 26,000SF of retail and day care space with lots of activity going on and the parking spaces are needed in this dense area.

Condition 32 should be edited so "the applicant may not reduce the number of non-residential parking spaces..."

Please note, there appears to be a math error with the parking calculations in the chart. For the South building, if the minimum number of residential spaces is 264 + 28 spaces for non-residential = 292 minimum spaces required for the South building not 282 spaces as shown in the chart.