

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 **DATE** 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 __th day of _____, 2016.

Mary Lyman Chair
Alexandria Planning Commission

ATTEST: _____
Karl Moritz, Secretary

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 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 <donnar555@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

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
- 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

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
- 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

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: 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.



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.

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 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 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
- 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 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
 - 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 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

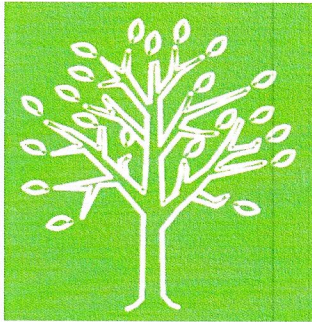
A request was just created using [Call.Click.Connect.](#) The request ID is 89131.

Request Details:

- Name: Barbara Karn
- Approximate Address: 911D PENDLETON ST (See [map below](#))
- Phone Number: 703-836-5666
- Email: dr.barb@ix.netcom.com
- 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.](#)



ALIVE!

ALexandrians In Volved 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 Baha'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

Letter of Support for ARHA's Ramsey Homes Project

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
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

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 or call 703.746.HELP.

This is an automated email notification of a **Call.Click.Connect.** request. Please do not reply to this email.

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>
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
- 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.](#)

From: Ninette Sadusky <ninette.sadusky@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2016 8:00 PM
To: Kristen Walentisch
Subject: Re: Call.Click.Connect. #87722 ARHA
Attachments: 091215-ALEXANDRIA-16-TRANSCRIPT OF COUNCIL HRG.pdf

Kristen, Thanks for your note. The file is 4.3 MB. Hopefully this one comes through to you.

Thank you. Ninette Sadusky

On Wed, Jan 20, 2016 at 11:38 AM, Kristen Walentisch <kristen.walentisch@alexandriava.gov> wrote:

Good morning Ms. Sadusky,

Thank you for using Alexandria's Call.Click.Connect. service. We have received your letter regarding the upcoming ARHA Ramsey Homes project, and it will be included in the staff report for the case. However, it appears you attempted to include an attachment to your Call.Click.Connect., but I'm afraid it did not go through. If you would like the attachment included with your letter, please email it to me directly and I will make sure it is added to the staff report as well.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best regards,

Kristen Walentisch

Department of Planning & Zoning

City of Alexandria

[\(703\) 746-3806](tel:7037463806)

From: Ninette Sadusky via Call.Click.Connect. [mailto: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 Commission

Request Details:

- Name: Ninette Sadusky
- Approximate Address: No Address Specified
- Phone Number: No Phone
- Email: 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.

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

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
CEO of the Alexandria Redevelopment Housing
15 Authority

16 ANNA MOSS
Thunderbird Archeology

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

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

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1 PARTICIPANTS (CONT'D):

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

5 DINO DRUDI

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7 Aging

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Representative, West All Town Citizens
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BILL HENDRICKSON
12 Chairman, The Historic Alexandria
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15 ELIZABETH JONES
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18 Neighborhood Resident

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5 TOWNLEY McELHINEY
6 Representing Historical Alexandria
7 Foundation Preservationist and Architectural
8 Historian
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12 Pendleton Street Resident

13 PHILIP MOFFAT
14 Member, Parker-Gray Board of Architectural
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14 Perseveration Experience

15 VAN VANFLEET
16 Ramsey Homes Neighborhood Resident

17 YVONNE WADE-CALLAHAN
18 President, Old Town Civic Association

19 BOYD WALKER

20 CHARKENIA WALKER
21 Ramsey Homes Resident

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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 MAYOREuille: 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 Charkenian 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 lose
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's on 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 unanimously 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. MESCUDE: 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 Charkenina 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.)

20

21 * * * * *

22

1 CERTIFICATE OF NOTARY PUBLIC

2 COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

3 I, Carleton J. Anderson, III, notary public in and
4 for the Commonwealth of Virginia, do hereby
5 certify that the forgoing electronic file when
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11 proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I
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16 (Signature and Seal on File)

17 Notary Public, in and for the Commonwealth of
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19 My Commission Expires: November 30, 2016

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