

Dear Planning Commissioners,

The West Old Town Citizens Association continues to believe proposed Ramsey Homes redevelopment is too large for this part of the historic Parker Gray neighborhood and that it does not sufficiently address historic preservation. While City Council has settled the density debate, we would like to press the City and applicant to take a more imaginative approach to preserving at least some of the history of Ramsey homes.

As the staff report notes, Ramsey homes are identified in the Uptown/Parker-Gray National Register Historic District as contributing resources. City staff has further discovered that the “existing Ramsey Homes may be one of the few remaining examples of the earliest form of residential pre-cast concrete construction on the east coast...” While City Council has chosen not to support preserving an entire building, there are other options that should be considered. We would kindly point your attention to a suggestion raised at the April 2016 Braddock Implementation Advisory Group meeting to incorporate part of the facade of one of the original buildings into the corner of the new building. If part of the original building facade were to be incorporated into the southwest corner of the new building, near the planned open space, it could serve as at the hub of an interpretive display on the site's history.

We also would like to express our strong support for all of the conditions #104-#111, which pertain to Alexandria Police Department input. In particular, we find the condition requiring controlled access to the garage, via a coiling gate or similar solid barrier, to be critically important. As was discussed during the 22 September BIAG meeting, homeless person loitering in unsecured garages has become an issue in the neighborhood. The condition to require controlled access to the garage is a common sense solution to this problem. We also strongly support all of the other police department recommendations and ask they be approved in total.

West Old Town Citizens Association Executive Board
Leslie Zupan, President
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DSUP2014-0035
Additional Materials

*Working to make homes affordable
in the City of Alexandria*

November 1, 2016

To: Honorable Mayor ^Silberberg,
Members of City Council, and
Members of the Planning Commission

Re: Ramsey Homes Redevelopment

I am writing Alexandria Housing Development Corporation to express my support for the final approval of the DSUP for the Ramsey Homes Redevelopment proposal, to be heard at the Planning Commission and City Council Hearings scheduled for November 1st and 12th, respectively.

In addition to replacing the current fifteen unit^s of low-income housing, the proposed project will provide 37 additional units of affordable housing to a city and region in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. This is exciting news! The Braddock Metro Neighborhood is particularly in need of more affordable housing. Only *one percent*, or ten, of all new units built since 2008 are affordable units, compared to the 949 new market rate/luxury units. The approval of the DSUP for Ramsey Homes will provide a four-fold increase in this statistic, a step toward ameliorating the affordable housing crisis in the City of Alexandria.

The redevelopment proposal before you not only demonstrates consistency with multiple City plans, but is also the result of the combined efforts of several partners committed to the policy of affordable housing. The proposal now offers a generous percentage of open space on the site, which will in turn benefit the entire Braddock East community. We urge you to support the redevelopment of Ramsey Homes and thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Marguerite Benson-West
Affordable Housing Advocate