

**City of Alexandria Draft Housing Master Plan
Town Hall Meeting, January 24, 2013**

The following summarizes public comments received at the City of Alexandria's Draft Housing Master Plan Town Hall Meeting at Samuel Tucker Elementary School on January 24, 2013. Staff responded to questions and comments as they were received. Following the second Town Hall meeting scheduled for February 11, 2013 at Jefferson-Houston Elementary School, additional comments will be posted.

1. Herb Cooper-Levy recommended that the slide "Who Needs Affordable and Workforce Housing?" be amended to include more service and retail type jobs.
2. Don Buch cited the statistic that more than 14,000 City households need housing. He asked where these households are currently living and where the City would construct housing units to serve this population. He suggested that new construction is the most expensive option for the development of new affordable housing.
3. Sammie Moshenberg – endorsed the concept of "strategic preservation." Would like to see recommendations in the Housing Master Plan to control and preserve existing affordable housing.
4. Herb Cooper-Levy – encourages the City to create special "affordable housing districts" citing Article 36 of the Code of Virginia. Notes that Arlington County has used this approach along the Columbia Pike corridor.
5. Vickie Menjivar – expressed concern that there is not an adequate focus on preservation of affordable housing and the contributions to affordable housing are too limited. She encouraged the use of rent subsidies in the City and expressed concern regarding the displacement of households and communities from redevelopment.

6. Don Buch – noted that 800 units to be created in Beauregard are expected to cost \$180 million. He asks how realistic is it for the City to build the 14,000 affordable units that the City needs.
7. Hector Pineda representing the Beauregard Tenants Association, which is affiliated with Tenants and Workers United. Mr. Pineda noted the need for immediate solutions to the City's affordable housing crisis. Wants JBG to roll back rents to 2010 levels to allow existing residents to remain in the area.
8. Sammie Moshenberg – expressed concern that JBG's rent increases have been sudden and primarily occurred in the most recent two year period.
9. Derek Hyra – would like for HMP to offer a stated goal in terms of affordable housing production. Would like to see a specific goal to be achieved in next 10 to 20 years. Recommended that New Market Tax Credits be referenced as an affordable housing tool. The Plan should address where in the city affordable housing is located – finds that affordable housing is on the periphery of the city. The city should avoid concentrations of affordable housing. Believe that pressures on the city's housing stock will mount as redevelopment and gentrification continue.
10. Poul Hertel – expressed his concern regarding the distribution of affordable housing units and the size of affordable communities as a percentage of the overall housing stock within smaller areas. Believes that affordability is best achieved through rental rather than homeownership. Expressed concern that the City is facilitating the conversion of affordable rental housing to condominiums through the proposed support of rehabilitation of older properties. Noted that the type of residential construction that is occurring is

problematic as the city's population ages. Too many multi-story townhomes are being built and these will not serve the aging population well.

11. Sammie Moshenberg – questioned the enforceability of long-term affordability provisions.
12. Carol Jackson, representing the Alexandria Housing Development Corporation (AHDC) – expressed support for the Plan, specifically citing Principle 3# related to public private partnerships. Stated that she would like to see AHDC identified more frequently in the plan as the City's potential partner. Suggested that it would be better to have stated goals for affordable housing rather than having none. The unachievable becomes too comfortable. Cited Fairfax County's "Blue Print for Housing" as an example of goal setting since it holds the county board accountable. Goals in the HMP will help Alexandria's City Council focus on the level of resources needed.
13. Walter Lozado – requested clarification of the term "area median income" and the definitions of "affordability" as used in the Plan. Also asked how public comments are used in shaping the Plan and if the City has met with groups like Tenants and Workers United and how their concerns are being addressed.
14. Mike Seltz – (Volunteers of America) recommends that the Plan include more case studies demonstrating how affordable housing financing is structured.
15. Sharon Annear – described the city's intervention in preserving Foxchase and asked for clarification on the renewal structure of the affordable housing there. She also asked how much money is needed to continue to support the affordable housing at Foxchase.

16. Don Buch – asked how the Plan is integrated with the needs of the Alexandria City Public Schools, noting that 105 additional classrooms are expected to be needed in the near future.
17. Sammie Moshenberg – stressed that goals and targets are needed in the Plan and that is important for the Plan to be aspirational. Indicated that the City needs to be more proactive and that leveraging resources need to be more clearly identified. Suggested that the City survey the community before a developer begins work to more clearly understand existing affordable housing resources. Suggests that the City conduct a human impact analysis similar to an environmental impact study to determine the impacts of development.
18. Herb Cooper-Levy – the city needs to capitalize a meaningful and substantial housing trust fund and provide rent subsidies as is done in Arlington County.
19. Poul Hertel – stated that City policies often undermine affordability, providing the example of set-back requirements which make larger homes possible.
20. John Catlett – noted that affordable housing is often associated with deteriorated conditions. Suggested that rehabilitation of property is an important tool for preservation of affordable housing. Also noted the importance of affordable homeownership opportunities and the need for a balanced approach between rental and homeownership. Suggested that it is particularly important in terms of enabling City employees to live in the community they serve. Commented that housing needs need to be considered within the overall context of the city budget and emphasized the importance of partnerships and resource leveraging.

21. Poul Hortel – believes that more bang for the buck is achieved with rental vs. homeownership.

22. Brandi Collins – noted that she used the City’s homeownership programs and stressed the benefits of these to employees. Stated that her monthly housing costs as an owner (mortgage and condo fees) are less than what it would cost to rent.