

City of Alexandria, Virginia

ALEXANDRIA HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MINUTES

In-Person | April 3, 2025

	Members Present	Members Absent	Staff
1		Aschalew Asabie	Jose Gonzalez, Housing Program Manager
2	Felicia Brewster		Tamara Jovovic, Housing Program Manager
3	Annette Bridges (Zoom)		Christopher Do, Housing Analyst
4	Michael Butler		Kenny Turscak, Planning & Zoning
5	Joseph Dammann		Aysha Sarwar, DCHS
6		Michael Doyle	
7	Betsy Faga		
8	Jon Frederick		
9	Michelle Krockner		
10	Coss Lumbé		
11	Jan Macidull		
12	Shelley McCabe		
13	Melissa Sathe		
14	Peter Sutherland		
15	Anderson Vereyken		
16	Sean Zielenbach (Zoom)		
17	Helen McIlvaine*, Housing		
	Ali Coleman Tokarz*, DCHS		
	Guests	Affiliation	
1	Cathy Puskar	Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley & Walsh, P.C.	
2	Melissa Kuennen	Resident	
3	John Rebstock	Resident	

*non-voting

1. Introduction and Chair Remarks (Chairs)

Chair Shelley McCabe called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Chair welcomed guests and Committee members.

2. Consideration of March 6, 2025 Minutes (Chris Do)

Jan Macidull motioned to approve the March 6, 2025 Minutes; Betsy Faga seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the March 6, 2025 minutes with Peter Sutherland abstaining.

3. FY2026 Annual Action Plan – Public Hearing (Kim Cadena)

Jose Gonzalez presented on the [FY 2026 Annual Action Plan](#). Betsy motioned to open the public meeting, Jan seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to open the public meeting.

Mr. Gonzalez explained the distribution of CDBG and HOME funds to programs that fall under the City's three priorities: equitable access to housing, prevent and end homelessness, and maintain housing stability.

One Committee member asked about the activities under the fair housing testing program. Helen McIlvaine responded that the Office of Housing conducts proactive testing for housing discrimination against protected classes and pursues remedial action where problems are detected.

Some Committee members also expressed concern regarding the potential impact of federal cuts to housing programs in the city.

Ali Coleman Tokarz thanked the Office of Housing for providing funding for transitional assistance, allowing first month's rent and security deposit for residents transitioning out of homelessness.

A resident asked who the Action Plan is aimed to serve, noting the struggle for groups at 60% AML, 24 to 32-year-olds leaving the city, service workers, and retirees to afford housing. The resident asked how these groups are addressed in the Action Plan.

Michelle Krocker motioned to close the public hearing, Coss Lumbé seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to close the public hearing.

4. Development Preview: The View (Kenny Turscak and Cathy Puskar)

Kenny Turscak and Cathy Puskar presented a development preview of the affordable housing plan for the proposed expansion of The View. The project, owned by Goodwin Living, seeks to add 257 senior housing units on their existing campus.

One Committee member asked how the Applicant defines "turnover" of units. Ms. Puskar explained that turnover is defined as death or leaving the community. Ms. McIlvaine added that residents will age in place in these units. Ms. Puskar explained that the five turnover figure is based on an average of eight years of residency.

One member asked why one-bedrooms were the only size for the affordable units. Ms. Jovovic explained that staff wanted to maximize the number of units and level of affordability, adding that the Commission on Aging will weigh in on the project as well.

A Committee member asked how this arrangement would be memorialized. Ms. Jovovic explained that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be developed as a condition of approval. Ms. Puskar noted that every senior housing project has different arrangements and conditions.

Another Committee member asked what happens if there are no available units at the next level of care. Ms. Puskar will discuss this question with the Applicant. Ms. Puskar noted that the project is built for assisted living, including the independent living units.

Another Committee member asked how the total affordable unit cost compares to market-rate units. Ms. Puskar discussed what services, level of care, and programming are covered by the buy-in and monthly fee. She noted that residents will have a mandatory meal allowance (which will be in addition to the monthly fee). Residents' personal insurance (Medicare and Medicaid) will cover their specialized medical needs (including prescriptions, surgery, treatments, etc.).

One Committee member commented that the bonus density gives the Applicant a significant number of market-rate units in exchange for the affordable units that are being "given up." The member emphasized the upside of market-rate units added through bonus density should cover more affordable units than the number of units provided in the model. Staff noted that the bonus density program was not designed to discount care and services which comprise a significant part of the cost of senior housing units. The number of affordable units proposed as part of this project maximizes the yield and discount on the buy in and monthly fee while maintaining the value of the affordable housing contribution.

Committee members underscored the importance of configuring a process to obtain affordability in similar projects considering the shortage of more affordable and moderately priced assisted living and continuum of care options in the city.

5. Virginia Housing Lending Requirements (Helen McIlvaine)

Helen McIlvaine explained the implications of changes to Virginia Housing's lending requirements on affordable housing projects in the city and the administrative and text amendment actions that are being pursued to address the requirements.

6. 2025 Point-in-Time Count and DCHS Video on Unhoused Alexandrians (Ali Coleman Tokarz and Aysha Sarwar)

Ali Coleman Tokarz shared the [DCHS video featuring unhoused Alexandrians sharing their lived experience of homelessness.](#)

Ms. Tokarz and Aysha Sarwar also presented updates on the 2025 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, during which every jurisdiction counts the number of unhoused individuals on the coldest night of the year. This year's PIT count was conducted on January 22 and will be released on May 15.

One Committee member asked if people living in cars are counted. Ms. Tokarz responded that if Staff see them and talk to them, they will be counted. Another committee member asked how Alexandria compares to other jurisdictions in the region. Ms. Tokarz noted that the results will be released on May 15 for other jurisdictions in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG).

One member asked about how the shelter waitlist is organized. Ms. Tokarz explained that it is prioritized based on vulnerability factors, including age, health, history of homelessness, and medical conditions. One member asked if substance abuse and addictions are factors. Ms. Tokarz explained that it is included in comorbidities and medical conditions.

One member asked if cooling shelters are being considered as extreme heat becomes more prevalent. Ms. Tokarz noted that a year-round shelter is being discussed. Another member asked if there has been an increase in teen and foster care homelessness. Ms. Tokarz explained that those numbers are hard to track for anyone under 18. Many teens couch surf or stay with friends.

7. Housing 2040 Updates (Staff)

Tamara Jovovic presented a brief update on the Housing 2040 Master Plan. The draft principles and goals were released at the March 18 meeting. Staff asked Committee members to provide any additional feedback on the draft principles and goals before the April 20 deadline.

Christopher Do presented an update on the Housing Preservation project. The Housing Preservation Panel will be held on April 29 in-person at Charles Houston Recreation Center and virtually via Zoom. A recording of the event will be made available, as well. The panel will kick off the housing preservation project and discuss preservation issues, policies, and solutions in Alexandria. Members of the Committee are invited to attend. Mr. Do also provided a [short presentation introducing housing preservation](#).

8. ARHA Updates (Michelle Krockner)

Michelle Krockner reported that ARHA has seen an increase in rental delinquencies. ARHA is being asked to hold off on evictions, which has primarily affected larger families. ARHA's new leadership is working to establish partnerships with other groups who are involved in eviction prevention.

One member asked if Ladrey habitability issues are being addressed. Ms. Krockner noted that the ARHA Board has met with Ladrey residents to discuss these concerns.

9. Housing Alexandria Updates (Jon Frederick)

Jon Frederick provided a brief update on the Ready to Rent Program which is focused on helping to prepare residents to apply for affordable units in tax credit projects.

10. Budget Updates (Staff)

Helen McIlvaine noted that the Committee received the memos and questions about the budget that pertained to housing.

Ms. McIlvaine also noted that on May 20, AHAAC members are invited to the Witter Place groundbreaking ceremony. Ms. McIlvaine also announced that Karl Moritz will retire as Director of Planning & Zoning at the end of June.

11. Information Items (Staff)

Staff did not report on information items due to the length of the meeting.

12. Announcements and Upcoming Meetings

ARHA Redevelopment Work Group Meeting

May 15: 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Council Work Room, City Hall, 301 King Street

June AHAAC Meeting

June 5: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

City Hall, Room 1900, 301 King Street

13. Adjournment (Chair)

Michelle Krocker motioned to adjourn the meeting, Peter Sutherland seconded the motion. The Committee adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.