

City of Alexandria, Virginia

# ALEXANDRIA HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MINUTES

Virtual | October 15, 2025

	Members Present	Members Absent	Staff
1	Aschalew Asabie		Mary Horner, Landlord-Tenant Division Chief
2	Felicia Brewster		Tamara Jovovic, Housing Program Manager
3		Michael Butler	Christopher Do, Housing Analyst
4	Joseph Dammann		Maya Contreras, Planning & Zoning
5	Michael Doyle		Kenny Turscak, Planning & Zoning
6	Betsy Faga		Maggie Cooper, Planning & Zoning
7	Jon Frederick		Chris Moore, DCHS
8		Coss Lumbé	Julian Swierczek, Planning & Zoning
9	Jan Macidull		Alexa Powell, Planning & Zoning
10	Shelley McCabe		
11		Melissa Sathe	
12	Anderson Vereyken		
13	Sean Zielenbach		
14	Stephon Hill		
	Helen McIlvaine*, Housing		
	Ali Coleman Tokarz*, DCHS		
	Guests		
1	Ken Wire	Wire & Gill, LLP	
2	Cathy Puskar	Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley & Walsch, P.C.	
3	Elliott Young	Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley & Walsch, P.C.	
4	Adam Peters	Red Fox	
5	Justin Kennell	Bozzuto	
6	Jeff Kayce	Bozzuto	
7	Carly Snyder	JBG Smith	
8	Josh Childs	Wesley Housing	
9	Michael Schuster	Commission on Aging	
10	Jane King	Commission on Aging	
11	Brandon Smith	Member of the public	
12	Sydney Kodama	Member of the public	
13	Chandler Wilkins	Member of the public	

15	Sharvee Tyler	Member of the public
16	Katrina Morrow	Member of the public
17	Jacqueline West-Spencer	Member of the public
18	Tomashia Cornitcher	Member of the public

\*non-voting

## 1. Introduction and Chair Remarks (Chairs)

Co-Chair Shelley McCabe welcomed the Committee and guests at 7:02 p.m. Committee members introduced themselves. Christopher Do explained the webinar format.

## 2. Consideration of September 4, 2025 Minutes (Chris Do)

Betsy Faga motioned to approve the September 4, 2025 minutes; Felicia Brewster seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the September 4, 2025 minutes.

## 3. Age-Friendly Update (Christopher Moore, Michael Schuster)

Tamara Jovovic introduced Chris Moore of Aging and Adult Services. Mr. Moore introduced Michael Schuster and Jane King from the Commission on Aging and provided a [presentation on the Age-Friendly Plan](#).

A Committee member noted the overlap with the Age-Friendly Plan, Housing 2040, and the City's legislative priorities. One Committee member emphasized the importance of recognizing assisted living as a form of housing and affordable assisted living as a form of affordable housing. Mr. Schuster noted that a proposal to enable localities to include affordable units in assisted living facilities is likely going to be a priority this year. Ms. Jovovic reported that the Office of Housing is seeking a consultant as part of the Housing 2040 process to inventory and analyze models for senior housing + care.

A member of the public asked if staff have considered the DC Medicaid model for affordable senior housing and care. Mr. Schuster responded that the City has focused on set-aside units in senior housing but will be pursuing a study to look at the Medicaid-based model.

Mr. Moore noted that it is anticipated that the Age-Friendly Plan will be presented to City Council at the end of the year and then to AARP in early 2026.

## 4. Jamieson Avenue Affordable Housing Plan

Kenny Turscak introduced the project and the Applicant's attorney, Ken Wire. Ken Wire introduced Adam Peters, representing the Applicant. Mr. Turscak reminded the Committee that City Council cannot deny a project due to the voluntary monetary

contribution and encouraged the Committee to evaluate projects using policy requirements.

Mr. Peters explained how the project will convert a six-story office building to residential and add four stories to the building. The project proposes to build 187 multifamily units, including 17 committed affordable units (CAUs) at 60% AMI in exchange for additional density. The CAUs will be distributed on the first six floors. The Applicant will provide a voluntary monetary contribution of \$114,547 per staff's calculation.

One Committee member asked about why the Applicant's estimated monetary contribution is higher than Staff's calculation. Mr. Turscak explained that staff credited the project with the contribution from the original office development. Another Committee member asked why the additional density granted amounted to a 37% increase. Mr. Turscak explained that the project requested additional density beyond the 30% allocated under Section 7-700, and will still provide 33% of the added density as affordable housing.

Another member asked about the unit mix and distribution. The Applicant noted that the top four floors will not have CAUs but the Applicant is providing a higher percentage of two-bedroom units and one-bedroom units with dens. Jon Frederick motioned to approve the Affordable Housing Plan, Betsy Faga seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the Applicant's affordable housing plan.

## **5. Eisenhower East Block 3 (Ken Wire and Adam Peters)**

Mr. Wire also presented Eisenhower Block 3. The project proposes building 750-767 units in a 31-story building. The Applicant proposes 19 CAUs at 60% AMI, which is 5% of the density beyond what is allocated in the SAP. The Applicant has requested the off-ramp provision in the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan that reduces the requirement from 10% of additional density to up to 5%. Based on the findings of a third-party analysis required by the off-ramp provision, staff proposed 31 CAUs be provided. Staff and the Applicant also disagree on the voluntary monetary contribution calculation as it relates to base density. The Applicant proposed contribution is \$1,469,480 while staff calculated \$2,241,517.

Mr. Wire claimed that no projects have been approved since the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan was approved because the market conditions and plan requirements are not feasible for development. The Applicant noted that the SAP mandates 100-200 feet in height, which pushes the project to costly steel and concrete construction.

One Committee member asked about the third-party market condition study for the off-ramp provision. The Applicant explained that the 2.5% rent escalation is more likely compared to the aggressive 2.7% rent escalation scenario. Mr. Wire highlighted that these numbers were determined by the third-party consultant.

One member commented that in these development negotiations, affordable housing seems to be the first thing compromised. Another Committee member pointed out that

based on the policy, the project should have 38 CAUs instead of the proposed 19 CAUs. From the Committee's perspective, the project is sacrificing affordable units to make the project feasible and it is hard to support a reduction of affordable units to make market-rate projects work. Another Committee member added that the Committee should focus on the policy and whether the benefits of the project warrant the reduction in affordable units from what is envisioned in the SAP. One Committee member spoke in support of the project because of how difficult the Eisenhower East area has been for development.

One Committee member asked if the Applicant would consider a higher monetary contribution. Mr. Wire stated the Applicant would be open depending on changing market conditions in the next 18 months.

Another Committee member asked about the conflict over the voluntary monetary contribution and how Tier 1 and Tier 2 contributions are calculated. Ms. Jovovic explained that the underlying zoning is calculated as Tier 1 and the actual density minus the underlying zoning is Tier 2. Ms. Jovovic noted that by-right density and the base density from the underlying zoning do not always overlap. Mr. Wire noted that there is precedent for both parties' calculations.

Helen McIlvaine reminded the Committee that the project will likely be built in a different environment than what is happening today.

One Committee member stressed the need for clarity from City Council on the underlying zoning with CDDs. Another Committee member emphasized the importance of making a recommendation based on affordable housing but the Committee would also like the issues with the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan to be reviewed.

Mike Doyle motioned to recommend approval of the affordable housing plan as presented, Andy Vereyken seconded the motion. The Committee voted to oppose the affordable housing plan, with Mike Doyle voting in favor, Aschalew Asabie and Felicia Brewster abstaining, and Joe Dammann, Betsy Faga, Jon Frederick, Jan Macidull, Shelley McCabe, Andy Vereyken, Sean Zielenbach, and Stephon Hill voting in opposition.

Betsy Faga motioned to allow the Chairs to draft a comment letter for the project, Andy Vereyken seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to allow the Chairs to draft a comment letter for the project.

## **6. 4880 Mark Center Drive (Kenny Turscak)**

Kenny Turscak introduced Cathy Puskar, who represents the Applicant for [4880 Mark Center Drive](#), which proposes 402 multifamily rental units in AlexWest. The project proposes providing one CAU in exchange for additional density beyond the Alex West SAP. Staff and the Applicant disagree on the voluntary monetary contribution over the interpretation of what constitutes the base density. The Applicant is proposing \$1.3 million for the contribution compared to \$1.8 million calculated by staff.

Ms. Puskar introduced Elliot Young and the representatives from Bozzuto. Ms. Puskar expressed frustration with the interpretations of base density in Eisenhower East and AlexWest, where these issues have come into play. The different interpretations of base has led to a difference in the voluntary monetary contribution. Ms. Puskar noted that this issue affects the pro forma and financing of these projects.

One Committee member noted that AHAC does not have the authority to determine what should be considered base density and clarification is needed. The Committee member commented that should not be negotiating at this point and whatever staff intended with the contribution policy is not clear. Jeff Kayce from Bozzuto emphasized the need for certainty with these policies. One Committee member reminded the Committee that they had previously asked City Council to provide clarity on the underlying base density for a previous project in AlexWest.

Jon motioned to vote on the affordable housing plan as proposed and enable the co-chairs to draft a letter asking for clarity on base density; Mike Doyle seconded the motion. The Committee voted to approve the affordable housing plan, with Shelley McCabe opposing and Andy Vereyken and Aschalew Asabie abstaining. Jan Macidull, Betsy Faga, Joe Dammann, Mike Doyle, Sean Zielenbach, Felicia Brewster, Stephon Hill, and Jon Frederick voted to approve the plan.

## **7. Development Preview Potomac Yard Landbay G-G (Kenny Turscak)**

Kenny presented a [development preview for Potomac Yard Landbay G-G](#). The project is an 88-unit project that will be entirely committed affordable units, ranging from 30% to 80% AMI. The affordability will average to be under 60% AMI. 73 units are proposed as two and three-bedroom units. JBG Smith is donating the land and Wesley Housing will develop the project using 9% LIHTC funding; no City funding is anticipated.

The City Council hearing is expected in December. One Committee member asked if this project is contingent upon other projects being approved in Potomac Yard. Ms. Puskar responded that yes, the project must be approved together with two other blocks in Potomac Yard (Block G- B&E and Block H). Block G- B&E proposes 432 market-rate multifamily rental units and Block H proposes 120 for-sale townhouse units. Ms. Puskar noted that there will be a phasing agreement with the City but after approval in December, the projects would move on separate trajectories.

One Committee member asked for the rationale for townhouses in Block H. Ms. Puskar stated that the townhouses reflect a diversity of housing typologies and the projects would likely not be able to be delivered at the same time if they were all multifamily.

## **8. Housing Master Plan Update (Staff)**

Ms. Jovovic provided an update on the Housing 2040 Master Plan. Staff are working on multiple projects, including preservation, condo, landlord-tenant project, and senior housing, and conducting outreach for sustainability and accessibility. The next Housing 2040 community meeting is set for November 17. A City Council work session is envisioned for early 2026.

## **9. ARHA Update (Helen McIlvaine)**

Ms. McIlvaine presented an update on ARHA. All former ARHA board members have resigned. City Council appointed six new ARHA Board members in an emergency session and will appoint the remaining commissioners after opening up opportunities to ARHA residents and the public.

The Board will be charged with adopting good practices for employees and finishing the investigation of the former CEO. The Board members were required to commit to transparency and working to improve ARHA in accordance with FOIA and open meeting practices. City Council is committed to getting ARHA on the right path and resetting its governance and practices. The firing of the former CEO has raised concerns about other agency practices and ensuring residents and staff receive the support and care they need.

One Committee member asked what authority the City has over ARHA versus HUD. Ms. McIlvaine noted that the City appoints the ARHA Board, which looks to the City for guidance. The City is also reviewing the ARHA agreement.

## **10. Housing Alexandria Update**

Jon Frederick provided an update on Housing Alexandria. Closing on Phase 2 of Sanse is set and revisions to the plan for the Naja phase will come before the Committee when ready.

Seminary Road had its ribbon cutting and 25 townhouses are under contract, but the process has slowed down due to diminished SPARC funding. Some applicants are also working with the DREAM program, which buys down interest rates by 2% if the applicant's immediate parents are not homeowners. The condominium building with five additional homeownership units and Sheltered Homes of Alexandria rental units will be delivered as part of the second phase of the project.

## **15. Staff Updates (Staff)**

The Co-Chairs thanked the Committee members for their engagement and tackling multiple complex issues. Ms. McIlvaine also extended her thanks to the Committee for their feedback and input on these issues. One Committee member asked for copies of the FY2026 legislative proposals.

Christopher Do explained upcoming changes to AHAAC's meeting venue due to City Hall renovation.

## **16. Information Items (Staff)**

Tamara Jovovic explained the October financial report.

## **17. Announcements and Upcoming Meetings**

Housing 2040 Community Meeting #5

November 17, 6:30 – 8:45 p.m.

Virtual (Zoom): [Registration form](#)

AHAAC December Meeting

December 4, 7 – 9 p.m.

Room 2000, City Hall, 301 King St.

ARHA Redevelopment Work Group Meeting

December 10, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

City Council Work Room, 301 King St.

**18. Adjournment (Chair)**

Mike Doyle motioned to adjourn the meeting. The Co-Chairs adjourned the meeting at 9:28 p.m.