

City of Alexandria, Virginia

ALEXANDRIA HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MINUTES

In-Person | December 4, 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		Aspasia Xypolia, Deputy Director
5	Michael Doyle		Kenny Turscak, Planning & Zoning
6	Betsy Faga		
7		Jon Frederick	
8	Carlos Bethencourt		
9	Jan Macidull		
10	Shelley McCabe		
11	Melissa Sathe		
12	Anderson Vereyken		
13	Sean Zielenbach		
14	Stephon Hill		
15	Rachel Dixon		
	Helen McIlvaine*, Housing		
	Ali Coleman Tokarz*, DCHS		
	Guests		
1	Cathy Puskar	Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley & Walsh	
2	Zane Gourzong	Member of the public	
3	Elliot Waters	Member of the public	
4	Flo Bryan	Member of the public	
5	Katherine Dixon	Rebuilding Together	
6	Leanne Fitzner	Member of the public	
7	Johnny Rojas	Member of the public	
8	Lismary Arriojas	Member of the public	
9	Pia Trigiani	Mercer Trigiani LLP	

*non-voting

1. Introduction and Chair Remarks (Chairs)

Co-Chair Shelley McCabe welcomed the Committee and guests at 7:00 p.m.

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

The Committee voted unanimously to approve the November 6, 2025 Minutes; Mike Doyle and Melissa Sathe abstained.

3. Duke/Quaker Towns Development Preview (Kenny Turscak and Cathy Puskar)

Kenny Turscak presented the [development preview for the Duke/Quaker Towns project](#). The project proposes 11 townhouse-style condominium units and includes one four-bedroom committed affordable for-sale unit priced at \$375,000 in exchange for Section 7-700 bonus density.

One Committee member asked whether the units come with garages. Ms. Cathy Puskar noted that each unit includes a one-car garage. Another Committee member asked about additional parking. Ms. Puskar responded that visitor parking will be available on the street shared with the church.

4a. Housing 2040 Draft Project Recommendations: Common Interest Communities (Helen McIlvaine)

Helen McIlvaine and Pia Trigiani presented the [recommendations for the Common Interest Communities project](#).

Ms. Trigiani stressed the importance of condominiums for first-time homebuyers. As part of the Housing 2040 process, the Common Interest Communities project convened insurance professionals, engineers, condominium owners, and lawyers to develop recommendations for Alexandria, informed by a [reserve study and report](#) conducted by the Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation. Policymakers and mortgage lenders are increasingly recognizing the importance of adequate reserves for condominium communities.

One Committee member asked whether there is a requirement to act on reserve studies. Ms. Trigiani explained that reserve studies must be considered in the budget annually, but there is no requirement to act on them. Annual audits indicate whether reserves are adequate.

Another Committee member highlighted the importance in understanding that condominiums occasionally become naturally occurring retirement communities in Alexandria. A Committee member also asked about the impact of condominium communities' issues on insurance. Ms. Trigiani explained that insurance costs are rising and, in some areas, coverage is becoming unavailable. The secondary mortgage market is also scrutinizing reserve studies and has begun refusing loans for buildings that are not adequately addressing reserves.

One Committee member asked how many set-aside condominium units exist in the City. Staff estimated there are about 100 units. The Committee member then asked how set-asides are affected by reserves and special assessments. Staff explained that homeowners in set-aside units are responsible for the same fees, including condominium fees and special assessments, and that sale prices reflect these costs.

Staff noted that the Home Rehabilitation Loan Program (HRLP) can be used for special assessments and is available to homeowners earning up to 80% AMI. A Committee member asked whether any recommendations specifically target condominium owners. Ms. Trigiani responded that the recommendations focus on condominium associations, but noted that other jurisdictions, such as Fairfax County, provide assistance to condo owners for special assessments in exchange for affordability restrictions. Ms. Trigiani added that a mix of incomes and creative solutions can support affordability.

Another Committee member asked whether the City could consider ways to assist condominium owners with limited incomes. Ms. McIlvaine responded that Virginia Housing may be interested in such assistance. Ms. Trigiani acknowledged the feedback regarding support for owners who cannot afford fees and assessments.

A member of the public provided feedback on the Housing 2040 process and requested greater transparency and communication regarding project leadership, policy development, and participation. Staff noted that additional comments and feedback may be submitted to Kim Cadena at Kimberly.cadena@alexandriava.gov by January 4.

4b. Affordable Housing Preservation Recommendations (Christopher Do)

Chris Do presented the [affordable housing preservation recommendations and strategies](#). Comments and feedback on these recommendations may be submitted by January 4 via the [online comment form](#) or via email to Christopher.do@alexandriava.gov.

A Committee member asked whether the City has partners and a plan in place should the state pass Right of First Refusal (ROFR) legislation. Staff explained that the City could develop a pool of potential partners to serve as designees for the right of first refusal, while avoiding situations in which partners compete against one another.

Another Committee member asked how the project incorporates tenant perspectives and addresses concerns related to rent increases. Mr. Do explained that the preservation project is seeking tenant engagement and feedback in the development of the recommendations. Throughout the Housing 2040 process, including the Housing Survey, tenants expressed concerns about rent increase. In response the City has proposed policies to mitigate these impacts. Properties that are acquired and preserved would limit rent increases to increases in AMI, while rehabilitating buildings would follow the voluntary rent increase policy, which caps annual rent increases at 5%.

Another Committee member asked about how preservation priorities would be narrowed. Mr. Do explained that staff will use feedback to identify two or three priorities to focus the City's preservation efforts.

A Committee member also inquired about what happens to LIHTC projects at the 15-year mark. Mr. Do explained that when investors and syndicators exit at year 15, property owners may sell the property, continue to operating at the same affordability levels, or pursue re-syndication to obtain additional credits to fund repairs.

Staff invited Committee members to submit additional comments or questions to Christopher Do via email.

5. ARHA Updates (Helen McIlvaine)

The Committee skipped this item.

6. Housing Alexandria Updates (Jon Frederick)

The Committee skipped this item.

7. Staff Updates (Staff)

Mr. Do provided an update on the 2026 AHAAC meeting schedule. Due to repairs at City Hall, the Committee will alternate between meeting at the Lee Center and meeting virtually, in accordance with the e-participation policy. Staff requested input on in-person meeting start times, noting that the Lee Center closes at 8:45 p.m. The Committee agreed to begin in-person meetings at 6:45 p.m. and to schedule longer agenda items on dates when meetings are held virtually.

8. Information Items (all)

The Committee did not discuss the November 2025 financial report.

9. Announcements and Upcoming Meetings

January AHAAC Meeting

January 7, 7 – 9 p.m.

Virtual (Zoom)

Housing 2040 Community Meeting

February 28, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Location TBD

12. Adjournment (Chair)

The Co-Chairs adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.