

City of Alexandria, Virginia

# ALEXANDRIA HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MINUTES

Virtual | January 7, 2026

	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		Nathan Randall, Planning & Zoning
7	Jon Frederick		Alexa Powell, Planning & Zoning
8	Carlos Bethencourt		Catherine Miliaras, Planning & Zoning
9	Jan Macidull		
10	Shelley McCabe		
11	Melissa Sathe		
12	Anderson Vereyken		
13	Sean Zielenbach		
14		Stephon Hill	
15	Cesar Madison		
16	Rachel Dixon		
17	Unique Coleman		
	Helen McIlvaine*, Housing		
	Ali Coleman Tokarz*, DCHS		
	<b>Guests</b>		
1	Cathy Puskar	Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley & Walsh	
2	Ken Wire	Wire Gill, LLP	
3	Jack Lester	EYA	
4	Dayonna Scott	Member of the public	
5	John Houston	Member of the public	
6	Theresa Edwards	Member of the public	
7	Chandler Wilkins	Member of the public	
8	Katharine Dixon	Member of the public	
9	Denise Fazio	Member of the public	
10	Mary Horner	Member of the public	

11	Elizeo Gonzalez	Member of the public
12	Katie Taranto	Member of the public
13	David Pontell	Member of the public
14	Deontae Dunkley	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. Members and other panelists introduced themselves.

### **2. Consideration of December 4, 2025 Minutes**

Betsy Faga motioned to approve the December 4, 2025 minutes; Andy Vereyken seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the December 4, 2025 minutes.

### **3. Duke-Quaker Towns Affordable Housing Plan (Kenny Turscak and Cathy Puskar)**

Kenny Turscak and Cathy Puskar presented the [affordable housing plan for the Duke-Quaker Towns project](#). Ms. Puskar explained that the 11-unit project will provide a four-bedroom for-sale unit in exchange for Section 7-700 bonus density.

One Committee member asked what the market-rate townhouses will cost. Ms. Puskar responded that the Applicant does not have sale prices available yet. Another Committee member asked who the Applicant is. Ms. Puskar noted the Applicant is Evergreen Properties.

Jon Frederick motioned to recommend approval of the affordable housing plan, Mike Doyle seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of the affordable housing plan.

### **4. N Lee Development Preview (Kenny Turscak and Ken Wire)**

Kenny Turscak and Ken Wire presented the [development preview for the proposed 300 N Lee development](#). The Applicant for the project is EYA and Ken Wire introduced Jack Lester from EYA. The project is not seeking rezoning, but is utilizing Section 7-700 bonus density, which yields two affordable for-sale fee simple units. The two units will each have a two-car garage, study, loft, and roof terrace comparable to the other market-rate units.

One Committee member asked what fee simple means. Mr. Lester responded that it means the for-sale units have no common ownership structure like a condo. A Committee member noted that they live next to the project and will excuse themselves from voting on the final affordable housing plan but asked if the site layout for the project is finished. Mr. Wire noted that the site layout is final, but the BAR will meet with the project again in January to finalize the design.

Andy Vereyken noted that he will also abstain from voting on the affordable housing plan due to a conflict of interest. Another Committee member asked what ADU meant in this context. Mr. Turscak clarified that Alexandria uses committed affordable unit (CAU) instead of affordable dwelling unit (ADU), which is a term used in other jurisdictions. The Committee member also noted that ADU can refer to accessible dwelling units.

One Committee member asked if there is a set policy for how monetary contributions are allocated. Ms. McIlvaine noted that the Office of Housing is able to allocate monetary contributions at its discretion, which makes it a flexible financial tool. In this case, the monetary contribution could be used to support homebuyer assistance.

One Committee member asked if the project is accessible. Mr. Wire explained that elevators or other accessibility features could be added to units in coordination with the Applicant's team, but it is not required in code. Another Committee member emphasized that there are different types of accessibility needs for different abilities, including sensory and hearing.

## **5. Housing 2040: Financial Tools**

Helen McIlvaine presented an update on Housing 2040 Financial Tools, including tax relief and developer fee relief. Ms. McIlvaine noted that the City is exploring tax abatement as a potential tool for rehabilitation projects and for redevelopments that add net new affordable units. Ms. McIlvaine noted that property taxes lower operating costs and allow developers to borrow more conventional debt, which would lower the amount of City gap funding requested. Fees account for \$15,000 per unit in affordable housing projects, so some form of fee relief could have a significant impact. Housing staff will continue to refine its recommendations in the Housing 2040 process.

One Committee member expressed their support for tax relief and asked for clarification if net new units would include units converted from market-rate to committed affordable. Ms. McIlvaine noted that it was envisioned to target additional affordable units built under redevelopment, but staff will reconsider its scope and definition.

Another Committee member expressed their support for these tools and asked about the time limits for a potential tax abatement. Ms. McIlvaine noted that under the City's statutory limitations, it can provide up to 15 years of abatement. A special tax district would allow the City up to 30 years of abatement, but staff are talking to lenders about an abatement period that would be impactful for loan terms and underwriting. Christopher Do noted that there is advocacy at the state level by Virginia Housing Alliance in support of enabling legislation for tax exemption and abatement.

One Committee member asked why there has been reticence around fee waivers for non-profits. Ms. McIlvaine noted that at one point, enforcing the same requirements for all developers helped to combat the stigma towards affordable housing. Ms. McIlvaine noted that some organizations have been granted tax exemption by the City but sewer tap fees are not waived.

Another Committee member asked about affordable housing and assisted living for faith groups. Ms. McIlvaine noted that the focus is on streamlining faith-based developments to avoid opposition that causes delays and added costs to these projects. A Committee member noted that the Mayor and Vice Mayor have been supportive at the state level of these initiatives.

Committee members noted that there is debate over enabling legislation that allows local control over decision making versus state mandates that can relieve some of the pressure and backlash from municipalities. A state mandate could limit challenges to City authority, provide certainty for developments, and avoid years of legal challenges.

## **6. Affordable Housing Pipeline and Priorities (Staff)**

Deputy Director Aspasia Xypolia presented the updated [Affordable Housing Pipeline](#) to the Committee.

One Committee member noted that the City could tackle the current pipeline in nine years based on annual revenue. The City could also leverage money and bring in new sources to move more quickly through the pipeline. Ms. McIlvaine noted that Parkstone was able to leverage JBG Smith funds for its acquisition and the Rooming House was able to use HOME-ARP funds for its rehabilitation.

Ms. McIlvaine explained that moving projects through the pipeline will require investment. The Co-Chairs noted that in discussions with City Council, they were receptive to affordable housing bonds.

One Committee member commented that without action, development costs will continue to increase. As a result, some projects will become too expensive or may not materialize. The Committee member noted that some of these financial tools, including tax relief, bonds, and fee relief, could help cover some of these funding needs. They also noted that 10-15 years ago, City Council asked if affordable housing projects would come forward if additional money was provided, so the pipeline demonstrates the need exists. Another Committee member expressed concern about the risk from the market, which could upend development conditions for these projects.

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

Ms. McIlvaine reported that ARHA has relocated everyone from Ladrey except for one resident. ARHA is working on obtaining the HAP contract for the Alate, which is needed to make payments towards the state bond authority. Seven residents have leased the affordable set-aside units in the property and two other set-aside units are currently available.

One Committee member asked if ARHA is currently using its reserves to make payments for the Alate. Ms. McIlvaine explained that ARHA is using reserves from proceeds and revenue from other properties and deals. The Committee member asked if these payments impact ARHA's maintenance and resident services at other properties. Ms. McIlvaine explained that the funding for those services are separate. The HAP contract implementation is dependent on the Ladrey relocation.

One Committee member noted that this is the first project to use the state bonding capacity and it could be a viable financing option to pursue for other projects.

## **8. Housing Alexandria Update (Jon Frederick)**

Jon Frederick reported that Housing Alexandria received the award for the best homeownership project for Cardinal Path at the Virginia Governor's Housing Conference. Residents are moving into their homes this month, including three homebuyers coming from LIHTC properties.

Housing Alexandria closed on Phase II of Sansé before Thanksgiving and is anticipating Phase I delivery by this summer. Naja has received a letter of intent from Neighborhood Health for its headquarters. Naja construction is anticipated to begin in 2026.

## **9. Staff Update: Duke Street Land Use Plan (Staff)**

Tamara Jovovic noted that the Duke Street Land Use Plan held an open house in December and held a work session with Planning Commission. The plan is aiming for public hearing by the end of 2026. It is currently soliciting feedback on land use areas, including opportunity sites for housing redevelopment and protection areas targeted for preservation. The Duke Street team is hosting workshops for additional feedback in the same format as the Open House.

## **10. Financial Report (Staff)**

Ms. Jovovic commented that staff continues to see the impact on monetary contributions as more units are provided as set-asides.

## **11. Announcements and Upcoming Meetings (All)**

Ali Coleman gave an update on the Economic Opportunities Commission (EOC) which met with co-chairs and staff last month. The EOC is looking to continue to collaborate on housing issues. Ms. Coleman also noted that the PIT Count is coming up on January 28 or January 29. DCHS staff are working on supporting housing legislation related to homelessness. A Committee member also noted that the Health and Human Services Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued and is currently available.

Staff highlighted the February 28 Open House will be held in-person at the Lee Center from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. All Committee members and members of the public are welcome to attend.

### [ARHA Redevelopment Work Group](#)

February 19, 5:30 – 7 p.m.

ARHA Headquarters, 401 Wythe St.

### [Housing 2040 Open House](#)

February 28, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson St.

[Registration Form](#)

## **12. Adjournment (Co-Chairs)**

Jon Frederick motioned to adjourn the meeting; the Co-Chairs adjourned the meeting at 8:53 p.m.