City of Alexandria, Virginia

ALEXANDRIA HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MINUTES

Virtual | October 1, 2026

	Members Present	Members Absent	Staff
1	Todd Perry		Mary Horner, Landlord-Tenant Division Chief
2	Annabell Bivens		Tamara Jovovic, Housing Program Manager
3	Michael Butler		Christopher Do, Housing Analyst
4	Joseph Dammann		Jose Gonzelez, Housing Program Manager
5			Carrie Beach, Planning & Zoning
6	Betsy Faga		Melissa Symmes, Planning & Zoning
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		Cesar Madison	
16		Rachel Dixon	
17	Unique Coleman		
18	Andrea Ponsor		
	Aspasia Xypolia*, Housing		
	Ali Coleman Tokarz*, DCHS		
	Guests		
1	Natalie Vaca-Flores	Member of the public	
2	Samuel Copelan	Member of the public	

*non-voting

1. Introduction and Chair Remarks (Chairs)

Co-Chair Sean Zielenbach welcomed the Committee and guests at 7:01 p.m. Quorum achieved, meeting begins.

2. Consideration of September 4, 2026 Minutes (All)

The Committee voted to approve September 4 minutes; Jon motioned to approve; Betsy second the motion. Shelley abstained.

3. Duke Street Land Use Plan Update (Melissa Symmes and Carrie Beach)

Duke Street Land Use Plan presentation begins. Melissa Symes and Carrie Beach from Neighborhood Planning presented.

Questions begin. Jan asks whether the new plan recognizes the needs of seniors and includes designated areas for senior housing. Carrie answers that the plan says a variety of housing types will be possible, the residential areas allow for flexible use, and that therefore the plan envisions places for senior housing.

Sean asks to what extent the Duke Street Land Use Plan reflects actual development interest in the corridor. Carries says they've talked to the property owners, and some are interested in redeveloping over five years and others say they do not envision redeveloping in the near future.

Shelley says she appreciates the flexibility for the mixed-use areas, but that she views it as being unlikely that there will be much market-rate residential interest.

Anderson asks how the land use plan will be implemented and how/whether it will interact with existing SAPs or CDDs. Carrie and Melissa answer is that this will become an overlay district where the new land use plan will supersede existing SAPs and CDDs. The land use plan represents the vision for the area future and developers will help future developments conform to that vision by applying for SUPs/rezonings.

Jon asks why the land use plan isn't willing to be more aggressive/less restrictive in its height limits. Carrie answered that the idea is developers will leverage 7-700's IZ provisions to get higher, and that there might be more flexibility near the transit nodes. Jon emphasizes that the city is too comfortable with 5-over-2 form factors due to current market conditions and that it should be willing to consider great heights in transit corridors more like those along the Ballston corridor.

Anderson asks what the thought process was for setting height limits at threshold heights where developers may find accessing 7-700 undesirable because it would push them into a more expensive building form. Carrie answers that they are aware of this issue, but suggests that it may be a temporary one if IBC regulations, market forces, or other conditions change.

Jon Frederick volunteered to draft a letter summarizing the Committee's feedback on the plan recommendations. Ms. Beach asked that comments are submitted before mid-November.

4. Housing 2040 Update (Staff)

Tamara provided an update on Housing 2040 progress. The Office of Housing has released an RFP for a consultant to assist with setting housing targets. Targets will be brought before City Council by the end of the fiscal year. Staff are also working on the Housing 2040 dashboard with the help of OAID.

Chris Do provided an update of legislative developments and funding updates surrounding recent ROFR efforts. He also shares information about an RFP the city issued to find an architect to help with a pattern book for triplexes/fourplexes now buildable under ZFH. Anderson asks how to read the RFP; Chris says they can share the RFP with the Committee. Jon comments that he's seeing more old single-family homes on the market where the listing will mention that it can be rebuilt into a triplex or duplex. Chris says that the city is tracking this as well and plans to engage someone to help with market analysis to determine the feasibility for those kinds of projects.

5. FY2028 Budget Letter Discussion (AHAAC Co-Chairs)

Shelley begins discussion of recent financing guidance from the city manager and asks for feedback on what to include in a potential letter from AHAAC to the city about funding of affordable housing matters. Jon suggests pushing for keeping the dedicated revenue sources currently paying into the affordable housing trust fund.

Shelley wants to make sure that even as we prioritize protecting existing sources of spending and hitting on getting the ROFR done quickly, we also want to push for things like a tax abatement for preservation and getting a bond issued faster than 2034.

Jan asks if we can get a survey about priorities to put in the letter because it's difficult to decide what's most important on the fly. Sean reemphasizes his view that an abatement for preserved affordable housing is very important and that he'd like to see Richmond take action to strip unnecessary items out of the QAPs for LIHTC applications.

Jan raises the idea of prioritizing rental subsidies for low-income renters and having tax abatements for people with modest incomes living in the expensive homes they own. Shelley says they'll send us a letter with different priorities for us to review.

6. ARHA Updates (Mike Butler)

Mike begins ARHA update. Roy Priest is operating as the interim CEO and is leading comprehensive efforts to improve resident services, establish financial stability, provide community outreach to residents, redevelopment projects (Samuel Madden North and South) that continue to advance, and update the Housing Choice Voucher waitlist.

Shelley commends Mike for his complete and thorough presentation on ARHA's current efforts.

7. Housing Alexandria Updates (Jon Frederick)

Jon begins Housing Alexandria's update. Sanse is outsourcing property management and is working with residents to prepare for move-in to Phase I. Naja construction will begin in Q1 of 2027. Housing Alexandria is continuing to work on Hart House and has sold every unit except for one at Cardinal Path. Housing Alexandria is finalizing its next three-year strategic plan.

8. Staff Updates (Staff)

Tamara begins staff updates. Mike mentions that compliance expenses for dedicated affordable units are often misunderstood and not accounted for in operating expenses. Sean asked about the status of the merger of Landlord-Tenant Relations Board with AHAAC. Tamara answers that she does not have information about this and is waiting to hear back from the City Clerk.

Jan mentions that the ALX Chamber of Commerce put out a letter saying that it wanted to streamline real estate development, and she's worried that they may want to eliminate AHAAC. Jan asks whether we know the degree of buy-in City Council has for AHAAC. Shelley says that her understanding is that City Council values the work AHAAC does and AHAAC is an active participant in city affairs in ways that other citizen boards aren't.

Shelley shares that AHAAC has received anecdotal feedback that City Council is impressed with how active AHAAC is now compared to the past. Tamara shares that in her experience working for the city, AHAAC's input continues to be sought-after and considered by City Council, especially when AHAAC disagrees with planning staff.

9. Information Items (Tamara Jovovic)

Tamara begins presentation on AHAAC's financial report, noting that developer contributions are expected to be limited moving forward.

10. Announcements and Upcoming Meetings (All)

Common Interest Communities Training Series: Cameras & Security
November 21, 9:30 a.m.
Virtual (Zoom Registration Link)

ARHA Redevelopment Work Group Meeting
December 7, 5:30-7 p.m.
ARHA Headquarters, 401 Wythe St

11. Adjournment (Co-Chairs)

The Committee motioned to adjourn at 8:30 p.m.