

ARHA Redevelopment Work Group
August 18, 2016
City Council Work Room
5:30pm – 7:00pm
Meeting Summary

Participants

Work Group Members

Mary Lyman, Planning Commission, Chair

Justin M. Wilson, Vice Mayor

John Taylor Chapman, City Councilman

Salena Zellers, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Vice Chair member

Helen S. McIlvaine, Director, Office of Housing

Karl Moritz, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning

Roy Priest, CEO, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority

Mark B. Jinks, City Manager

Note: Daniel Bauman, ARHA Chair, was absent.

City of Alexandria/Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) Staff

Eric Keeler, Office of Housing

Brandi Collins, Office of Housing

Nathan Imm, Department of Planning and Zoning

Joanna Anderson, City Attorney Office

Connie Staudinger, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority

Leroy Battle, Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority

Introductions and Meeting Summary Approval

Vice Mayor Wilson convened the meeting and introductions were made of Work Group members, City and ARHA staff, and others attending. Upon a motion by Ms. Lyman and a second by Ms. Zellers, the Work Group members unanimously approved the written summary of the July 14, 2016 meeting.

Ramsey Homes

Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review (BAR) Karl Moritz and Patty Mao-Booker of KTG Architects provided an update on the Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review (BAR) worksession on July 27 beginning with an overview of the earlier 53 unit design and describing how the current design for Ramsey Homes responds to comments from the Board during the session including revised elevations to achieve “an honest representation of a multifamily building” versus a townhouse-style building design. Among the changes now captured are an additional 10’ setback to provide an expanded view of the Watson Reading Room and Black History Museum building along Wythe Street and multiple architectural revisions, including enhancements to the balconies, windows and doors, exterior materials and color. After a review of market standards, the City-ARHA team agreed to retain 9’ ceilings for affordable housing development to be consistent with general market rate development practices. Ms. Mao also discussed the building materials and presented images of built properties for illustration. At this time, the only unresolved issues include treatment of the porches and pergolas, which may

require additional minor design changes. Next steps will include a second worksession with the Parker Gray BAR in September and community engagement during a project presentation at the Braddock Implementation Advisory Group (BIAG) meeting in September. The idea of holding an “open house” event to solicit public comments prior to the BIAG meeting was discussed. It was noted that some members of the community have expressed concerns with the proposed open space design and what type of programming should be planned.

Section 106 Process

Helen McIlvaine provided an update on the Section 106 process which is a federally mandated consultation with various stakeholders to create a plan to mitigate the loss of a historic or culturally significant resource. Two community meetings will be held on Thursday, September 15: staff from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources will attend the morning session and a second session (without a state representative) will be held in the evening. Persons and groups that have identified themselves as interested parties have been invited to attend, and members of the public are welcome to participate, as well.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Consultant

Mr. Priest indicated that ARHA’s position on this matter was that ARHA’s draft LIHTC application for Ramsey Homes per the Joint Work Plan, is no longer necessary since only one option is going forward. It was previously requested for comparison purposes. Ms. McIlvaine stated that ARHA will be required to produce the draft application for City staff’s review since it is part of the standard underwriting practice for Housing Opportunity Fund loans. Even if a City HOF loan is approved, funds are not disbursed unless ARHA wins tax credits so there is a built in safeguard should the application not be competitive for 9% credits. The City did reserve its right to consult with any expert, should that be necessary, in performing due diligence as part of recommending the loan. Mr. Priest stressed that confidentiality is important to protect the integrity and competitiveness of their application and that ARHA considers the information contained in their application to be proprietary. A suggestion was made that the draft LIHTC application be submitted by ARHA’s attorney to the City Attorney’s Office. Ms. McIlvaine stated that, at ARHA’s request, the City has agreed that a third party consultant is not needed to evaluate ARHA’s draft LIHTC application for Ramsey Homes.

Executive Sessions

Since there is no resolution within the ARHA Board yet regarding staff reciprocal attendance at Executive Sessions, this item will continue to be discussed.

ARHA Request for Proposals (RFP)

Mr. Moritz and Mr. Priest provided an update on the ARHA RFP process. Mr. Moritz made a presentation regarding the City’s current recommendations for sequencing and timing of the redevelopment/DSUP proposals. This schedule anticipated undertaking two sites at a time, however, it may not be necessary to proceed with more than one site at a time.

- 1) Samuel Madden Uptown/Andrew Adkins
- 2) Hopkins-Tancil/ARHA Administrative Building
- 3) Cameron Valley

Among the factors influencing the City's approach are community readiness, the status of the relevant small area plan, and current development pressures. City staff capacity is a major challenge and staff will ask City Council and ARHA to provide for additional internal capacity if this timeline is endorsed. It is anticipated that Planning and Zoning would need one additional full-time staff person and Office of Housing will need ½ additional staff person to carry out the recommended sequencing. Ms. Zellers inquired as to whether or not there was precedence for developer contribution to city staffing. Mr. Moritz indicated that it occurred for the Oakland and Potomac Yards projects. The goal is to have a development involving affordable housing/ARHA replacement units approved in time for submission to the 2018 annual tax credit competition to the greatest extent possible. Some redevelopment sites could generate multiple tax credit applications if it is determined to be necessary to be completed in phases.

Mr. Priest emphasized that ARHA is looking at multiple drivers, in addition to those the city looked at, including but not limited to, the physical conditions of certain properties may result in modifications to the sequencing. He explained that at Cameron Valley, for instance, we used stimulus funds some years ago to stabilize the site. Now we are noticing new cracks in the structures. He also explained that, ARHA only receives Tenant Protection Vouchers for occupied units so vacating them prior to development is not something that would be desirable. Staff must be flexible to respond to those conditions as they arise.

The necessity to undertake community outreach early was discussed and encouraged (significant increases in density are likely to be proposed for all sites to be redeveloped), along with other development and market considerations, as well as the needs of the development partners who have been identified. Mr. Moritz mentioned that he would be meeting with the new head of Metro real estate the following day so might have a better idea of that agency's current plans for redevelopment of the Braddock Station.

The temporary and permanent relocation needs of current residents impacted by the redevelopment will need to be considered. The City has prioritized creating options to allow residents to remain in the Alexandria community.

ARHA was asked for an update on the timeline for repayment of the Glebe Park loan, and Mr. Priest reported that a draft application amendment has been submitted to HUD for feedback. He believes a repayment may be possible within the current year (2016).

Other Business

There will be no September meeting, and the next ARHA Redevelopment Work Group meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2016

The meeting was adjourned by Vice Mayor Wilson.