

## **Planning for Alexandria's Future Housing Needs**

ARHA/City Working Group Meeting 08/03/2015

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## **WHY ARE WE HERE?**

- Changes to the HUD Mixed-Finance development and disposition regulations related to Tenant Protection Vouchers are being updated and the proposed revisions are not as favorable.
- Property does not meet HUD minimum property standards, therefore is at risk of losing its operating subsidies.
- A 1946 article that announced that the City had an opportunity to purchase the war housing units quoted the mayor as saying, the emergency homes do not conform with the city building codes. This continues to be true for the homes and, therefore, federal and/or state-based development funds could not be used in any kind of renovation effort.
- In order to be competitive for tax credit funding the units must not be obsolete, must offer current amenities (washer/dryer, AC, dishwashers) and must be competitive with comparable properties (marketable).

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## WHY ARE WE HERE?

- Our team has been proceeding with the development review process under the basis that the zoning/building envelope has been set since the last meeting of this group on April 17<sup>th</sup>.
- The team is still studying options for resolving open space issues.

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## WHY ARE WE HERE?

ARHA has been responsive to the small area plans as well as recommendations from the City staff, BAR, and the community.

- Changed the design from town-house inspired (BEMP) traditional character (City staff); to a more honest, multi-family form and transitional architecture (BAR and Focus Group).
- Rotated the North building 180 degrees (City staff)
- Committed to underground the parking and utilities (BEMP and City staff)
- Reduced the height from 4-story, to stepped 3/4-story, to 3-story with flat roof to relate to the 2 and 3-story structures with pitched roofs. Incorporated the rhythm, massing and color palette from the neighborhood.
- Added features such as double doors, and more prominent canopy sizes to provide hierarchy at main building entrances while retaining street (direct unit) entrances with smaller canopies to relate to the pedestrian scale (BAR)
- Enhanced glazing and softened corners (BAR)
- De-concentrated public housing units, and increased density to sustain the lower-income households (BEMP)
- Increased the set-aside for low-income from 15 to 17, adding 2 additional low-income units while adding 36 units at workforce housing limits to sustain the low-income units (Community)
- Performing an HABS-level documentation of the history which is above and beyond for projects of this type (City staff).

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## WHY ARE WE HERE?

- As of the 4/17/2015 presentation to this Group, the concessions made by ARHA at the request of the City for design had significantly increased the cost.
  - Estimated at **\$1,184,737** Underground Parking
  - **\$200,000** for 2-elevators that go to the 3<sup>rd</sup> story (4-stops)
  - **\$119,450** in additional design fees.
  - **\$380,000 to \$400,000** added cost for building (2) dis-similar buildings
- The added costs have significantly marginalized the competitiveness of the application for tax credit funding.
- Additional costs will compromise the quality of the architecture.

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## Next Steps

- If Project moves forward (at a minimum):
  - Continue to refine architectural character, working with City staff but within the requirements of the funding and budget.
  - Would request city contributions to the Project, which will increase the funding application score (leverage), at a minimum for:
    - Stormwater Fee = approximately \$142,000
    - Sanitary Fee = \$1.50 x peak wastewater flow in gallons
    - Undergrounding of utilities not serving our site: approximately \$650,000
    - Fees related to the Traffic Management Plan
- If Project does not move forward:
  - Reimbursement of all pre-development costs incurred in excess of the \$100,000 VHDA Pre-development grant secured for this effort.
  - Discuss how to mitigate the lost land economics if the full potential of the site cannot be realized by ARHA.

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## Ramsey Homes

### Existing Conditions

- 70-year old PH property
- Capital improvement funds from HUD were scarce
- Monthly rental income (\$4,395) is less than expenses (\$5,216)
- Capital improvements were completed based on priorities set for ARHA's total public housing portfolio
- Site has been well maintained with the limited funds available to ARHA.
- Even with substantial rehabilitation the existing units cannot meet (HUD) 504 accessibility codes
- Surface Parking / overhead utilities

### Proposed Improvements

- New 53-unit, mixed-income community
- Underground parking
- Underground utilities
- Walkable Streets
- Lower in height than the Plan recommended 45 feet in height (39 feet in height/3-stories)
- Promotes use of mass transit

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## Rehabilitation vs. Redevelopment

- \$113,809 per unit is the estimated cost of a *conservative* rehabilitation. Rehabilitation would not result in accessibility code compliant units, therefore ARHA could not use HUD or tax credit funding.
- \$126,517 per unit is the estimated cost of new construction. New construction would qualify for HUD or tax credit funding.
- The \$12,708 difference per unit would be recovered in the short-term by integrating green technology with high performance design and construction for which proper operation and maintenance will promote durability, reduce operating costs and equate to significantly lower utilities for the residents.
- A rehabilitation to bring the structures up to current codes would result in the loss of all four of the exterior walls, roof structure, etc. and would significantly expand the building footprint. Even then accessibility code compliance could not be achieved.

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# PROPOSED DESIGN CONCEPT



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1. ELEVATION FROM STREET VIEW



2. ELEVATION FROM STREET VIEW

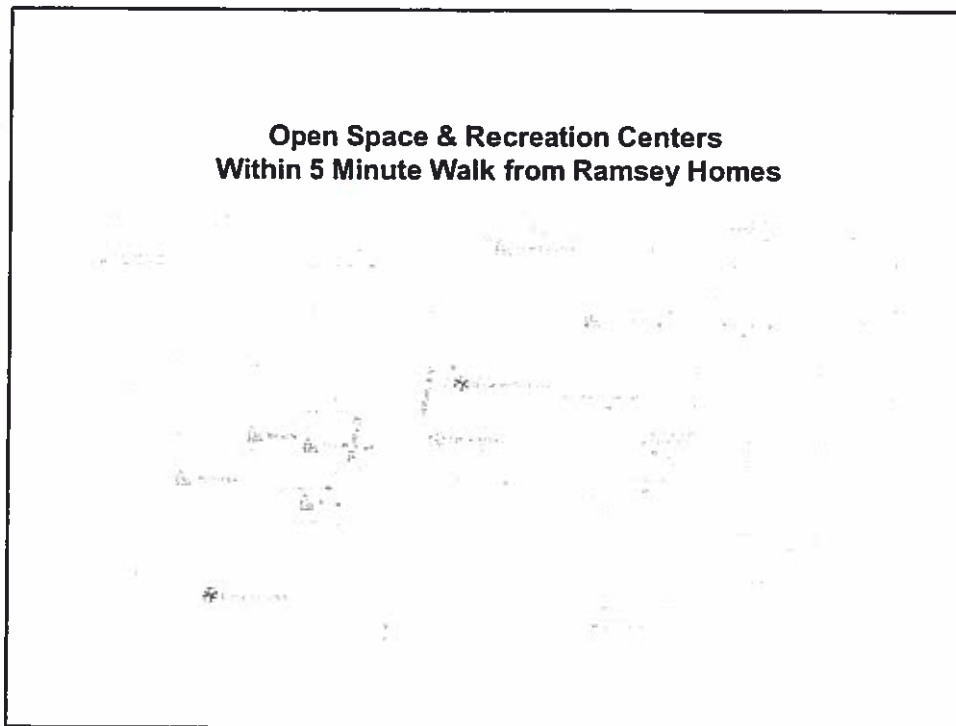
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## ZONING/BUILDING ENVELOPE

- Open Space:
  - 21%: (August, 2014) Inception
  - 17%: (March, 2015) Height reduced to 3-stories at city staff request, effect of this height change increased the ground level SF
  - 15%: (July, 2015) Addition of a transformer
- Increasing the open space could require:
  - Loss of units needed for critical mass to sustain the community; or
  - Adding height

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### Open Space & Recreation Centers Within 5 Minute Walk from Ramsey Homes



## ZONING/BUILDING ENVELOPE

- Potential Mitigation for Open Space Reduction:
  - Opportunities at future ARHA redevelopment efforts. \*
  - Owner entity commitment to fund scholarships for the (17) low-income units only to a community-based, youth-focused organization with organized activities (e.g., Boys & Girls Club or Charles Houston)
  - Maximize open space usability
  - Other potential off-site opportunities
  - Green roof (per CM, this would be 4x the cost of a standard room)
  - \* Please note that ARHA cannot obligate any future owner of the Development Sites at this stage in the RFP process.

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## DEVELOPMENT-RELATED COSTS

- Technical Requirements per City of Alexandria Memorandum to Industry 07-14: Requirements of Combined Sewer Service Area
  - Option A: All sanitary sewage and/or stormwater from the redevelopment site shall discharge to fully separated sewer systems if such systems are available as determined by the Director of T&ES.
  - Option B: Retain 50% of the annual stormwater runoff generated from the development site, onsite.
  - Option C: Provide for offsite separation of sanitary and/or storm sewers to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES; OR, pay a contribution in lieu of offsite separation
- Stormwater Fee = \$200,000 x total parcel area in acres or \$142,000
- Sanitary Fee = \$1.50 x peak wastewater flow in gallons

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## DEVELOPMENT-RELATED COSTS

- Sanitary Sewer Mitigation
  - Option A met - The development proposes the construction of offsite improvements which connects to an existing fully separated sewer system
    - The existing fully separated sewer system was constructed as part of the Bland effort and sized to handle the 5-block Old Town Commons plus the ultimate outfall of the King and West areas. ARHA paid in excess of \$1M to improve the city's infrastructure with no means to recover the cost from future development tying into and taking advantage of the line.

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## DEVELOPMENT-RELATED COSTS

- Storm Sewer Mitigation
  - Since Option A and B are not viable, the Applicant has proposed the following improvements to compensate for the allowance to discharge the proposed storm sewer system into a combined sewer system.
    - Remove the existing impermeable surface within the Public Alley located to the east of the development and replace it with a permeable surface. Additionally, the applicant proposes the detention of the post development 2 year 24 hour storm peak flow rate below the pre-development peak flow rate, which goes beyond the Zoning Ordinance requirement for Channel Protection (detailed below).
    - The conversion to a permeable surface within the public alley would reduce the runoff by approximately 400 cubic feet. The first 1" of runoff across the site generates approximately 2,468 cubic feet of runoff. The elimination of 400 cubic feet equals a roughly 16% decrease in storm water runoff.
    - The post development site generates a 2-year 24 hour storm peak flow rate of 2.79 CFS. This storm event will be detained on-site to below the pre-development rate of 2.17 CFS. (In other word, with the proposed, we would be performing better than required.)

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## DEVELOPMENT-RELATED COSTS

- **Dry Utility Undergrounding:**
    - Required by the redevelopment (\$175,000):
      - Cost for new service \$100,000
      - New service conduit and switch on Wythe to serve future development: \$75,000
    - Not required by the redevelopment (\$650,000):
      - Wythe Street Relocation Cost: \$350,000
      - N. Patrick Street Relocation Cost: \$75,000
      - Pendleton Street Relocation Cost: \$200,000
      - Public Alley Relocation Cost: \$25,000
- \* Note: This can be completed with this effort but ARHA would request it be reimbursed by the City as it is creating a benefit to the City.

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## POLICY OVERVIEW

### Redevelopment of the Ramsey Homes Supports the Goals of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan (BMNP):

- Redevelop public housing with housing for mixed-income communities at higher densities with a mix of populations including ...affordable, workforce,...
- Provides enough underground parking to avoid aggravating the on-street parking crunch, but not so much that it encourages ownership of additional vehicles
- Takes advantage of the underlying value of public housing sites to transform public housing into a mixed-income community that is part of the larger neighborhood.

### Braddock Metro



© Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan  
2012

## POLICY OVERVIEW

Braddock East Master Plan



October 2008

### Redevelopment of Ramsey Homes is Consistent with the BEMP:

- Promote mixed-income communities through the redevelopment of the existing public housing sites within the Braddock East planning area.
- Create a community that is diverse and affordable
- Construct new buildings that are generally no more than one-story higher than adjacent buildings
- Provides for underground parking and utilities

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## POLICY OVERVIEW

The BEMP embraces the BMNP goal of creating a community that is diverse and affordable, with a mix of income levels *and at a density high enough to sustain a critical mass of public housing residents* in order to maintain the strong social and support networks that are essential in low-income communities.

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## **POLICY OVERVIEW**

The 15 households in residence have the right to return to the redeveloped site. In order to achieve the goal of a mix of income levels large enough to sustain the lower-income units and maintain the strong social and support networks that are essential in low-income communities, workforce housing units will necessarily have to be added to the unit mix in some sustainable proportion.

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## **POLICY OVERVIEW**

The Plan recommends a mix of public housing and market-rate housing and, where possible an element of affordable and/or workforce housing. This Project will include an approximate 1/3-2/3 ratio of low-income households (17 total) to households with incomes up to a workforce housing income (36 total). There is no public housing component to this Project contemplated at this time.

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## POLICY OVERVIEW

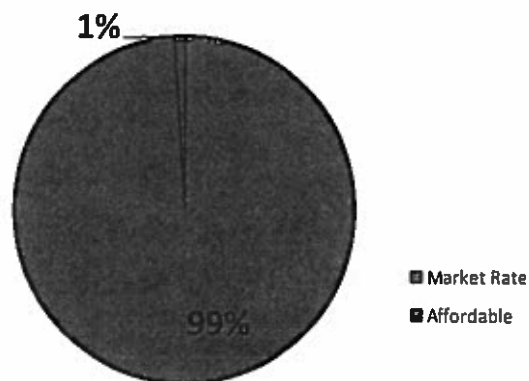
- The Alexandria City Area Median Income is \$109,200
- 60% of the AMI is considered by City policy to be consistent with a workforce housing household income limit, if the housing is rental housing
- 60% AMI household income ranges from \$45,900 - \$86,520 depending on the number of persons in the household

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## Who is Earning 60% of AMI?



**New Units Generated in the Braddock Metro  
Neighborhood  
(From Adoption of BEMP to Present)**



Market Rate/Luxury: 949  
Affordable: 10

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## **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

- **Affected Resident's Group (3)**
- **Focus Group (3)**
  - Consists of various citizens with a variety of affiliations and experience that live in the Braddock East area
- **Advisory Groups or City-Community Partnerships**
  - Braddock East Implementation Advisory Group (BEIAG)
  - Parker-Gray Roundtable
- **Community-at-Large (1)**
- **Community Groups**
  - West Old Town Citizen's Association

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## **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

- **Faith-Based Community Groups**
  - ALIVE
  - Third Baptist Church
  - St. Joseph's Catholic Church
- **Business Community**
  - Lost Dog Café
- **Advocacy Groups**
  - Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance
- **Not-for-Profit Foundation**
  - Historic Alexandria Foundation

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## **History of Ramsey Homes**

The only constant at the Ramsey Homes development site is change – since settlement, its land use has evolved from vacant land to farmland (pre-1849) to military housing and hospital use during the Civil War (1849-1854) to affordable tenant housing for European immigrants (1854-1914) to vacant land (1914-1941) to military housing during World War II (1942-1945) to its current use as affordable public housing.

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## History of Ramsey Homes

In October of 1946 as the City of Alexandria was contemplating the purchase of the Ramsey Homes site, the Washington Post published an article quoting the Mayor as saying, the emergency homes do not conform to the city building codes and are consequently substandard. In 2015, they remain nonconforming and therefore substandard.

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## History of Ramsey Homes

- The Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District includes 984 contributing buildings and 328 non-contributing buildings. The Ramsey Homes include seven contributing resources, which represents 0.71% of the contributing resources. Their loss will have no effect on the significance and viability of the District.
- The District is described as "a good example of an urban historic district with a mixture of building types and architectural styles. It contains an important collection of churches, lodges, and other properties associated with the social life of the neighborhood and the ethnic heritage of the city as a whole." The loss of the Ramsey Homes buildings will not detract from the District's ability to convey a sense of the historic urban neighborhood.
- The Ramsey Homes were built in a way that was not sympathetic to the historic neighborhood; the buildings are not consistent with the general character of the District in terms of scale, density, or setback.

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## History of Ramsey Homes

- The District's architectural significance is primarily associated with its historic townhouses and row houses (i.e. "Most of the architecturally significant resources [in the District] are townhouses and row buildings. The vernacular frame townhouses from the late nineteenth century represent historic styles of the era as they manifested themselves locally; they also reflect the racial segregation of the core area of the neighborhood...")
- Although representation of a variety of historic architectural styles is important to the significance of the District, the integrity of the 20th century architectural component, in our opinion, is more closely linked to preservation of the colonial revival style buildings (i.e. "The District's twentieth-century residential buildings, whether individual or in rows, are nearly all in the Colonial Revival style, an apparent effort to emphasize Alexandria's early architectural heritage...")

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## HISTORY OF RAMSEY HOMES

- Draft history report notes that,
  - *"The Ramsey Homes and landscape are out of scale in the neighborhood as they lack the density of their neighbors."*
- If any of the improvements remain, the parking and utilities could not be undergrounded. Rehabilitation/infill that the BEMP suggests conflicts with this Plan suggestion.

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## **HISTORY OF RAMSEY HOMES**

- Final history report will include the history of public housing as presented in the James Bland history report.
- First available date for final history report is 8/18/2015. This was the first date it could be made available given that the level of detail requested by the City staff exceeds what the state would require and what would be required for a site with this level of significance; therefore sub-consultants (e.g., architects for scaled drawings) had to be retained.

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## **Creative Mitigation**

- It bears repeating that, the significance of Ramsey Homes lies in the social history of publicly assisted affordable housing, something that is increasingly challenging to maintain in one of the most expensive regions in the US. To celebrate its history, the site should continue to be a source of affordable housing for the city.
- There is ample opportunity for public interpretation and commemoration of the site's public housing legacy, without preservation of the resource.

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## Creative Mitigation

- Mitigation will:
  - closely relate to the significance of the property that is being adversely affected;
  - seek to maximize the public benefit;
  - seek to increase knowledge of and appreciation for the past; and,
  - consider the needs of all involved parties.

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## Creative Mitigation

- The former 1940 Robert H. Robinson Library on Wythe Street now serves as the Alexandria Black History Museum.
- The Museum houses a permanent exhibit, *Securing the Blessing of Liberty*, which examines early African-American life in Alexandria, and the Parker-Gray Gallery, where rotating exhibits are displayed.
- Mitigation for the loss of this resource could include the development of an exhibit for this space and a corresponding website, revealing the history of public housing in Alexandria to the present.

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## Creative Mitigation

- Exhibits may be interactive and tie in activities for children.
- Possibilities include:
  - The replication of the floor plans and the war trailers
  - Activities related to defense workers in WWII and other occupations associated with residents of the Ramsey Homes as revealed in city directories and oral history.
  - Illustrated interactive timelines of the local architectural and land use history may be made available as part of the local history curriculum in schools.
  - On the street with a traditional historical highway marker.

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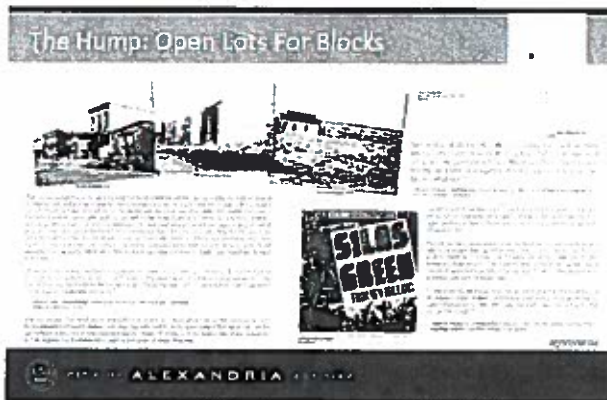
## Creative Mitigation

Mitigation for demolition of the James Bland Homes public housing in the City of Alexandria was required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Mitigation measures and related cultural resources documentation efforts included:

- Preparation of a Documentary Study detailing the property history of the site and context of public housing at the local and national levels.
- Phase I-II archeological investigations.
- Intensive level architectural documentation of the buildings.
- Recorded oral history interviews with various former residents of the site and public housing.
- Incorporation of the site's history into the landscape of the development

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# Creative Mitigation



James Bland Homes - City Historical Marker

# Creative Mitigation



James Bland Homes - City Historical Marker

## Creative Mitigation

VDOT, the Federal Highways Administration, and the City of Alexandria, with the assistance of consultants, employed various creative strategies in order to mitigate for adverse effects to the historic Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery site. In addition to the Phase III archeological excavations aimed at ensuring no graves would be impacted during the construction of the memorial, mitigation efforts involved the preparation of public interpretation materials including:

- Consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
- Establishment of a public park and memorial features on site.
- Content and design for the City of Alexandria's planned Contrabands and Freedmen Cemetery Memorial web site.
- Publication of historic site brochure with text graphics and QR codes that would link to relevant portions of the website.

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Contrabands & Freedmen Cemetery Memorial Walking Tour historic site brochure with text graphics and QR codes that link to relevant portions of the website



## Creative Mitigation

Facing the projected demolition of the historic African American Douglass Elementary School in Leesburg for the construction of a new school, historic consultants developed an alternative mitigation plan which resulted in a history of the integration of schools in Loudon County, and the construction of a multiple award winning interactive exhibit in the new school lobby which outlines the history of segregation.

- Collaboration with community groups and the school district to develop an oral history project documenting the early years of the historic school as told by former students, teachers, and administrative personnel and other school workers.
- School teachers and students assisted with oral history.
- End result was a memorial wall exhibit, including a timeline of key events in the local and national struggles for civil rights, installed in the new school.



Mitigation for Demolition of the Frederick Douglass Elementary School in Loudoun County, Virginia included Oral History Research Conducted by Students and Production of a Memorial Wall Exhibit

## PART 2B PROCESS

- On June 19<sup>th</sup>, 13 total Proposals were received from Respondents invited in Part 2A to participate in Part 2B:

### Development Site

ARHA Admin. Bldg.	Bozzuto		EYA
Hopkins-Tancil	Bozzuto		EYA
Samuel Madden Homes	Bozzuto	Clark Realty	EYA
Andrew Adkins	Bozzuto	Clark Realty	EYA
Cameron Valley	Bozzuto	Mission First	EYA

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## PART 2B PROPOSAL DELIVERABLES

- Term Sheet and Key Business Criteria specific to the Concept Plan/Development Program being proposed
- Design Proposals
- Financing Plan
- Relocation Plan
- Plan to promote Resident Self-Sufficiency and Quality of Life
- Plan to promote Community and Economic Development
- Proposal Security

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## City Involvement in the Evaluation Process

- Evaluation Committee Representation
  - City Appointee is a senior planning staff member. This member will review the full proposals.
- Two planning staff members have executed Confidentiality Agreements and will be given the design proposal tab only of each of the Respondent's Proposals.
  - The design review will be limited to an evaluation of the extent to which design proposals meet current conditions applicable to the subject site (consistency with plans and zoning, parking, open space, height, etc.).
  - Karl Moritz executed a Confidentiality Agreement so that he could discuss the design proposals with the two planning staff members reviewing the design.

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## TIMELINE & PROCESS

- Part 2B submissions received: June 19, 2015
- Short-list interviews: August, 2015
- Board approval of top ranked Respondent, per Development Site: September - October, 2015
- Negotiation of Purchase and Sale Agreements and determination of sequencing: to conclude Spring, 2016
  - Sequencing cannot be determined until after review of all Part 2B responses
- Apply for competitive LIHTC (1<sup>st</sup> Development Site): Spring, 2017
- Relocation activities: Fall, 2017
- Demolition of 1<sup>st</sup> Development Site: Winter, 2017/18 (dependent on successful LIHTC Application)

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### COMPLIANCE WITH THE CITY'S DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

- ARHA has actively engaged its residents and has been having regular meetings with them to keep them apprised of the activities.
- ARHA will actively engage with the community after selection of one Partner per Development Site.
- Just like any other developer, ARHA and their Selected Partners will be subject to the City required Development Review Process and civic engagement requirements.

2015 City of Alexandria Tax Benefits Gained from ARHA Redeveloped Sites  
\$11.5 MM

