

MEETING SUMMARY

Purpose:	Ramsey Homes Development, Section 106
Meeting Date & Time:	June 6, 2016, 6:30 PM
Location:	Alexandria City Hall, City Council Work Room
Attendees:	Al Cox(City of Alexandria Planning & Zoning), Connie Staudinger (ARHA), Catherine Miliaras (City of Alexandria Planning & Zoning), Boyd Sipe (Thunderbird Archeology/Wetlands), Leroy Battle (ARHA), Karen DeVito, Katherine Dixon (AHAAC), Cheryl Malloy (Alive), Helen McIlvaine, (City of Alexandria Office of Housing), Karl Moritz (City of Alexandria Office of Housing), Eric Keeler (City of Alexandria Office of Housing), Roy Priest (ARHA), Gail Rothrock (HAF, HARC), Charles Ablard (HAF), Bill Hendrickson, McArthur Myers, Kendrick Meyers
Minutes Prepared by:	Leroy Battle, ARHA
Attachments:	Attachment 1 – Presentation, Thunderbird Archeology

The meeting was convened at 6:39 PM by Roy Priest who stated the purpose of the meeting was to inform the public of the Section 106 efforts to date and yet to occur, for the Ramsey Homes development proposal and to provide an overview of the federal regulations and legal requirements and each of ARHA's and the City's obligations and responsibilities pursuant to the Historic Preservation Act of 1965.

Karl stated that we were here to discuss the Ramsey Homes Preferred Concept and the Alternate Concept, to be followed by a discussion on the Section 106 process and what will occur moving forward.

Karl presented the Preferred Concept consisting of:

1. Two buildings;
2. 53 units with underground parking;
3. The buildings are U in shape with one opening facing the alley and forming the entry to the garage and the other facing North Patrick Street and forming a courtyard.

The massing perspectives demonstrated the neighborhood context and how the Preferred Concept would relate.

The Alternate Concept was to preserve one of the existing buildings and build one new building with 52 units. The new building would include the following:

1. 4 stories at the alley, with 3 story shoulders at Wythe, Pendleton and Patrick Streets;
2. Underground parking;
3. Recessed courtyards along North Patrick.

Alternative uses of the preserved building considered were residential dwelling units and a day care.

Graphics of the Alternate Concept elevations were presented along with the massing perspectives.

Mr. Moritz turned the presentation over to Ms. McIlvaine who informed the attendees that because HUD no longer retains a person on staff to perform the Section 106 responsibilities, the Department of Housing will serve as a liaison with HUD and the State Department of Historic Resources.

Ms. McIlvaine asked if there were any questions for Mr. Moritz. Mr. Moritz was asked about the origin of the determination for 2 or 4 residential units proposed in the preserved building? Mr. Moritz stated that we had a meeting on the 26th of May with residents and one of the things that was learned was that the square footage in the existing building (2-bed unit) was limited and consisted of approximately 750 SF for each of the 4 units in the buildings. These are very Spartan plans and are much smaller than ARHA's standards, thus the determination was made that converting the 4 units to 2 units would create larger, more livable units and was therefore more appropriate.

A follow up question was asked as to how we should determine that the units are the right size and that we have the best program? Mr. Priest stated that the units are in keeping with the current market standards and meet the current tax credit guidance to maximize the scoring.

Ms. McIlvaine then introduced Boyd Sipe as ARHA's consultant who would be leading the Section 106 related archeological and historical study. Mr. Sipe stated that he had sent out notifications to many in the room and stated for those who were not familiar with the process he would provide an overview of the Section 106 process. He stated his professional credentials sharing that he has been an archeologist since 1985 and is currently working on behalf of Wetlands Solutions located in Gainesville, VA. This has been his practice for the last 5 years. He stated that the federal agency will expect the applicant to do the heavy lifting. Mr. Sipe placed added emphasis on clarifying his role, who he was working for, and his relationship with and the various roles of ARHA, VHD LLC, and the State of Virginia Office of Historic Resources.

Mr. Sipe presented a series of slides (see Attachment 1) indicating what has occurred to date and what is required to occur to satisfy the requirements of the Section 106 process.

Boyd opened the floor to questions:

Ms. Rothrock – As the Federal Agency makes the final decision, how does that square with the City Council's decision in reversing the BAR Decision and granting the permit to demolish the building? Mr. Sipe stated that if there was a determination that the adverse effect could not be mitigated, the project could not proceed with federal funding. In addition, the project would have to get through the City's entitlement process. For example, even if the Section 106 was completed, the process would not be able to proceed without appropriate City approval.

Mr. Sipe then moved to discuss the Ramsey Homes project. HUD has determined that the project is a federal undertaking and has delegated its responsibility to the City Housing Office. Mr. Sipe gave an overview of Ramsey and the Historic Preservation register as a part of the Uptown/Parker-Gay Historic District which is a Part of the Virginia Landmark Register and the National Register of Historic Preservation. It does not matter that they are not individually eligible, but they are culturally relevant pursuant to the 2008 list in the Virginia Landmark Register and the NRHP district listed in 2010.

Historic Documentation has been completed with copies to the Department of Historic Resources (DHR) Black History Museum.

One archeological finding on the site 44AX0160 – represented a 1991 finding; however, there was no physical record and the entire site has not been investigated currently. A documentary study was submitted to Alexandria Archeology and Thunderbird is expecting comments soon to identify any additional resources and the prior finding.

Questions: Ms. Rothrock asked why the public was not allowed to review the report before the public agency opines. Mr. Sipe stated that this is the process and the public will have an opportunity to comment, and added that the state could require revisions if there were mistakes or omissions.

Section 106 was initiated on Feb. 9, 2016 with notices to the City of Alexandria Office of Housing and the Department of Historic Resources. On March 1, 2016, DHR requested additional information regarding the area of potential effect; what would be done to increase future involvement. On April 18, 2016, DHR requested additional materials. He added that we invited DHR to attend this meeting, but they declined due to staffing issues.

Following the slide presentation and after answering questions raised by the attendees, the meeting concluded.