

Ramsey Homes Symposium

Historic Preservation, Community, and Architecture of Public Housing in Alexandria

February 11, 2021

9 a.m.- 4:30 p.m.

Free, via Zoom

This virtual symposium is a case study of the innovative construction of the World War II era Ramsey Homes, segregationist practices, and the African American residents of these buildings. Originally built as temporary housing for African American war industry workers in the 1940s, the homes later served as permanent affordable housing for 65 years. Symposium panelists will explore the history of segregationist practices in Alexandria, stories of early residents, and the building's unique construction and place in architectural history. The symposium will conclude with a virtual experience of the new Lineage on North Patrick Street.

The symposium is being offered virtually via Zoom. Register for one or all three parts of the day. Recordings of final two sessions will also be available through Historic Alexandria's YouTube Channel, HistoricALXVa after the event.

Session One, 9 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

Register here: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_NSUMptlQTX2Spm9Hoc_ZPw

- Opening Remarks by Justin Wilson, Mayor of Alexandria
- Overview of the Ramsey Homes project by Helen McIlvaine, Office of Housing Director
- **Speaker One:** *Finding a Place to Call Home: Race and Place in Alexandria, Virginia, 1860s-1960s*



Presented by Dr. Krystyn R. Moon, Professor of History and American Studies at the University of Mary Washington. Dr. Moon will examine housing accessibility and how segregationist practices (both de jure and de facto) impaired African American residents in Alexandria.

Session Two: 11 a.m-1 p.m.

Register here: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_2r9ZR3YLQx6bxuDI2KDtUw

- **Speaker Two:** *The Evolution of the Ramsey Homes Site, circa 1834-2018*



Presented by Anna Maas, MUEP, Architectural Historian/Preservation Planner with Environmental Research Group, LLC. Ms. Maas will present the results of the studies conducted in preparation for the redevelopment of Ramsey Homes by Thunderbird Archaeology, a division of Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc. The talk will include historic imagery and records of the site as well as architectural and archaeological photo-documentation from the investigations.

- **Speaker Three:** *Segregation War Time Housing: Story of the Ramsey Homes*



Presented by Char McCargo Bah, CEO/Founder of Finding Things for U, LLC. Learn more about the lives of individuals who lived at the Ramsey homes from the 1940s-1950s.

Session Three: 2 p.m. -4:30 p.m.

Register here: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_i2Fx_ekBRZyL67EOP_h3IQ

Panel Presentation: *The pre-Fab Four: Experimental Design and Construction of the Ramsey Homes & New Digital Technologies for Interpretation*

Presented by three panelists:



John Dumsick, P.E., FAPT, APT-RP, an experienced structural engineer for the U.S. Department of State's Office of Cultural Heritage within the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations. John is a former board member of HARC, Friends of Carlyle House, and the Historic Alexandria Foundation.



Al Cox, FAIA former City Architect and Historic Preservation Manager in the Department of Planning & Zoning. He was staff to the Board of Architectural Review when the demolition and replacement for the Ramsey Homes was being reviewed.



Purvi Gandhi Irwin, AIA, LEED AP BD+C, supporting professionals across all disciplines with BIM technologies as Practice Manager for Architecture at CADD Microsystems. She served on the Parker Gray Board of Architectural Review from 2012 until its consolidation in 2019, as both board member and Chair. She currently serves on the Alexandria Board of Architectural Review.

This presentation focuses on the structural system for one of the earliest precast concrete residential buildings in the United States and the reasons Modernist architectural design was used in a city best known for its red brick Colonial heritage. The digital software used to document and interpret these buildings will also be demonstrated.

Concluding Remarks by Keith Pettigrew, Executive Director of Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

A virtual site tour, "Experience Lineage, a new affordable housing project on North Patrick Street in Alexandria," will be offered at the conclusion.