

Meeting notes are recorded by City staff to provide a written summary of the Advisory Group discussion and comments from the public. They are not intended to be a verbatim transcription of events at the meeting.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Faroll Hamer, Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning, opened the meeting by welcoming the attendees. Ms Hammer welcomed city officials in attendance: Mayor William D. Euille, Vice Mayor Del Pepper, Planning Commissioner John Komoroske, and ARHA Vice Chairman Connie Ring.

Roy Priest, Acting Executive Director of the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA), was introduced and noted that this is a very important process as a large portion of ARHA's assets are located in the Braddock East Planning area.

Project Consultants:

Mary Means, Mary Means & Associates: facilitator for the planning process.

David Dixon, Goody Clancy: lead planning consultant, assisted by Ben Carlson and Ganesh Ramachandran.

Rhae Parkes, EJP: national public housing redevelopment expert.

Sarah Woodworth, W-ZHA: development economics consultant.

AJ Jackson and Bob Youngentob, EYA: James Bland project developer.

Project Staff:

Neighborhood Planning and Community Development: Kathleen Beeton, Division Chief Andrew Spurgin, and Brandi Collins.

Development: Jeffrey Farner, Division Chief Dirk Geratz, and Maya Contreras.

Office of Housing: Mildrilyn Davis, Director and Helen McIlvaine, Deputy Director.

Advisory Group

Gwen Menefee: Public Housing Advocate.

Harvey Gray: Person knowledgeable about Parker Gray history.

Salena Zellers: Braddock Neighborhood Resident.

John DuPree: At-Large Member.

Sylvia Sibrover: Northeast Citizens Association Representative (NECA).

Connie Ring: Alexandria Redevelopment & Housing Authority Commissioner.

Leslie Zupan: Inner City Civic Association Representative.

John Komoroske: Planning Commissioner.

Janice Howard: At-Large Member.

Advisory Group absentees:

Kerry Beatty: Public Housing Resident.

Howard Katz: Developer with affordable/workforce housing development experience.

Merrick Malone, At-Large Member.

ADVISORY GROUP ACTIVITIES

Mary Means explained the role of the Advisory Group as advisors to staff and the consultant team on alternative development scenarios. Advisory Group members were encouraged to ask questions, and ask for information as needed. The Advisory Group was asked to participate in individual meetings with the facilitators.

Two tours are scheduled: A walking tour of the Braddock East Planning Area which will be scheduled as part of a regular Advisory Group meeting; A Saturday bus tour of mixed income housing developments in the region.

Reference was made to the Braddock East Plan Calendar which is available on the City website. Sylvia Sibrovoer indicated that the March 19, 2008 BEAG meeting conflicts with the NEAC meeting. Salena Zellers stated that the April 17, 2008 BEAG meeting conflicted with a Braddock Lofts homeowner's association meeting. Staff stated that it would look at alternative meeting dates.

JAMES BLAND DEVELOPMENT SPECIAL USE PERMIT UPDATE

Jeff Farner explained the City review process. The October 2008 deadline is critical if the project is to be eligible to apply for Tax Credits. Mr. Farner gave an overview of the schematic plan, noting that there is ongoing discussion around issues such as the amount of open space, density, scale, etc. A schematic plan for James Bland will be reviewed with the Advisory Group at a later meeting.

The James Bland Development Special Use Permit review process and the Braddock East Planning Process are following parallel but separate schedules. The James Bland Development Special Use Permit process is for the redevelopment of the James Bland Public Housing site, with EYA serving as the developer and ARHA as the landowner. The Braddock East Planning Process involves planning the conceptual redevelopment of all the public housing sites in the Braddock East area.

ARHA'S STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS.

Roy Priest explained that the Authority is working in partnership with the City, Office of Housing, Department of Planning and Zoning, and City Council to create a Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan will be a 5-year plan for the management of the entire portfolio of housing authority assets.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE WORKGROUP (AHIWG)

AHIWG is reviewing the City's affordable housing policy on issues such as how to define affordable housing, preserve, and measure supply/demand and Resolution 830. AHIWG has been meeting for about one year and will present final recommendations to Council by the end of the year.

Mildrilyn Davis explained that Resolution 830 was adopted by City Council in 1981, as a continuation of Resolution 99, representing an agreement between ARHA and Council that there would be no demolition or loss of existing public housing in the City without a

replacement of public or publicly assisted housing in the City. 1150 units are covered by this resolution.

Connie Ring further explained that Resolution 99, which preceded Resolution 830, was an agreement between City and ARHA that public housing demolished or lost, would be replaced within the City boundaries. Resolution 830 amended the definition of what was to be protected to include public assisted housing. At the time Resolution 99 was adopted, all of the City's public housing units were east of the railroad tracks. Now, 33% of the public housing is west of railroad tracks.

BRADDOCK METRO PLAN

David Dixon provided an overview of the Braddock Metro Plan – including walkable streets, parks, public housing redevelopment, neighborhood square, and the Implementation Advisory Committee.

ADVISORY GROUP QUESTIONS AND COMMENT:

Q. What is the status of the HOPE VI application?

R. HUD has not announced the awards yet. ARHA is one of 39 applicants and only 5 awards will be made. A decision is expected by the end of this month or early April. (HUD has since published its HOPE VI nominations and this project was not included).

Q. What is the racial/ethnic breakdown of ARHA's public housing units?

R. There is information in the Braddock East Advisory Group binders providing detailed information on demographics and number of units by location. This indicates that there are 365 units of public housing with 930 bedrooms in the project area. Most of the units are 1, 2, and 3 bedroom units. Andrew Adkins has 4 and 5 bedroom units. There are about 44 units that are 4 bedrooms and larger. The number of large units creates a challenge in relocating these families. In the project area, there are 338 families and a mean annual income of \$15, 318.40.

Q. Are there any Hispanics in the project area?

R. Not in this project area

Roy Priest stated that City has lost 20,000 units of affordable housing. Therefore, there is an increased demand for Section 8 vouchers so families can move outside the City to find affordable housing. Mr. Priest described the Section 8 porting process whereby non-residents of Alexandria may use their Section 8 vouchers to move into Alexandria Section 8 units and vice versa.

Q. Does non-resident porting count against ARHA's available Section 8 allocation?

R. It is counted as an ARHA unit.

Q. Is it true that Alexandria has the highest concentration of public housing in the Northern Virginia region?

R. Other jurisdictions, such as Prince William County, Arlington, and Fairfax have Section 8 units but not public housing.

Q. Who owns Jefferson Village?

R. ARHA owns it. There are 10 market-rate units and 50 Section 8 units that were converted from public housing units. The units were converted to Section 8 because those units produce higher yields for ARHA's budget.

C. We need a glossary of terms such as Section 8, Public Housing

R. A glossary of terms will be developed and provided at the next meeting.

Q. Regarding the Bland project, it appears that there has been 1½ years work already completed. Is there room for change?

R. EYA has been working with City staff and the Bland development is following the framework of the Braddock Metro Plan. A site plan was prepared to apply for HOPE VI funds and was submitted to HUD. It lays out a basic framework and has room for adjustments but any proposed change is sensitive because it affects the economic viability of the project.

Q. What about the density and open space that was indicated on the Bland site plan?

R. That has changed from the initial HOPE VI application.

Q. When can we see the plans for the Bland development?

R. The Bland plan is not set in stone and the City will present plans and concepts to the Advisory Group at future meetings.

Connie Ring (speaking on behalf of ARHA) stated: Bland is like any other plan and will involve the City process of review and hearings. However, the economics must work and if the economics do not work then there is no redevelopment.

Q. What has ARHA and the City done to identify and acquire relocation sites?

R. That is an on-going discussion. There are 44 Bland units that will be relocated to Glebe Park once the redevelopment is complete. There are 16 other Bland units that need relocation assistance. Relocation is a tough issue and must benefit residents because public housing functions as a community and any relocation site must have an equal level of community amenities, access to transit, and mix of incomes.

C. Connie Ring noted that ARHA is the trustee of the City's public housing and workforce housing is separate from public housing. ARHA's mission is to preserve the possibility of public housing. Alexandria is wealthy now and much housing has become unaffordable. Workforce housing should not be financed out of public housing resources.

R. Workforce housing will not compete with public housing but will be financed from other sources.

Q. Why develop mixed-income housing (ranging from low- to mid- to high-income) in this neighborhood but not other neighborhoods?

R. There are good examples of these developments and the consultants will show examples of places where this worked.

REQUESTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Advisory Group was asked if there were additional questions or requests for information that should be brought to the next meeting.

- Can the Advisory Group get property values information of ARHA properties? Also, land values (before and after redevelopment) of other communities that redeveloped public housing into mixed-income housing?
- People in the area should not be uprooted. This is a community.
- What are the needs of the residents?
- What green space do public housing kids use?
- Can we get summaries of previous public meetings for Braddock Metro?
- Can we summarize other developments near project area?
- What is the minimum amount of density necessary to make project work? What is ARHA's bottom line financially? Is this project intended to stabilize ARHA's finances?
- Deconcentration breaks up community. What size is optimum to keep continuity? How is it done in other communities?
- Do not spread tenants all across the City. They have friends and families in community. Don't break that up.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Q. What is purpose or charge given to the Advisory Group? What is the role of the public? What are parameters of public role? There are no public housing residents on the Advisory Group. How will you make public housing residents concerns and input known? Who will facilitate that?

Q. Is a stated goal to deconcentrate public housing? Is there a time period established for this?

Q. Will you look at economic development of residents in the redevelopment of the community? When are community members going to benefit financially from the redevelopment?

R. HOPE VI requires that job creation is a part of the project. The Bland development has a requirement for job creation in the redevelopment of that site; such as hiring former or current ARHA residents. Chatham Square was under the same requirements and it was successful.

Q. Will the density be concentrated near the Metro site?

C. There should be a doctrine of fairness – for the public housing residents, non-public housing residents, and future residents. ARHA is asking for density that is too high.

R. ARHA has not requested a rezoning for the Bland development. It conforms to the existing zoning. The plan for Bland is not set in stone. That is why the public is part of the process. Preliminary work has been done to determine if the project is economically viable. That work had to be done in advance to determine if the project was an option.

C. There is concern that the public will not be involved in the process, only the Advisory Group. This is unlike the Braddock Metro process. It is necessary to attend Civic and Citizen Association meetings and reach out to the community.

R. There will be two community meetings during the Braddock East planning process, dates and locations to be determined in the next couple of weeks.

NEXT STEPS:

Staff will look at alternative dates for the next two meetings to avoid conflicts with neighborhood meetings. A meeting notice will be sent to members of the Advisory Group and the date, time and location will be posted on the Braddock East Planning Process website.

Staff and the consultants will review the questions and requests for more information and respond to the Advisory Group at the next meeting.