



**Planning for Alexandria's Future Housing Needs
Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Agency (ARHA)
FRP 14-02, Developer Partners, Multiple Site(s)**

**Meeting Summary for Meeting #2: Taylor Run/Duke Street Community
April 15, 2015, 7:00pm**

Location: Bishop Ireton, 201 Cambridge Road.

Participants:

- 29 attendees, not including ARHA and City staff and consultants
- Of those in attendance, 76% live in the neighborhood and 70% live in the Cameron Valley public housing site.
- Length of time in the neighborhood includes: 0% <1 year, 41% 1-5 years, 18% 6-10 years, 23% 11-20 years, 18% >20 years.

I. Introduction: Roy Priest, CEO of ARHA and VHD LLC provided an overview of the project and the purpose of the meeting.

- ARHA is redeveloping 5 publicly assisted housing sites (ARHA Administrative Building, Hopkins Tancil Courts, Samuel Madden Homes (Uptown), Andrew Adkins, and Cameron Valley) in 3 small plan areas. The project is motivated by a variety of factors, including continued cuts in federal funding increasing ARHA's reliance on rental income to sustain its publicly assisted housing units.
- **Tonight's meeting focuses on the Cameron Valley public housing site within the Taylor Run/Duke Street Community.** There will be two additional meetings this week focused on the Braddock East Community and the Andrew Adkins/Samuel Madden Homes public housing sites on 4/13/15 and Old Town/Old Town North and the Hopkins-Tancil Courts publicly assisted housing site on 4/16/15.
- ARHA recently finalized its strategic plan which includes the redevelopment of these 5 development sites as the catalyst for the other plan goals.
- Redevelopment of these properties will help ARHA (1) replace its aging, obsolescent housing stock with livable, decent housing for residents; (2) leverage the value of ARHA's land assets to ensure the agency's long-term financial sustainability; and (3) create successful, mixed-income communities. ARHA also hopes to add to the City's overall stock of affordable housing through redevelopment.
- ARHA created the Virginia Housing Development (VHD) LLC to serve as its development arm.



- ARHA’s initiatives are consistent with Resolution 830 (a joint City Council-ARHA resolution) which requires the preservation of publicly assisted housing units on a one-for-one basis in all new development, and is consistent with the City’s adopted housing master plan.
- Mr. Priest described 5 completed ARHA redevelopment projects spanning approximately 30 years , and demonstrating effective use of several tools and strategies, including mixed-income communities, smart growth, implementation of the one-for-one replacement requirement, quality design, and innovative financing.
- The project timeline is long-term; relocation activities will not occur for more than 2 years and demolition of the first development site will not occur before winter of 2017-18, assuming the very competitive financing is secured.
- ARHA anticipates using a variety of financing sources for redevelopment (e.g., VHDA tax credits, ARHA soft financing; City gap financing), some of which were made possible by its James Bland effort.
- Through these developments, ARHA seeks to address the recent (city-wide) loss in affordable housing, the decline in available public resources, and the scarcity of development sites in the City while capturing the highest and best use of ARHA-owned land. ARHA is committed to replacing existing units within the same community to the extent possible by maximizing density and creating a mix of units and housing choices on site.
- Each project will be subject to the regular City development review process and will comply with the city’s civic engagement process, starting with tonight’s meeting.

II. Citywide Review Process

- Brandi Collins from the Alexandria Office of Planning and Zoning, described the citywide review process for all new developments. First, the City works with community residents to develop small area plans (SAPs) that define what they want to see in new development. Then the City reviews all development proposals against the SAP as well as other identified needs and policies, including transportation management and improvements, parking requirements, water/sewer capacity improvements, and housing/housing contribution policies.
- Ms. Collins described the community-defined guiding principles and development recommendations of the Taylor Run/Duke Street Small Area Plan (1992) that guide the land use for the Cameron Valley properties. The guiding principles of the SAP that are most relevant to these properties state that residential uses should remain residential and commercial uses should be along Duke Street. For the ARHA properties, the SAP recommends that the existing residential use, if redeveloped, become townhomes with a maximum height of 45 feet.
- Gary Wagner from the Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning described the five stages of the City’s development process. For each site, the city reviews design principles (e.g., shape and size of building, height, public amenities such as open space, sidewalks, and connections) and legal requirements (e.g., zoning). Mr. Wagner described the existing conditions at the public housing site and emphasized that a site’s existing conditions serves as the foundation for any future development. The City also makes sure new development is compatible with the broader neighborhood fabric and incorporates the lessons and successes of recent development in the area.



Mr. Wagner also described the development considerations that must be maintained during the review process and the community benefits that could enhance the current neighborhood.

- Eric Keeler from the Alexandria Office of Housing described the City’s housing policy, which reflects collaboration between the City and ARHA. Key themes of the plan include housing for all, mixed-income development, and demand for housing at 50% of AMI. The City’s Housing Master Plan supports Resolution 830 to ensure that as redevelopment occurs at these sites, all existing publicly assisted units are replaced.
- Those who have questions can contact the City or ARHA at the following email addresses: Connie Staudinger – cstaudinger@arha.us, Brandon Mitchell bmitchell@arha.us, or Brandi Collins – brandi.collins@alexandriava.gov. Information about the project will be posted to: <http://www.alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=83919>

III. Community Feedback

- Rhae Parkes of EJP Consulting Group explained that this meeting is a preliminary exercise to provide feedback to developers competing for the projects, and to make sure participants are fully aware of what each site’s Small Area Plan calls for. Once the developers are selected for each site, the activities will follow the City adopted development review process; Rhae encouraged the community’s continued participation in upcoming events.
- The following provides a summary of the questions, comments, and recommendations voiced by meeting participants, as well as the responses provided by the ARHA-City team.
- If participants have additional questions they can submit them through the City’s “ClickConnect” feature and ARHA’s “Response Now” feature on each of their websites. Each entity will respond within 24 hours.

Mixed Income:

Question: Will the redeveloped site be mixed-income, including market rate units as well as low income?

ARHA Response: Yes. ARHA will add to the current 40 units based on the site plan that the City approves. For example, if we build 100 units, these will represent a diverse income range. If ARHA cannot generate enough income through the land value to build all 40 public housing units on site, it may locate some of those affordable units elsewhere in Alexandria. However, **all 40 public housing units WILL be replaced.**

Building Design:

Question: Would a change in the height of the building require modification to the small area plan?

ARHA/City Response: Yes, a change would require another public process and approval from the Planning Commission and City Council to amend the Small Area Plan. There will be opportunity to provide additional feedback once the developer is selected and ARHA holds additional community meetings to get feedback on things like open space, parking, architecture, and design.

Section 3:

Question: How would tenants know about the job openings that came about through the Section 3 program (which offers employment opportunities for low and very low income residents in the community)?



ARHA Response: ARHA staff will work with residents during and leading up to the redevelopment process to match the opportunities available with the needs and interests of residents. To the extent possible, ARHA will work with residents to enroll them into relevant training opportunities that will help them prepare for anticipated jobs.

Relocation

Question: A participant expressed concern about the structural conditions at the Cameron Valley site, which was constructed on marine clay and was affected by the earthquake in 2011. Does the proposed timeline mean that any relocation from Cameron Valley is at least 2 years away?

ARHA Response: Yes. ARHA and its engineers are watching these issues very closely and ARHA will address any needed repairs to keep all Cameron Valley residents safe as we wait for the redevelopment to begin. Before demolition, ARHA has to apply to HUD for tenant protection vouchers and will only receive them for the number of occupied units at that time. So if units are vacated earlier, ARHA will not get vouchers for those units. Regardless, ARHA will not keep families in unsafe housing conditions.

Question: How soon before the redevelopment will residents move?

ARHA Answer: Residents will be relocated at least 90 days before demolition commences and will be given *at least* a 120-day notice. ARHA will keep residents informed of these and other issues and will meet with residents regularly as the redevelopment and relocation process approaches.

Question: Do you have enough section 8 vouchers for everyone to be placed?

ARHA Response: ARHA has to provide HUD a relocation plan that details temporary relocation. If a resident decides not to take a voucher, they will be placed into other ARHA housing. Because ARHA has such a low vacancy rate (~2%), some prospective developers have committed that if selected, they would make some of their units in other properties available for residents to relocate to temporarily.

Question: Who covers the cost of relocation?

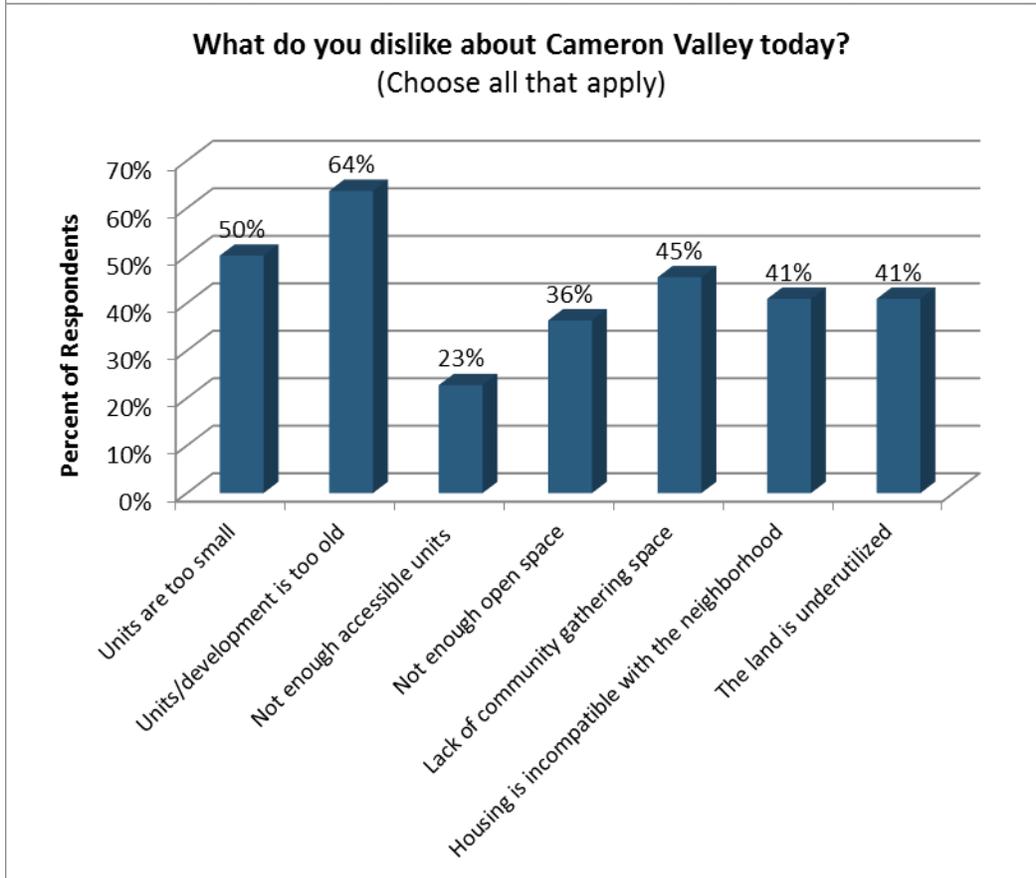
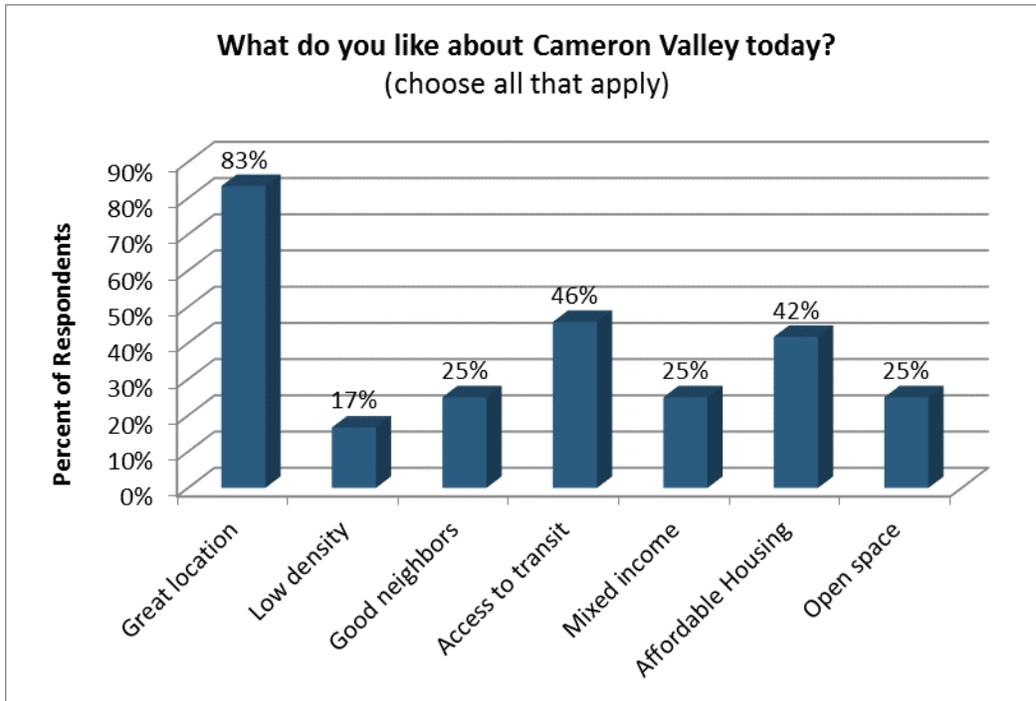
ARHA Response: ARHA will pay for all relocation costs. In prior redevelopment efforts, for those who were over income, or may be qualified to buy a home, ARHA has worked with them to find housing choices that met their needs, including homeownership.

Response from Rapid Feedback Voting Exercise

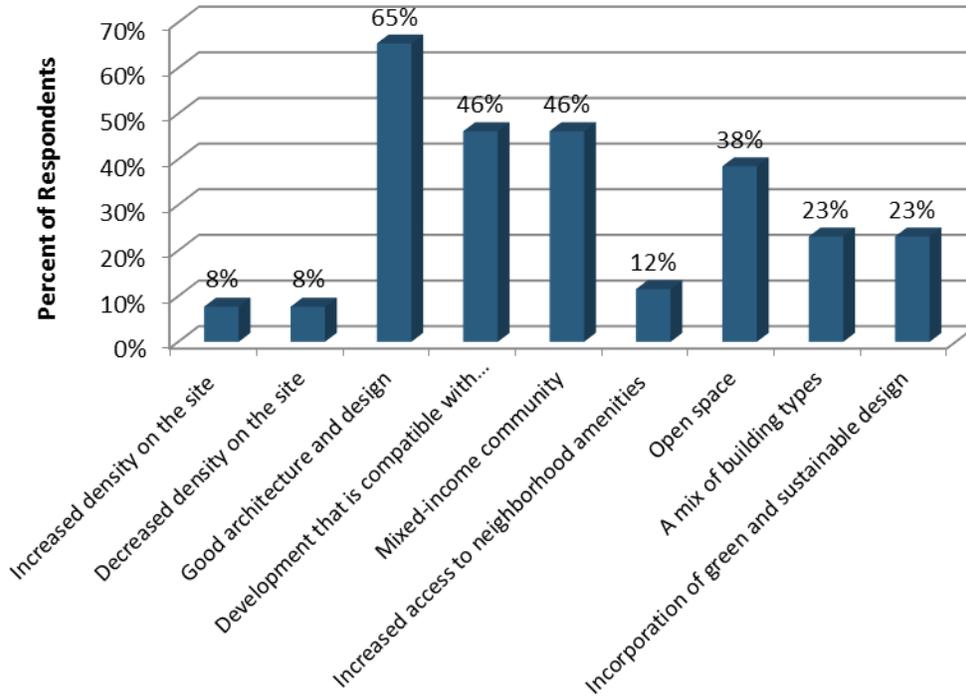
- Location was the feature residents (both public housing and neighborhood residents) most liked (83%) about the Cameron Valley site, followed by access to transit (46%) and affordable housing (42%).
- The most common things that residents do NOT like are: units/development is too old (64%), units are too small (50%), and lack of community gathering space (45%).
- Residents ranked the three most important development possibilities for Cameron Valley as: good architecture and design (65%), development that is compatible with the neighborhood (46%), and a mixed-income community (46%).
- The ARHA Strategic Plan principles that are the most important to residents are: improve the quality of life for residents living at the affected development (83%), ensure redevelopment contributes to ARHA's long-term viability, increase the number of affordable rental (ARHA) units



(tied at 70% each), and promote economic development for disadvantaged individuals and businesses (52%).



Importance of Development Possibilities for Cameron Valley (Choose top three)



Importance of ARHA Principles (choose top three of four)

