



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

**Meeting Summary for Meeting #3: Old Town/Old Town North
April 16, 2015, 7:00pm**

Location: ARHA Offices, 401 Wythe St.

Participants:

- 81 attendees, not including ARHA and City staff and consultants.
- Of those in attendance, 71% live in the neighborhood and 82% live in the Hopkins Tancil public housing site.
- Tenure of community residents includes: 8% <1 year, 23% 1-5 years, 20% 6-10 years, 23% 11-20 years, 26% >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 Hopkins-Tancil Courts publicly assisted housing site within the Old Town and Old Town North communities.** 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 the Taylor Run/Duke Street community and the Cameron Valley public housing site on 4/15/15.
- 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 Old Town and Old Town North SAPs that include Hopkins-Tancil and the ARHA Administrative Building. The most relevant principles from the Old Town SAP include: new development should be compatible with neighboring building and existing residential uses should remain residential. The most relevant principles from the Old Town North SAP include: a fair balance between residential and commercial land uses, urban design, sight lines that allow critical views of waterfront, and better use of open space. The SAPs recommend that the Hopkins-Tancil site, if redeveloped, remain medium density residential (i.e., townhomes, with maximum height of 45 feet) and the ARHA Administrative Building, if redeveloped, become high density residential (maximum height 50 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 publicly assisted units that serve the lowest income residents of the city are maintained.
- 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 website. Each entity will respond within 24 hours.

Bedroom Mix

Question: Will the redeveloped site have 1 bedroom units?

ARHA Response: There is no plan yet for the unit mix. The developer and the ARHA will develop a range of unit types that reflects the needs of current residents and the market demand. The current market shows more demand for 1 and 2 BR units than for larger units.

Relocation

Question: Will current residents receive vouchers when relocated from the site?

ARHA Response: It is our understanding that upon approval of ARHA's application to HUD to dispose of the site we will receive tenant protection vouchers for all units occupied at the time of application. Residents can choose to accept a voucher or to move into another ARHA public housing unit.

Question: What's the difference between a housing choice voucher and a tenant protection voucher?

ARHA Response: They're the same thing. A tenant protection voucher is just associated specifically with the redevelopment effort.



Question: Do I have to wait until fall 2017 to get a voucher? What if I am on the waiting list for a voucher?

ARHA Response: You have to wait until HUD awards the tenant protection vouchers to ARHA. ARHA will need to apply and be awarded; we are at least two years away. If you are on the waiting list for a housing choice voucher, you will receive a tenant protection voucher regardless of where you are on the housing choice voucher waiting list, as long as you are a resident of the development site.

Question: If you use your voucher to move somewhere, can you still move back into the redeveloped site?

ARHA Response: The new development may not accept vouchers. If you can't find a unit that will accept a voucher, ARHA will accommodate you. Many residents who receive tenant protection vouchers have moved out of the City.

Question: When you get a voucher, do you have to wait a year to use it to move out of town?

ARHA Response: No. There is no required delay to use your tenant protection voucher to move out of the City.

Services/Amenities

Question: Will there be options for residents to buy houses?

ARHA Response: ARHA staff will work with each resident to match their work experience with the Section 3 jobs that become available through the redevelopment project. Staff will also assess the financial capacity of residents for homeownership. In the past, ARHA has helped tenants who were over-income to obtain financial assistance to purchase a home.

Question: What will happen to the Ruby Tucker Center?

ARHA Response: The center will likely be torn down as part of the redevelopment process. However, ARHA will look to replace it with a similar amenity at the redeveloped site.

Question: Will you put a child care development center at the site?

ARHA Response: The development plan for the redeveloped site may not address child care, but ARHA will look for solutions to the need for child care. Many housing authorities have provided training to residents to become child care providers as a way to increase child care on site.

Question: Will people be allowed to provide in-home child care?

Response: This is the beginning of the planning process during which ARHA will consider various suggestions for the amenities available at the redeveloped site.

Recommendation: Include the issue of adequate off street parking for residents and their guests on the list of issues.

City Response: The selected developer will be required to follow the City's policy for parking standards. There will be additional opportunities to discuss this issue further during the planning process.

Question: What will happen to the playground?

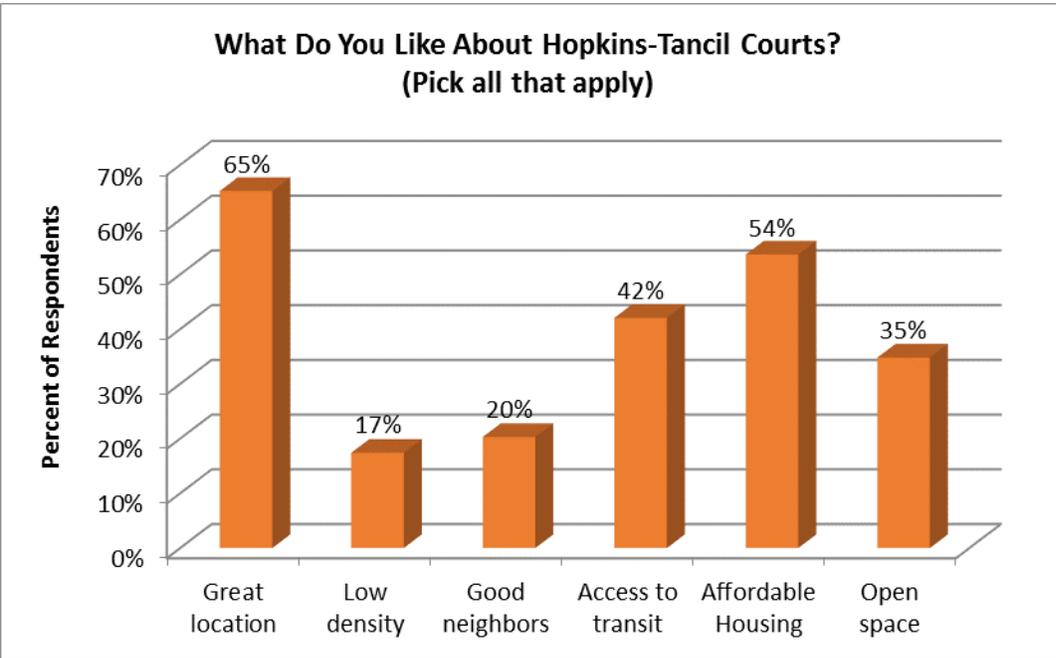
ARHA Response: When the site is demolished, ARHA will try to find an alternative location for the equipment. Rather than destroying the equipment, ARHA will seek to re-use it.

Rapid Feedback Voting Exercise

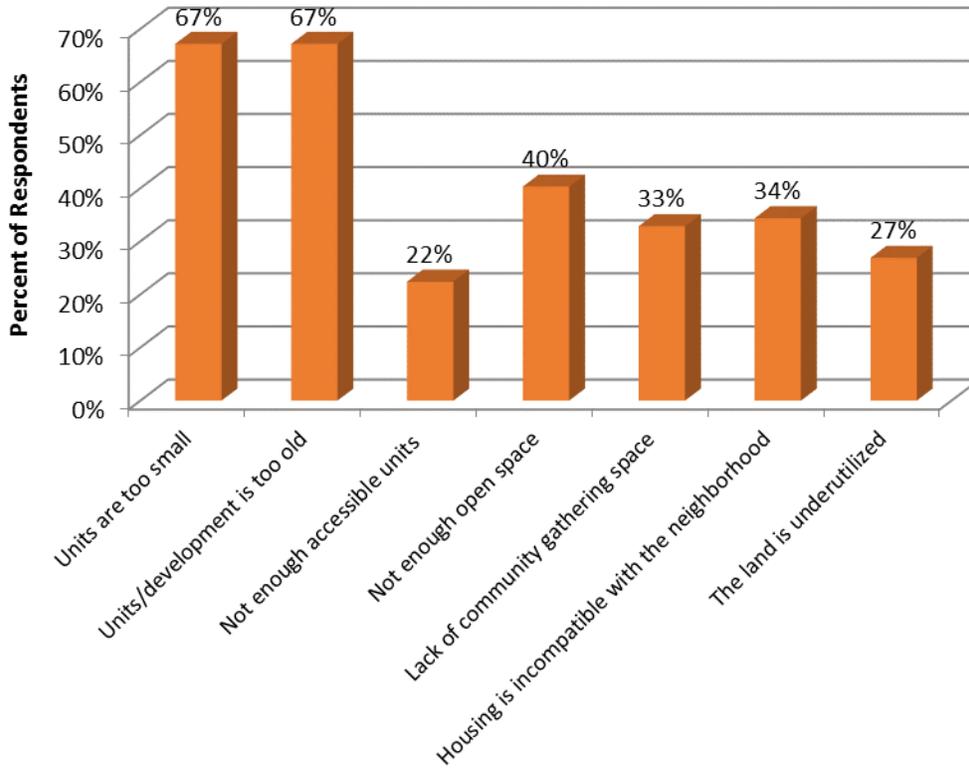
- Location was the feature residents (both public housing and neighborhood residents) most liked (65%) about the Hopkins-Tancil Courts site, followed by affordable housing (54%) and access to transit (42%).



- The most common things that residents do NOT like about the site are that the units/development is too old (67%) and its units are too small (67%).
- Residents ranked the three most important development possibilities for Hopkins-Tancil Courts as: good architecture and design (61%), compatible with the neighborhood (33%), open space (32%), and increased density on site (30%).
- Residents ranked the three most important development possibilities for the ARHA Administration Building as: good architecture and design (63%), compatible with the neighborhood (41%), open space (31%), and increased density on site (31%).
- The ARHA Strategic Plan principles most important to residents are: increase the number of affordable rental (ARHA) units (71%), improve the quality of life for residents living at the affected development (66%), and ensure redevelopment contributes to ARHA’s long-term viability (56%).



What Do You Dislike About Hopkins-Tancil Courts? (Pick all that apply)



Importance of Development Possibilities for Hopkins-Tancil Courts (Pick top three)

