

City of Alexandria, Virginia

ALEXANDRIA HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MINUTES

In-Person | June 5, 2025

	Members Present	Members Absent	Staff
1		Aschalew Asabie	Eric Keeler, Deputy Director
2	Felicia Brewster		Mary Horner, Landlord-Tenant Division Chief
3		Michael Butler	Jose Gonzalez, Housing Program Manager
4	Joseph Dammann		Tamara Jovovic, Housing Program Manager
5	Michael Doyle		Christopher Do, Housing Analyst
6		Betsy Faga	Dominic Ruiz, Housing Analyst
7	Jon Frederick (Zoom)		Grace Douglas, Housing Intern
8	Michelle Krocker		Kenny Turscak, Planning & Zoning
9		Coss Lumbé	Daniel Welles, Planning & Zoning
10	Jan Macidull		
11		Shelley McCabe	
12	Melissa Sathe		
13		Peter Sutherland	
14	Anderson Vereyken		
15	Sean Zielenbach		
	Helen McIlvaine*, Housing		
	Ali Coleman Tokarz*, DCHS		
	Guests		
1	Erik Johnson	ARHA	
2	Lester Simpson	ARHA	
3	Elijah St. Dennis	Landlord-Tenant Relations Board	
4	Bonnie Naugle	Landlord-Tenant Relations Board	
5	Trent Besecker	Landlord-Tenant Relations Board	

*non-voting

1. Introduction and Chair Remarks (Chairs)

Chair Sean Zielenbach called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The Chair welcomed guests and Committee members. Chris Do explained the format of the hybrid meeting

for members of the public attending online.

2. Consideration of May 14, 2025 Minutes (Chris Do)

Jan Macidull motioned to approve the May 14, 2025 Minutes; Michelle Krocker seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the May 14, 2025 minutes with Melissa Sathe and Mike Doyle abstaining.

3. Development Preview: Olde Towne West (Kenny Turscak and Mary Catherine Gibbs)

Kenny Turscak and Mary Catherine Gibbs presented the development preview for Olde Towne West. The project proposes 140 units that will be 100% affordable, with 102 units at 60% AMI and 38 units at 30% AMI to replace the existing 34 units on site. The project anticipates applying for low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC) and plans to extend the current project-based vouchers to fund the project. Current residents in good standing will have the right to return following redevelopment; the Applicant hopes to relocate existing residents within the neighborhood during construction.

One member asked about the current residents. Ms. Gibbs responded that the current residents are recipients of project-based vouchers and have been meeting with the Applicant. One member asked if concerns had been raised by the community. Ms. Gibbs noted that community members asked about traffic impacts and that the Applicant will be presenting the results of the traffic study at the next community meeting.

One member asked if a 2027 groundbreaking is realistic. Ms. Gibbs noted the project still needs to go through development review and obtain financing. If the project requires City funding, it may have to wait in the pipeline.

4. ARHA Update (Michelle Krocker)

Michelle Krocker noted that Erik Johnson had good news to share with the Committee later in the meeting.

5. Housing Alexandria Update (Jon Frederick)

Jon Frederick updated the Committee that Sansé construction is on track, with the opening of Phase I likely next year. The Seminary Road project is on track for a phased delivery starting in the later summer/early fall and received \$1 million from the governor's workforce housing initiative, which will reduce the purchase price of each unit.

The sales price will be \$365,000 for a two-bedroom unit and \$395,000 for a three-bedroom unit. The units will follow a shared equity model to keep the units affordable upon resale. More information about applying for affordable homeownership units is available on the [Office of Housing webpage](#).

6. Housing 2040 Presentation: Tenant Rights and Protections (Mary Horner and Dominic Ruiz)

Mary Horner and Dominic Ruiz provided [a presentation on Housing 2040 Tenant Rights and Protections](#), including draft recommendations.

One Committee member asked about the number of evictions brought by small landlords. Ms. Horner noted those evictions are limited, accounting for about 5% of total evictions. National corporations are using a more “efficient” eviction process with standardized legal notices and legal counsel compared to other landlords. One member asked how updated the 2025 eviction numbers are and Ms. Horner noted that OPA updates the eviction date every Friday.

One Committee member asked how many evictions are for single-person households. Ms. Horner explained that writs of eviction will not reflect household composition. Another member asked if age data is available for evictions, and Ms. Horner explained that age data is similarly unavailable to track. One Committee member asked for an explanation of how evictions are handled in Alexandria. Ms. Horner explained that they are filed in General District Court and cases are on the docket on Tuesdays and Wednesdays to coordinate resource provision.

One member of the public commented that eviction diversion programs in Virginia are still working within the court system and have limited effectiveness compared to Philadelphia’s program. Ms. Horner explained that the goal is to work towards a stronger eviction diversion program, but under Dillon Rule, the City is limited to what the state legislature designates for eviction prevention. Ms. Horner expressed hope that these pilot programs will demonstrate the need for stronger eviction diversion.

One member asked if the permanent supportive housing (PSH) voucher program that is starting in the Office of Housing is funded federally or by the state. Ms. Horner replied that the PSH program is state funded. Another member of the public asked if rent control and rent stabilization are being discussed as recommendations. Ms. Horner noted that it is being discussed, but there is caution with Montgomery County’s rent stabilization ordinance and the challenges they are facing from landlords. A member of the public commented that it is important to set a limit for private equity and large corporations. Corporate landlords claim that rent caps will prevent maintenance, but maintenance isn’t happening even without rent caps in Alexandria. The member of the public noted that even without rent caps, the affordable housing supply is insufficient in places like Alexandria.

A Committee member asked if the City tracks which properties are using rent algorithms and Real Page. Ms. Horner noted that some share that they do not and others are unwilling to disclose if they are, but much of this information can be inferred when there are dramatic increases in rent and evictions. Ms. Horner added that legislative bills could look at reporting requirements for this issue.

7. Housing 2040 Financial Tools and Homeownership Programs Discussion and Q&A (Staff)

Eric Keeler welcomed follow-up questions and discussion following last meeting's [Housing 2040 Homeownership Programs Presentation](#) and [Housing 2040 Financial Tools Presentation](#).

Eric Keeler noted that sewer tap fees would need to be paid elsewhere if they were waived for any projects. Mr. Keeler noted that there is growing interest in tax abatement. When asked about affordable homeownership units, Mr. Keeler explained that units have come online through the shared equity homeownership model via the development process.

One member raised the need for an affordable assisted living facility. Mr. Keeler explained that the City has included the plan for affordable assisted living since the 2013-2025 Housing Master Plan, but conditions to develop such a project are more difficult than other affordable housing projects. It would require City land but also subsidy for higher operating expenses compared to multifamily buildings.

8. Housing 2040 Goals and Targets (Tamara Jovovic)

Tamara Jovovic provided a [presentation on Housing 2040 Goals and Targets](#), outlining potential ways of setting numerical housing targets for 2040.

One Committee member asked how many unfunded projects are at risk of DSUP expiration. Ms. Jovovic noted that Parc View has a five-year DSUP approval. One Committee member noted that targets may vary in different parts of the City, namely the density in Arlandria is smaller compared to the West End.

Mr. Keeler noted that targets could also be based on funding sources and resources. Ms. McIlvaine added that the pipeline can determine what can be constructed if resources are available. One member asked if most affordable units in the pipeline are homeowner or rental. Ms. Jovovic explained that most affordable units are rental, and the City subsidizes affordable homeownership units through assistance programs.

One Committee member commented that staff should be cautious about the language of the plan and prioritizing based on income level. That type of language may not translate easily to the public.

9. ARHA Project Request to the City (Erik Johnson)

Erik Johnson provided an update on the [proposed acquisition of the Alate by ARHA](#). ARHA would purchase the 133-unit project for \$56 million and relocate up to 110 Ladrey residents to the property while Ladrey undergoes substantial rehabilitation. The existing residents of the Alate would be given the choice to stay. ARHA is asking City Council to provide a [moral obligation to back debt service payments for Virginia Resource Authority \(VRA\) bonds](#), which is a condition necessary for the loan to be provided. City Council will vote on the moral obligation on June 24 and bond rates will be locked in on July 22.

One Committee member asked about the payment standards for the existing residents of the building. Mr. Johnson noted that rent payments will be adjusted based on the service provision that ARHA is able to offer. One member asked if the existing residents are already receiving services. Mr. Johnson noted that the current owner's provision of services was dependent on occupancy, so full services are not in place yet. ARHA services will depend on funding.

Another member asked what would happen to the Ladrey households that are not able to relocate to the project. Mr. Johnson responded that they will be provided with tenant protection vouchers and will be assisted in finding replacement housing during the rehabilitation. All Ladrey residents who do not take the relocation option to the Alate will have the right to return to Ladrey.

Michelle Krocker motioned to allow the Investment Subcommittee to review the acquisition terms and provide feedback on behalf of the Committee to City Council; Jan Macidull seconded the motion. The Investment Subcommittee will meet on June 16 to discuss the deal and provide feedback.

10. Co-Chair Elections (Christopher Do)

Christopher Do explained the nominations for Co-Chairs and distributed ballots to the members in attendance. The Committee unanimously voted to re-elect Sean Zielenbach and Shelley McCabe as Co-Chairs.

11. Information Items (Staff)

Tamara Jovovic raised the idea of a summer meeting. One Committee member asked what the Committee would discuss and Ms. Jovovic noted Housing 2040 updates and federal updates were likely agenda items.

12. Information Items (Staff)

Staff did not report on this item.

13. Announcements and Upcoming Meetings

Summer AHAAC Meeting

July 30: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Virtual

14. Adjournment (Chair)

The Committee voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 p.m.