

City of Alexandria, Virginia

ALEXANDRIA HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE DRAFT MINUTES

In-Person | November 6, 2025

	Members Present	Members Absent	Staff
1		Aschalew Asabie	Mary Horner, Landlord-Tenant Division Chief
2	Felicia Brewster		Tamara Jovovic, Housing Program Manager
3	Michael Butler		Christopher Do, Housing Analyst
4		Joseph Dammann	Virginia Patton, Housing Program Manager
5		Michael Doyle	Catherine Miliaras, Planning & Zoning
6	Betsy Faga		Kenny Turscak, Planning & Zoning
7	Jon Frederick		Daniel Welles, Planning & Zoning
8		Coss Lumbé	Dirk Geratz, Planning & Zoning
9	Jan Macidull		Abigail Harwell, Planning & Zoning
10	Shelley McCabe		
11		Melissa Sathe	
12	Anderson Vereyken		
13	Sean Zielenbach		
14	Stephon Hill		
	Helen McIlvaine*, Housing		
		Ali Coleman Tokarz*, DCHS	
	Guests		
1	Mary Catherine Gibbs	Wire & Gill, LLP	
2	Cathy Puskar	Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley & Walsh	
3	Dallas Evans	Alfred Street Baptist Church	
4	Josh Childs	Wesley Housing	
5	Glen Powell	The Community Builders	

*non-voting

1. Introduction and Chair Remarks (Chairs)

Co-Chair Shelley McCabe welcomed the Committee and guests at 7:00 p.m.

2. Consideration of October 15, 2025 Minutes (Chris Do)

Betsy Faga motioned to approve the October 15, 2025 minutes; Andy Vereyken seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the September 4, 2025 minutes. Mike Butler abstained,

3. Potomac Yard Landbay G-G Affordable Housing Plan (Cathy Puskar)

Cathy Puskar presented the affordable housing plan for Potomac Yard Landbay Block G-G. The project proposes 88 affordable housing units in Potomac Yard, of which 83% are proposed as two- and three-bedroom units. Ms. Puskar noted the project will not need City funding given land donation by JBG Smith and 9% LIHTC.

Helen McIlvaine noted that Tenants and Workers United expressed interest in this project and finding ways to increase the number of deeply affordable units.

One Committee member asked if the 44 parking spots would be financially challenging for the project. Ms. Puskar explained that at grade parking is much cheaper than below grade parking. Ms. Puskar also noted that there is no street parking on Glebe, only short-term pick-up spots, but Potomac Yard is a transit rich area with BRT and the Metro station. Jon Frederick remarked that The Bloom has 48 parking spots for 97 units with residents self-selecting based on the community's urban location and that units are never vacant. The Committee member also asked about the open space at the terrace level. Ms. Puskar responded that the terrace is located on the back of the lot.

Another Committee member asked for clarification on the relationship between Landbay G-G and other parcels. Ms. Puskar explained that Blocks H and B&E are coming before City Council with Block G-G completing the vision for the Coordinated Development District (CDD). Phasing conditions will incentivize the blocks to finish together but will be on separate development trajectories after development approval.

Another Committee member asked if the gap would be different for 9% LIHTC vs 4% LIHTC. Josh Childs from Wesley Housing explained that the project is only aiming for the competitive 9% LIHTC credits because the 4% LIHTC credits are about half the subsidy.

Another Committee member commended the project for the larger bedroom sizes but expressed concern about open space for kids to play in the area given the proximity to mass transit. Ms. Puskar commented that the project is near the playgrounds in Potomac Yard's linear park, which is three blocks away. Another Committee member echoed the importance of having this many family-sized units.

Jon Frederick motioned to approve the affordable housing plan; Betsy Faga seconded the motion. The Committee voted to approve the affordable housing plan, with all in favor except for Shelley McCabe abstaining.

4. Olde Towne West Affordable Housing Plan (Mary Catherine Gibbs)

Mary Catherine Gibbs presented the project, along with Glen Powell of Community Builders and Dallas Evans of Alfred Street Baptist Church. The affordable housing plan

for Olde Towne West addresses Phase I, which will redevelop and replace 34 existing affordable units into 145 affordable units.

One member asked for clarification on how many parcels are in the project. Ms. Gibbs explained that there are three parcels, two in the first phase and one in the second. 598 will be the first parcel developed with 145 units, then 601 will be developed

One Committee member asked when the project is likely to go forward. Ms. Gibbs responded that the project will likely need City funding, which could delay the project to as late as 2034. Ms. McIlvaine commented that Staff will talk through the pipeline in more depth. Under Housing 2040, staff are exploring other mechanisms to fund projects, beyond the Housing Trust Fund, and revisit the City's funding priorities. The project is not subject to BAR.

One member asked if the project would compete with Landbay G-G. Ms. Gibbs responded that Olde Towne West will need to wait for funding while Landbay G-G does not. One member asked about relocation concerns with utilities being paid. Ms. Gibbs explained that utilities were covered in the old building but is not sure about utilities for the temporary relocation. The project still needs to find a third-party relocation consultant.

Virginia Patton presented on the Olde Towne West Relocation Plan. Residents will be kept informed throughout the process and more details for the relocation plan will be developed and shared once the third-party consultant is brought on board. Ms. Gibbs noted that Spanish and Amharic interpretation are being provided at resident meetings.

One member asked about the age composition of existing households. Ms. Gibbs responded that there are a mix of ages. Another member added that in their experience, there is a danger in communicating too far in advance with projects that will be waiting for years to begin construction. Residents may not understand the timing of the construction process and could begin to worry about the impending redevelopment. Ms. Gibbs noted that they have been transparent with residents and told them the construction would begin no earlier than 2028.

Another Committee member asked if the residents live in townhomes now and how they are reacting to living in a multifamily building. Ms. Gibbs responded that they may look like townhomes, but they are apartments currently. Residents have been provided information about the new units and are aware they will be a different size.

One Committee member asked about the unit mix in the first phase. Ms. Gibbs responded that there are 78 one-bedroom, 45 two-bedroom, 18 three-bedroom, and four four-bedroom units. One member asked if the new rents will be at or near the current rents. Ms. Gibbs explained that both current and new rents will be limited by income under project-based vouchers. The 75 project-based vouchers are being extended for five years. Another Committee member highlighted that relocation has profound impact on tenants' lives.

One Committee member asked about the ownership structure in the new project. Dallas Evans responded that the Church will own 51% of the land and the Community Builders will own 49%. Ms. McIlvaine explained that the site was subject to an urban renewal project decades ago and used to be owned by the same owner as the Heritage until the Church purchased the property in 2009. As HAP contracts were set to expire, Virginia Housing helped to host community meetings and charettes that turned into the South Patrick Street Plan.

Ms. Jovovic asked if there are any vacancies in the project. Ms. Gibbs noted that there are three units undergoing heavy renovation that are vacant.

Jon Frederick motioned to approve the affordable housing plan for Olde Towne West, Jan Macidull seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the affordable housing plan.

5. FY2027 Budget Priorities (Co-Chairs)

The Committee discussed the draft FY2027 Budget Priorities letter drafted by the Co-Chairs. One Committee member commented that the letter is excellent and could add more examples of projects to support the last bullet in the recommendations section.

The Committee member discussed expanding on the City's bonding capacity as a way to address the growing project pipeline. One member estimated that bonding one penny in property taxes could open up \$30 million. One Committee member asked if the City's bonding capacity was used for the Bloom; Arbelo, Longview Terrace, and Lacy Court were definitive examples of the City's use of its bonding capacity.

The Co-Chairs explained that they have been meeting with City Council and the City Manager to raise the needs of the near-term housing projects in the pipeline. They have received little pushback, except around the bond issue. The City Manager informed them that some projects can be funded before these policies are written.

One Committee member commented that the near-term is coming very soon and it is important to memorialize the proposal to use City bonds. The pipeline will feel increased pressure as Olde Towne West gets approved, and the City receives smaller monetary contributions over time.

Jon Frederick motioned to submit the Budget Priorities letter, subject to revisions by AHAAC members; Betsy seconded the motion.

6. Housing 2040 Master Plan Update (Tamara Jovovic)

Tamara Jovovic provided an update on the Housing 2040 process. On November 15, Kim Cadena will host a community meeting to present recommendations on Common Interest Communities. On November 17, staff will host a virtual community meeting to present recommendations and strategies for Landlord Tenant Rights and Protections and Affordable Housing Preservation. Ms. Jovovic also noted that other projects are moving forward as Staff work to complete draft recommendations by February.

One Committee member asked about the development of a dashboard. Ms. Jovovic noted that a dashboard will likely be developed at the end of 2026 in coordination with OPA.

7. Staff Updates (Helen McIlvaine)

Helen McIlvaine provided an update on Newport Village. One substantive change was made from the Applicant's proposal to what was approved. One unit will be provided at 40% AMI. The same number of CAUs will be provided in the old building but will be fully renovated. As a result, the project is losing about \$3 million in value in terms of equivalency. Most existing units are around 65% to 70% AMI and are being reduced to 50% AMI. Staff are pushing for a requirement that the project will start within a designated timeframe as part of the conditions.

One Committee member asked if the project will go back to City Council. Ms. McIlvaine explained that the proposed changes are subject to City Manager review and approval. Another member asked if the units are deed restricted to keep them affordable. Ms. McIlvaine stated that approval conditions are enforcing affordability. The member asked how this would work with existing units, since the units are in an already approved project. Ms. McIlvaine noted that development approval was used for Southern Towers for their 105 set-aside units. Ms. McIlvaine noted that the Newport Village units will be affordable for 43 years.

8. ARHA Update (Helen McIlvaine)

Ms. McIlvaine provided an update on ARHA. City Council appointed six members to the Board and still has additional slots for appointees. For Ladrey, the goal is to get residents relocated by the end of the year, with plans to close the building then. ARHA is facing challenges relocating older tenants to other buildings. ARHA continues to work with existing residents of the Alate.

9. Housing Alexandria Updates (Jon Frederick)

Jon Frederick provided an update on Housing Alexandria projects. For Sanse, they are hoping to close by November 21. Phase I is on track to finish in June 2026. For Cardinal Path, all units are under contract, but homeownership takes longer with mortgages and eligibility issues. Move ins are anticipated in early 2026 for most households.

10. Information Items (Staff)

Tamara Jovovic explained the October financial report. The Committee discussed manufactured and prefabricated housing and its opportunities and challenges.

11. Announcements and Upcoming Meetings

[AHAAC December Meeting](#)

December 4, 7 – 9 p.m.

Room 2000, City Hall, 301 King St.

[ARHA Redevelopment Work Group Meeting](#)

December 10, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

City Council Work Room, 301 King St.

12. Adjournment (Chair)

Mike Butler motioned to adjourn the meeting. The Co-Chairs adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.