

Ramsey Homes Redevelopment Project Narrative

Project Overview

The redevelopment of the Ramsey Homes site (the “Project”) is consistent with the ARHA 2012-2022 Strategic Plan, the City’s Housing Master Plan and the Braddock East Master Plan (“BEMP”). The Project involves the redevelopment of an underutilized and obsolete public housing site into a mixed-income, affordable, multi-family rental housing site.

The Project site is .71 acres, occupying one half of a city block, the east side of the 600 block of North Patrick Street between Pendleton and Wythe Streets. The site is currently improved with (15) two-bedroom townhomes in four buildings. Three of the buildings are quadruplexes and one is a triplex. The existing structures were built in 1942. The buildings’ floors, walls and roof were built of 1-1/2” precast concrete slabs. Numerous modifications have been made to the structures since the initial construction, diluting the architectural historic significance of the Project.

The density of this site is specifically identified in the BEMP at a maximum FAR of 2.0; this represents an increase in the current FAR, necessitated by the goal of integrating the existing 15 households throughout a larger community of families with higher incomes. ARHA was granted a 2.0 FAR by the Alexandria City Council as it approved the DSUP Application for the redevelopment of the Ramsey Homes. A mix of public housing and market-rate housing, and, where possible, an element of affordable and/or workforce housing is recommended in the Braddock East Master Plan (BEMP). This Project includes an approximate 28%/72% ratio of very low-income (30% AMI) households, to households with incomes up to a workforce housing income. Six (6) units will be subsidized by an Annual Contributions Contract (ACC) with HUD. The unit mix is driven by market factors, land value, public policy and funding availability and terms. The BEMP recognizes that these and other variables will drive the viability of redevelopment projects, and ARHA’s ability to meet the BEMP’s objectives. Specifically, the BEMP notes:

The precise ratio for this mix should be determined through the development planning process, as it will be influenced by the funding available at that time.

Consistency with Applicable Plans

The focus of the ARHA Strategic Plan is on preserving ARHA’s present affordable housing stock until opportunities arise that will enable ARHA to substantially improve conditions while complying with Alexandria’s ordinance mandating preservation or replacement of ARHA’s affordable housing (Resolution 830). ARHA recognized that it is not enough to provide sustainable affordable housing; we must also ensure that the housing we provide meets qualitative standards that are acceptable to ARHA, our funding providers and to the greater Alexandria community. We are actively pursuing opportunities that improve housing quality and add to the number of affordable units whenever economically and financially appealing prospects occur. The overriding recent and present objective has been to pursue these opportunities with caution, in a manner consistent with ARHA’s core mission and principles. A further objective has been to improve the quality of our existing affordable housing stock in a manner in which it becomes indistinguishable from other housing prevalent in the surrounding neighborhoods.

More than 40% (14,353 households) of the overall rental housing demand in the City of Alexandria consists of households with incomes at or below 60% AMI. For extremely low-income households within this group (those at or below 30% AMI), there are no committed permanent affordable units or market affordable units subsidized to be affordable to this income level outside of a limited number of project-based Section 8 units, ARHA-owned public housing and some units operated by city or nonprofit agencies for the benefit of special needs clients. This mixed-income Project would be available to the extremely low-income families that reside at the Project today, as well as to households at up to 60% of the AMI. The unit mix is driven by market factors, land value, public policy and funding availability.

This Project redevelops the Ramsey Homes public housing site into vibrant and sustainable mixed-income housing which is consistent with the BEMP. The Project provides an appropriate level of residential density given that it is within a half-mile radius from the Braddock Road Metro Station, thereby better utilizing transportation infrastructure and potentially decreasing negative impacts of vehicular traffic. The BEMP encourages greater mobility, especially for those with limited access to automobiles.

We believe that the concept for this Project advances the City and ARHA Strategic Plans, the City Housing Master Plan and the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan, and the Braddock East Master Plan objectives.