



**Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan
Educational Workshop #1**

- ***Development Allowed by Current Zoning***
- ***Redevelopment of Public Housing***

**Meeting Summary
October 16, 2007**

INTRODUCTION

Faroll Hamer, Director of Planning and Zoning, began the meeting with two announcements. She explained that, although Transportation was a topic planned for this evening's session, it has been delayed. There was already sufficient material for this evening's meeting, and to include Transportation would not give it and the other topics sufficient time. There will be a new meeting just for Transportation added to the schedule, and she will be announcing that meeting date shortly. Another item of interest to the participants is the overlapping planning efforts going on, including the HOPE VI work, the Braddock Neighborhood Plan, and the Braddock East planning work. Ms. Hamer will explain how those are integrated without conflict during the Housing session tonight.

Robert Kramer, Kramer & Associates, explained that tonight's Education Workshop is a continuation of the September 24th Town Meeting and, coupled with Saturday's second Education Workshop and the one to be scheduled on Transportation, is designed to provide you with the basic information you need for the charrette on November 3rd. At the charrette you will be discussing what you want to see in your neighborhood, and we want that discussion to be informed and for everyone to be working from the same information. So the purpose for tonight's session is to equip you with the knowledge you need to participate, by presenting information and encouraging you to ask questions and receive answers.

Based on the interviews this summer, Kramer & Associates created a list of the items heard over and over that the community thinks is important for the neighborhood. They are restated briefly here as a list of seven objectives, and they are displayed on a board in each room. The list is:

- Sense of place/neighborhood identity
- Community serving open space
- Safe, walkable neighborhood
- Deconcentration of public housing
- Community serving retail
- Managed traffic and parking
- Appropriate height and scale

The list is displayed prominently tonight so that you will think about these issues as you learn about public housing and development. Part of this exercise is for you to consider how what we are talking about does or does not achieve these community objectives.

Two concurrent sessions, one on Redevelopment of Public Housing and the other dealing with Development Rights, were conducted two times to allow the attendees to better ask questions and make comments. Then the full group reassembled for wrap-up comments and a summary of next steps. The sessions were video taped for future use and reference.

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP: DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

David Dixon, Goody Clancy, introduced himself and reiterated the importance of attendance at Saturday's Educational Workshop #2 and at the charrette on November 3rd. The charrette is a real chance to work together to establish the framework for the plan. He encouraged everyone to think about the goals that they would like the City to have.

We are going to be using models of sample blocks tonight and when you look at development in a historic district, the best way to look at development is inch by inch. For tonight that means that you have to remember that a block has a series of contexts along each of its sides. Although redevelopment could easily occur on one side because it is across the street from a parking lot, another side may be bordered by townhomes and more care will be needed there. Development on the site must relate to each of these contexts through height and scale.

Two things to consider: When the City negotiates with developers, it is not doing it *to* you, it is doing it *for* you. Part of this planning process is for you to let the City know what it is you want the staff to request when it negotiates with developers. Second, when looking at a block or a development site, think about what heights, densities, and scales are appropriate on different portions of the site?

David introduced Jeff Farner, Division Chief of Development.

In order to evaluate the possibilities of development under current zoning, a sample block is being used. The sample block is roughly the same size as many of the other blocks in the study area. The block shown for illustrative purposes is at Wythe and North Payne Streets, where a project has already been approved, but it is typical of most blocks in the study area. The sample block is surrounded by a series of uses. For example, across North Fayette Street, there is an existing parking lot; across Wythe Street, there are lower scale townhouses; across Pendleton Street, there are industrial uses and townhouses; across North Payne Street there are townhouses and an apartment building. Because of the

variety of uses and contexts surrounding the block, planning and community building must be done inch by inch at each point to determine appropriate heights and scales.

Tonight we will take a look at a sample site, which is permitted to build to a 1.0 to a 1.5 FAR under current zoning. Additional development is valuable to developers, and the City is in the position to negotiate valuable public benefits in exchange for the increased density. Jeff will go through various development scenarios on this site, some of which will provide tremendous public benefits, while other scenarios will provide very little public benefit. Public benefits include park land, deconcentration of public housing to achieve mixed-income housing, neighborhood serving retail, management of traffic, and appropriate heights and scales.

The sample block, as presented, appears as a clean slate. While it is essentially a clean slate, the zoning ordinance establishes specific rules, which govern development in each zone. Prior to examining the specific block, it is important to consider the existing zoning. Many of the blocks are currently zoned CRMU/M or CRMU/H (Commercial/Residential/Mixed Use – Medium, or – High). As part of the zone regulations, there will be a floor area ratio limit. A floor area ratio, or FAR, is essentially a rule for telling the owner how much mass he can put on the site; for example, in the case of FAR 1.0 you can either cover the site once, or you can go up in height. This is very similar to a water balloon: if you squeeze a water balloon, to achieve additional open space, for example, the water balloon will decrease one place but increase in another. The CRMU/M zone allows an FAR of 1.0 to 2.0, while the CRMU/H zone allows an FAR of 1.25 to 2.5. The higher FARs require approval of a development special use permit.

The three types of development applications, with different review standards, are:

1. **Site Plan** – goes to the Planning Commission and is approved by the Planning Commission. With a site plan the City has less discretionary authority under the zoning ordinance and state law, to require specific public benefits, such as underground parking. Much of the existing zoning permits 77 to 90 feet.
2. **Development Special Use Permit** – in this situation there is more discretionary authority that goes to both the Planning Commission and City Council. With this approval, the City can look at underground parking, open space, affordable housing, quality of architecture, underground utilities, etc. The important thing for the community to consider is both the potential public benefits that benefit the developer and future residents or users on-site, and the public benefits which benefit the community (i.e. contributing to a fund for open space, housing, etc) and would be realized elsewhere in the Braddock neighborhood.
3. **Coordinated Development Districts** – a coordinated approach, such as at Potomac Yard, where more detailed planning is done, that often

requires infrastructure improvements and includes design guidelines. This is also a discretionary approval, and requires a DSUP with City Council approval. It offers the greatest potential for negotiations for public benefits, both on- and off-site.

Most of the CRMU zones permit 77 or 90 feet with a site plan today. As we talk about individual height, it is helpful to identify a range of heights with examples of buildings in the City. The following are examples of building heights in the City:

The Prescott – 35 to 40 feet
Braddock Lofts – 45 feet
Corner of Henry and Oronoco – 35 feet
Whole Foods – 66 feet
Colecroft Station – 77 feet
Marriott on Duke – 90 feet
Braddock Condos – 90 feet

Under the existing zoning, with only site plan approval, could you construct retail? Yes, the retail could be provided, but is not required. In addition, the retail that would be provided under the site plan would be limited by the parking requirement. If the parking were constructed underground, this substantially increases the cost. Surface parking associated with the retail would prohibit the "eyes on the street" desired by the community.

Under existing zoning, could townhouses be constructed? Yes, the site could accommodate townhouses of a 1.25 FAR. With a site plan, it is likely that many of the townhouses would face internally, toward the inside of the site, rather than externally, toward the sidewalk and street. With the internally facing townhouses, the eyes on the street principle is lost. A developer could potentially propose a configuration of the townhouses to face externally, rather than internally, but that is a chance that the City and the residents would take under the site plan scenario.

Under existing zoning, could townhouses be constructed with an SUP? Yes, this configuration could be similar to Braddock Lofts or the Prescott. The special use permit would presumably allow for additional height and density, would require that units on the exterior face the street, and that parking not be at the street edge.

Under existing zoning (FAR 1.25), a 90-foot building with two levels of above grade parking could be provided. One of the problems with an above grade parking garage is that there is very little activity around a parking garage. The developer may propose underground parking, but that is a risk, as it may or may not happen. There is a considerable cost associated with the provision of underground parking. The above grade parking on the site adds volume to the

project, which does not count toward the FAR of the project. Also, it is difficult to achieve building breaks and street connectivity with above grade parking.

Jeff and Tom Canfield, City Architect, then presented a series of images to illustrate the above examples. These images included retail with surface parking, townhouses, and a 90-foot building with above grade parking.

With a special use permit, the height limit is 90 feet and the permitted FAR is 2.5. If the discussion is that 90 feet is too tall and the community wants a less tall building the building would as a result cover more of the site. It is important to note that whenever retail is envisioned on a site, the height will start with a base of 20 feet to accommodate the height necessary for successful retail uses. This of course pushes any uses on top of retail higher. One of the things that we will discuss on Saturday is which locations are ones where retail will work, and what types of retail are desired.

If the public open space is internal, it is not much of a community public benefit, even though it might be nice for the people who live on the site. It might be better to create an off-site public benefit through developer contributions.

With a coordinated development district (CDD), there are specific zoning components, which allow increased height and density. The CDD also has infrastructure requirements and design guidelines which are part of the small area plan and with which compliance is required.

To apply these abstract zoning discussions, staff discussed a specific development proposal referred to as the Madison. The Madison property is zoned CRMU/H, which allows 90 feet without an SUP. The developer has requested an SUP for an increased FAR from 1.5 to 2.5. The applicant is proposing retail and below grade parking. There are other issues, such as fire access, open space requirements, and parking requirements, all of which begin to form the site design. Staff has heard that the community is interested in maintaining lower scale buildings on Henry Street. The applicant has proposed approximately 50 feet on North Henry, 50 feet on North Fayette Street, and heights stepping up to 70 feet in the center.

Questions and Answers

Q: Could not a developer come in and create a townhouse development with the same density that would allow “eyes on the street?” Aren’t there other configurations of the townhouses could occur on the site?

A: This is correct. A developer could potentially underground parking even with a site plan, but this is a chance that the City and the neighborhood would take.

Q: Under the current zoning, a developer could come in and put up a 90 foot building with two levels of above-grade parking, but the City could still deny it, correct?

A: It depends. If the project meets all the basic requirements for a site plan, the traffic impacts and other elements, then it is difficult to deny the project.

Q: What does CDD stand for? How is a CDD established?

A: CDD is shorthand for a coordinated development district. The plan must recommend a CDD and the developer, the City, and the community must work together. The CDD also requires approval by City Council.

Q: Does the CDD have to include land that is contiguous?

A: There is not a requirement for contiguous blocks, but staff tries to make it a larger contiguous area to obtain additional public benefits and coordinated development.

Q: How wide are the sidewalks in the Madison proposal?

A: 18 feet on North Henry Street and 14 feet on Madison and North Fayette Streets.

Q: What is the proposed use for the Madison development?

A: Condos or apartments and retail.

Q: Are the buildings setback from the street in the Madison proposal?

A: The sidewalk goes directly to the building on North Henry Street for the retail. On the other streets, there will be some landscape relief, but generally the buildings are located at the sidewalk.

Q: What are the public benefits of the Madison? Could you simply extend Montgomery to connect to Braddock Road?

A: We heard from the community that it did not like the idea that more cars could drive into the neighborhood there to get to the Metro if the street went all the way through. Also there is a portion of the land that would then be undevelopable. If you extend the street, it leaves about 30 to 40 feet of unusable space to the north of the Montgomery Street extension. Connections and porosity are very important, and this proposal allows two ways through the site east-west for cars and pedestrians.

Q: All the problems that we are discussing would be alleviated if there was a metro stop between Braddock Road and the National Airport station.

A: Thank you.

Q: The Master Plan for the Braddock Road area and the zoning are in concert. The zoning is structured to achieve the highest and greatest mixture of uses to fulfill the goals and objectives of the Master Plan.

A: The fundamental goal of this Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan is to bring the plan, the zoning, and the community into concert.

Q: What is the process for changing the zoning of a parcel?

A: If there is a discussion of adding a CDD, this must be incorporated into the plan, and then an application for rezoning would have to be approved by City Council.

Q: Is there a real possibility of contributing funds for open space in the area? It is unclear whether there is the land to accommodate the open space and this area would benefit from parks, so money from developers in this area should not contribute to an overall open space fund which will be used outside the neighborhood. Could developers contribute to a fund for the neighborhood rather than including green-space in their development?

A: A component of this plan must be an open space / parks plan. This process only makes sense if there is a location where a park is possible. There must also be a mechanism for maintaining the fund and insuring that the money gets used in this neighborhood.

Q: There should be a study of the existing retail to determine how it is doing. We might want to consider an economic development fund for the retail so that existing retail can be enhanced and protected.

A: There are communities that have created a fund to support mom and pop retailers and local entrepreneurship.

Q: In every plan isn't there an open space requirement so that it should be integrated with the plan?

A: Yes, there are requirements for specific amounts of open space, both at ground level and above grade. Rather than obtain a small percentage on each block, the community should look at increased percentage in certain spaces. For example, in the Eisenhower East area, developers are required to provide a specific percentage of valuable open space on their site, but if the site is in close

proximity to a designated park area, then the developer contributes to an open space fund.

Q: For Saturday, could you print two maps of the existing zoning which shows the FAR and the height allowances?

A: It may be beneficial for everyone to use the maps to mark-up the heights that are appropriate in specific locations.

Q: How did the development end up on the sample block?

A: On the real block we used as a sample, the development proposal includes lower scale townhouses to relate to the existing townhouses across Wythe Street, and mid-scale units to relate to the apartment building and existing townhouses on N. Payne Street, and higher scale units on N. Fayette Street to relate to the Monarch.

Q: How much land in Potomac Yard does the City own?

A: Right now the City does not own any of the land. When the development is finished, the City will own much of the street rights-of-way and a number of the parks.

Q: Could there be a way to lower the density in the Braddock area, and shift it to Potomac Yards, to ensure that there is not a concentration of density and increased traffic in the Braddock area?

A: In terms of the zoning and density, almost all the planning area has the zoning in place today.

Q: In addition to the two maps requested, is it also possible to include the CDDs proposed in the previous plan on the maps?

A: Yes, we can do that for the charrette.

Q: Could you describe the affordable housing density bonus and if this affordable housing is included in the FAR? What tools do we have that would determine the number of units to begin to evaluate the traffic impacts prior to the special use permit?

A: What we need out of this is a much more transparent set of criteria that are used to evaluate density and height beyond the zoning. One of the things that makes sense is to think about what creates a mixed-income neighborhood. One of the things that has been very clear is that it doesn't work nearly as well as when housing is provided for a gradation of incomes. As to additional density for affordable housing, it is possible to obtain a density bonus for the provision of

affordable housing, but an affordable housing contribution is required for development projects.

Q: It seems as though we are forgetting the existing housing stock. The existing zoning and FAR should be identified for the existing housing stock, including the lower scale townhouses. Can you provide the FAR for existing housing, rather than the maximum permitted FAR? We should also have a breakdown of the housing stock in this area for the charrette.

A: We can do that, but rather than recreate the historical neighborhoods, it is important to focus on creating compatibility with the historic neighborhoods.

Q: The impression provided is that density will increase in this area. Does the City have the ability to get cars off the road?

A: The transportation element of this plan is critical. The City has more control with a development special use permit than with the site plan. There are real trade offs that must be considered as a community. If the development will create minimal traffic impacts but will provide substantial public benefits, then the development may be worth it. If the development creates tremendous impacts, then the public benefits may not be worth it. The plan must include policy, which outlines what must be done when special use permits are requested.

EDUCATION WORKSHOP: REDEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC HOUSING

Discussion of Planning Processes by Faroll Hamer, Director of Planning

Ms. Hamer presented information about the overlapping planning processes in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood. One graphic displayed the Braddock small area plan area, which was delineated in 1992. The map also included a blue shaded area outlining the current boundaries of the Parker-Gray Historic District; some of the northern part of that area is within the Northeast small area plan boundaries. We do not yet know the boundaries of the National Register Historic District, although that will be another overlapping area in the future.

A second map showed the two planning processes focused on the public housing in the area. First, the five blocks shown in green are James Bland (including James Bland Addition) and the subject of the HOPE VI application for a federal grant. The area in red on the same map shows all the public housing blocks in the area; this area will be the subject of the Braddock East planning process. It includes James Bland, but also includes Ramsey Homes, Samuel Madden Uptown, and Andrew Adkins.

The Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan will include the entire neighborhood and focus on all issues affecting it, including transportation, retail shopping,

pedestrian amenities, and historic preservation. The redevelopment of the public housing is just one of the elements in the plan for the neighborhood. Although the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan will include land uses, densities and heights in general for the public housing blocks, the Braddock East plan will be much more detailed as to the location and look of buildings and their architecture, the mix of units and income levels, location and amount of parking, etc, than the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan will be. The Braddock East plan will also include a relocation element for the residents of the public housing. Whether or not the HOPE VI application succeeds, the planning for the redevelopment of public housing – all of the Braddock East area, including James Bland – will occur. While the relationship of these plans is complex, it is doable. They are related and will not conflict and City agencies and ARHA are all working together to ensure they are coordinated.

As to timing, she estimated the following schedules:

Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan: The intent is to have public hearings for approval before the Planning Commission and Council approval by March 2008.

HOPE VI application: November 7, 2007 is the deadline for submission of the application. We will not hear results officially until the spring, but may know sooner about how the application is being received.

Braddock East Plan: This effort should start in January 2008, with development approval by Council in October 2008 for the James Bland blocks.

National Register Historic District: This process has been going on for over a year already, and there is a work session scheduled before the Planning Commission to update them on it on November 8 at 6pm. There will be a public meeting in January 2008 and then the proposal will be submitted to the Virginia National Register Review Board. It has its own process which includes a community meeting here in Alexandria, likely in May 2008, and then a board meeting in June in Richmond, after which the plan is sent by the State to the National Park Service, who should respond in 30 days with comments. The hope is that we will have answers by the summer or fall 2008.

Redeveloping Public Housing Discussion, by Rhae Parkes, ABT Associates

Rhae Parks, a guest speaker who has worked nationally in many cities on public housing, redevelopment introduced her talk, stating that she hoped to provide as much information as possible so that community members could participate in the upcoming charrette with as much knowledge as they need to do a good job. Her comments concern public housing and its redevelopment generally and do not relate to one or another specific site in Alexandria.

The current thinking about public housing is that to be vibrant, energetic and healthy, a community needs a range of housing types, including public housing for low income families, market rate units which is at the other end of the income spectrum, especially in Northern Virginia, and “affordable housing” (sometimes called “workforce housing”), which covers a range of incomes in between and can include housing for firefighters, teachers and others who earn too much to qualify for public housing.

ARHA is in the business of providing public housing, and it, like other housing authorities across the country, is redeveloping its public housing with a *mixed finance* and *mixed income* approach. This is the model used here in Alexandria at Chatham Square, which includes both public housing units and market rate for sale units. ARHA also used a number of financial tools, including HOPE VI grant money and Low Income Tax Credit financing. This is the trend we are seeing in other places too. The housing authority is taking a public housing asset and reinvesting in public housing using a variety of financing tools and including market rate units in order to subsidize the cost of building the public units.

The mixed finance approach means that a housing authority needs to leverage any money it has or can obtain by using and trying for all possible money available, including city, state, federal and even private money. No housing authority today has enough money on its own to redevelop housing. It may have to give up control to achieve redevelopment. For example, in a mixed income redevelopment project that includes market rate for sale units, the authority gives up part of its ownership when it sells units. As available money dwindles and as real estate prices rise, housing authorities and their partners still operate in an environment of complex regulations and have to be very careful and creative to make redevelopment successful.

Another trend today is that housing authorities are rethinking management operations. Many are bringing in private management to run new mixed income developments. The stronger emphasis on a new management approach helps protect the investment in new housing developments. Another trend is requiring public housing residents to work if they are able; the requirement is becoming common in new public housing.

Over time, the role of public housing authorities has evolved.

- In the 1970s, they were building purely public housing without debt. HUD requires that public housing be debt free, although in mixed income developments debt is allowed for the non public housing units.
- In 1986, the Low Income Tax Credit Program was created and it has been a great tool for authorities to tap into. This program involves the creation of credits, which are sold to investors, as a means of raising equity. They are attractive to investors who can pay as much as 98 cents on the dollar to offset dollars of tax liability owed. Under this program, units are restricted to a range of families earning more than the traditional low

incomes required for public housing, but still only up to 60% of area median income.

- In 1992 the HOPE VI program was created and serious money has been allocated to it over time. Last year, with about the same amount of money in the program, there were 26 applications filed. This year there is only \$94 million and there will only be 4-5 grantees funded. We predict many more authorities will apply this year in order to avoid next year's announced changes in the program. Although very competitive, the HOPE VI money is attractive because it is a grant, and does not have to be paid back.

It is important to understand that because the housing authority owns the public housing land, it is subject to the laws that apply to housing authorities, and those relate principally to HUD. Any activity the housing authority proposes is subject to HUD approval. It could have the greatest plan, but HUD still has to approve it. The City does not own the public housing land, but does have land use approval authority over the development. These overlapping processes affect the content as well as the timing of redevelopment, and, typically, the federal government process slows the local process down.

The decision to redevelop public housing includes a long series of steps in the process.

- Planning is the first and most important step and that is what you are engaged in right now: coming up with a vision and strategic plan for what the community wants the new housing project to be. The plan needs to meet the needs of the people who live in public housing as well as the community. These developments as they exist today are not empty; they have people in them, so there must be a plan for the people as well as the new buildings.
- There is "predevelopment" work, which includes assembling the final financing, bringing in one or more developers, and working with HUD on the disposition and demolition plan.
- The phasing of the demolition and development is a challenging issue because, on the one hand, it is easiest from a development and cost standpoint to demolish an entire site all at once. On the other hand, it may be difficult on the residents and the housing authority to relocate a large number of people all at the same time. In addition, although the financial decisions may have been made, all of the money may not be in hand at the same time.
- Relocation is a significant part of the redevelopment of public housing, and its financial requirements. By law, a plan for redevelopment must include a relocation plan, which shows how and where the existing public housing

residents will live on both a temporary and permanent basis. The housing authority must provide replacement housing, although it can be made available in a series of forms, including actual housing units, section 8 vouchers, and down payment assistance for home ownership. The housing authority also has to pay the cost of relocation, which includes the cost of moving people and packing assistance, as well as the differential if there is one between the cost of the existing rent and the new one.

- Supportive services, including work training, GED classes and family counseling are part of the relocation plan. A package of services is provided for people who move back and often services are coordinated with local existing agencies so there is a seamless process for families.
- HUD approval of the entire plan is required, including the disposition of the public housing asset, whether it be demolition, sale of land or otherwise.

Ms. Parkes then highlighted the key challenges for redeveloping public housing

1. Responsible relocation that treats public housing residents well and fairly.
2. A one for one replacement of public housing units.
3. Avoiding an over concentration in one area of a community, although you must remember that these families have to live somewhere.
4. Financing must be very creative, and can include a long list of different types of financing, including LITC, HOPE VI, local funds, private foundations, voluntary contributions, Housing Trust funds, HOME funds; CDBG funds. These are complicated layers of financing, each with its own rules, for example, regarding how much rent can be charged for differently financed units.
5. The schedule can be long; the process from start to finish can take up to five and ten years.

In terms of examples from other cities, there are dozens of them. It is important to know that Washington, D.C., Chicago, and many cities are engaged in similar discussions and arrangements to redevelop dozens of housing projects across the country, and new and creative ideas are at work to help it happen. In Baltimore recently, the housing authority worked with Johns Hopkins on a land swap that made land available for relocation housing. In Boston, a new nonprofit organization has been created to help raise funds for redevelopment of public housing. And there are more and more partnerships with charitable as well as private foundations to make housing developments viable and successful.

Ms. Parkes pointed out that in Alexandria there are a number of especially good assets, and real opportunities, including the fact that the public housing you are talking about is right near a Metro station, within a historic district, and that you

have a very good real estate market. Even with a slow market elsewhere, there is a strong demand here. Mixed income is not a new concept for you, so you are not starting out without experience. And finally, you have a very engaged citizenry, which makes for a dynamic planning process.

Questions and Answers

Q: How does the plan being submitted for the HOPE VI grant money relate to the ultimate plan for James Bland?

A: The plan and information submitted with the HOPE VI grant application regarding future development on the James Bland blocks will be conceptual. To the extent it includes numbers of units, or other development information, be assured it can and will change after that, in large part based on the community's discussions about the Braddock neighborhood generally, and the Braddock East planning, in particular.

Q: Can't we just amend the Braddock small area plan boundaries to include the public housing blocks that are now outside this planning area?

A: The blocks in question are part of the Northeast small area plan boundaries and those boundaries will not be changed. There is no need to do that as the Braddock East plan will include all the land involved.

Q: When a housing authority runs a deficit, and requires assistance from the City, does the City gain control?

A: Helen McIlvaine, Deputy Director of Housing, stated that the City has never loaned money to ARHA for operating deficits. In 1998, the City did provide a loan of approximately \$1.2 million to help ARHA pay real estate taxes on the Quaker Hill property following a determination by the City that the 60 units operated by ARHA at that site were liable for such taxes. ARHA has paid annual real estate taxes, as due, since. If there is a City loan connected to land, then the City typically takes a lien on the property.

Q: Will the proposed new development for James Bland be the same as Chatham Square?

A: It does not have to be; there could be more housing options, for example, to include workforce housing.

Q: Why does the housing authority not use housing vouchers as part of the base project as others are doing, particularly since the vouchers are a financial tool which can be leveraged to possibly reduce the requirement for City funding? Fairfax County was cited as an example of a jurisdiction which is strategically bundling vouchers to leverage funds to redevelop properties.

A: There was a long discussion of various housing voucher programs, including the difference between vouchers attached to a specific project (project based) and those that float and allow users to seek rental housing on the private market and live outside a project. Whether to use one or another approach is a public policy decision. Members of the ARHA staff and board explained that the current approach in favor of deconcentration works against earlier methods of “project basing.” In addition, ARHA stated that there is no longer a way to accumulate vouchers to use in relocation, as HUD will take away any vouchers not used.

Q: If a housing authority is not allowed to have debt related to a public housing project, how did we get a HUD mortgage on the Glebe Park properties?

A: Mildrilyn Davis, Director of Housing, and Connie Lennox, ARHA, explained that Glebe Park was not originally constructed as public housing and that the Glebe Park mortgage relates to the nonpublic units within that complex of buildings. There are a total of 152 units; only 40 are considered public housing, and the debt does not relate to them.

Q: How many units are involved in the public housing blocks in and near the Braddock Metro?

A: There are 194 units in the James Bland/HOPE VI blocks; of those, ARHA proposes that approximately 134 be rebuilt on those sites in the redevelopment. In addition, there are 66 units in Samuel Madden Uptown, 15 in Ramsay and 90 in Andrew Adkins. The total is 365 public housing units.

Q: How many market units are planned for James Bland?

A: The desire is to achieve approximately a 60% market rate/40% public housing mix.

Q: Can we have a program similar to Arlington’s Special Affordable Housing District in Ballston-Roslyn metro corridor where affordable housing units that are displaced due to redevelopment must be replaced in the same general area, even if not on the same property?

A: Pros and cons of this idea were briefly discussed; however, Alexandria’s goal to deconcentrate poverty sometimes makes a wider geographic distribution of replacement sites for public housing more desirable.

Q: Could we take another look at the redevelopment of Charles Houston, perhaps to include adding a new floor and including residential units above it? Is Charles Houston going to be part of the planning process?

A: We have done something similar to what you suggest, including affordable housing above the new fire station at Potomac Yard. Charles Houston is an approved project. We are not going to revisit it now, but can consider this approach on other sites. The City is looking for other opportunities to include affordable housing in mixed-use projects.

Q: Have relocation sites already been identified?

A: City staff and ARHA explained that relocation will be part of the planning process, but the idea in the proposed development at Glebe Park is to include 44 replacement units there. It had originally been planned to include 60 there, but the number was reduced as a result of the community planning process. The remaining units will have to be found elsewhere in the City. Faroll Hamer emphasized that the City is committed to replacing the public housing units under Resolution 830 on a one for one basis.

Q: Is it true that any development plan we come up with must be approved by HUD?

A: Yes, HUD must approve the plan. It is rare that HUD would reject a plan that has been agreed to by ARHA, the city and the community, but it does have to review and authorize whatever the plan includes, such as acquiring extra land, razing existing buildings, disposing of the land, and the redevelopment of the land. Faroll Hamer repeated that the City, ARHA and the community will work together in a coordinated way, and will be in communication with HUD, so there are no surprises.

Q: Please clarify whether the numbers presented earlier, such as 134 public units in the redeveloped James Bland development are set.

A: That is what is being worked out now in these planning processes. The HOPE VI application will include numbers, but those can change. There is a HOPE VI meeting scheduled for Monday, October 22 that you should attend.

Q: Will the redevelopment of James Bland proceed, even if HOPE VI funds are not awarded to ARHA? Is there a commitment to the redevelopment of all of the public housing shown in the Braddock East planning map? Is there a commitment to the construction as well as the planning for it?

A: Yes, the work on redeveloping the public housing will proceed regardless of the HOPE VI money. With ARHA, the City is committed to the planning for redevelopment of the Braddock East area. That will not necessarily include a funding plan, but it could include an implementation plan for actually getting it done. As with any development, there are many reasons for actual construction not to proceed as scheduled. It is important in the planning to talk to developers

and real estate experts and ensure that what is being planned is viable in the marketplace so it can actually happen.

Q: What determines whether ARHA is awarded a HOPE VI grant?

A: Roy Priest, the interim CEO of ARHA, responded that there needs to be a strong application, a commitment from ARHA's partners, and an application filed on time. It is a very competitive process.

Q: Will the City proceed with James Bland with the same developer even without the HOPE VI money?

A: ARHA explained that EYA is ARHA's development partner for James Bland, and ARHA intends to proceed with that group with or without the HOPE VI money. It is not up to the City to choose the developer.

Q: At Chatham Square there was an effort to decrease the number of on site replacement units from 52 to 26 until a lawyer went to court and the number was raised again to 52. How will you ensure that something similar does not happen here?

A: Connie Ring responded for ARHA, stating that ARHA was always committed to 52 replacement units on site and 48 replacement units off site. That never varied. There was a lawsuit but it related to the role of the resident committee and not to the number of replacement units.

Q: Is there a difference between redevelopment with HOPE VI money and without it in terms of density, concentration and design? Does the lack of HOPE VI money affect the quality of the development or just the source of funds for it?

A: HOPE VI is just a funding mechanism. Without the \$20 million, it could affect development amenities in the neighborhood and we will have to come up with more and other creative financing methods.

Q: The City seems very committed to Resolution 830. There was also a Fair Share study that supported deconcentrating public housing. Is the City committed to that policy also? With Chatham Square, there were replacement units found in the west part of Alexandria. How was that done?

A: Connie Ring explained that the trend towards deconcentration began in the late 1970s and has since that time been a policy in Alexandria. When public housing was displaced by Metro, ARHA found locations in the west end to disperse the population. When Cameron Valley was redeveloped, it was rebuilt with 80% market rate units and 20% public housing units; the remainder were scattered in the west end of the City. With Chatham Square, 48 units were relocated onto three sites, two of which are in the west part of the City. The

intent for 30 years has been to deconcentrate as opportunities present themselves and as we are able.

At James Bland, ARHA's objective is to achieve a general ratio of 60% market and 40 % public units, by adding density and value to pay for the public units, relocating units at Glebe Park and elsewhere in the City. ARHA's proposed density for James Bland is less than at Chatham Square. Part of the equation is how the financing pieces are put together. At Chatham Square we had very valuable land, HOPE VI money, tax credit financing, and a \$3.5 million city loan which we were able to repay from the proceeds from the sale units. The market is a large part of the picture. ARHA has to come out breaking even.

Q: The HOPE VI and Braddock East boundaries are within the Braddock small area plan. How are they related?

A: The Braddock small area plan will cover many topics, including public housing. It will include general guidelines for development on those blocks, such as density and uses. The Braddock East work will be much more detailed, and provide specifics about the development, such as the buildings, open space, architecture, and parking. The HOPE VI application will include some conceptual information about the development but is subject to change based on our planning process.

Each of the planning questions is related in that similar trade offs will underlie the plan for redevelopment. For example, the only economically viable way to redevelop public housing is to add density so that you can add market rate units. The question for the community is how much density is okay and how big the buildings can be and still have a good neighborhood.

Q: Do the residents have a say in the HOPE VI plan? Do they have to approve the plan before it is submitted to HUD?

A: There was a training session for the James Bland residents a week ago, and a community meeting last night. There is another meeting next week on Oct. 22nd, and one planned for Oct 30 if it is needed. ARHA is getting community input and there is a door to door survey that was done in order to learn the needs and interests of residents. Residents do not have to approve the plan, but ARHA wants their input. If ARHA does not rebuild the public housing, then residents can submit their own plan to HUD.

Q: Will the HOPE VI plan consider all of ARHA holdings as context, and not just James Bland in isolation.

A: Yes. There are 365 ARHA housing units in the vicinity; James Bland includes 194.

Q: Do historic tax credits apply?

A: Theoretically, yes, they can, but the requirements add complications and are typically not workable.

Q: On p. 16 of the handout for this session there is a map with % concentrations in different areas of the City. Will the proposed redevelopment of public housing here change those numbers?

A: Yes.

Q: Could you change the plan for James Bland by relocating more public housing units off site?

A: Yes, it is theoretically possible, but it is more expensive. To the extent we must find places to relocate, we must buy land, which is incredibly expensive. Again, this requires a balancing and assessment of tradeoffs.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Bob Kramer concluded the meeting by encouraging people to come to Saturday's second Educational Workshop. He also highlighted the coordination among City agencies through the participation of representatives from Housing, ARHA, the police and T&ES.