

# Braddock East Master Plan

## Staff Report



**Docket Item # 6**  
**MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT #2008-0005**  
**Planning Commission Meeting**  
**October 7, 2008**

Docket Item # 6  
MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT #2008-005  
Braddock East Master Plan

Planning Commission Meeting  
October 7, 2008

**ISSUE:** Consideration of a request for a revision of, supplement to, and amendment of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and North East Small Area Plan chapters of the City's Master Plan to include the Braddock East Master Plan.

**APPLICANT:** City of Alexandria, Department of Planning and Zoning

---

**CITY COUNCIL ACTION, OCTOBER 18, 2008: (The following reflects action taken on Council docket items #9, 10 and 11)** City Council approved the Planning Commission recommendations for docket items #9, #10 (noting the deletion of MPA #2008-0004), and #11 with the following amendments: (1) incorporate the language submitted by the Inner City Civic Association and the Braddock Lofts Homeowners Association for the Braddock East Small Area Plan; (2) accept staff recommendations in the staff memo dated October 17, regarding open space, the 16 offsite units, the process to review the distribution of income in the multifamily buildings, the management office for the public housing, building architecture and parking. Include the option, for Council to decide within the next 12 months, for Council to purchase two additional lots to increase the consolidated open space at the same economics of the original four lots; (3) require that the final Homeowners Associations documents modify the housing conditions to be clear that market rate unit holders must use their garages for vehicular parking and may not use them for another purpose that restricts the use of the of the garage for parking; (4) in light of the significant loss of permeable surfaces, direct staff to work with the applicant to explore economically viable use of all reasonable environmental technologies, with a specific emphasis on storm water management approaches to keep storm water onsite and in the water table (e.g. permeable pavement), and to explore potential grant funding to help support this project; (5) direct staff to create, within 90 days, a Braddock Road Implementation Committee that shall be responsible for monitoring the implementation of all aspects of the Braddock Road and Braddock Road East plans as well as related city activities that relate to this neighborhood; (6) work with the applicant to explore options to provide for accessible electrical outlets in all parking garages to facilitate future electric car options, if economically feasible; (7) direct staff to work with the community to develop a formal parking plan for the neighborhood, including Inner City, Northeast, and Braddock Road with the goal of completion of such plan within 18 months or less. The plan should evaluate options for diagonal parking, among other things; (8) direct staff to explore with the community and report back to the Braddock Road Implementation Committee (or whatever the group is named) on option for changing street flow so that the new on-way

access between First and Montgomery Streets run north to south and the one-way access between Montgomery and Madison run south to north and also to evaluate whether one way streets would be beneficial; and (9) the applicant shall work with staff to explore the relocation of the public housing units on lot #17 to a location on North Alfred Street to be determined by the applicant and the Director of Planning and Zoning. The relocated ARHA footprint will be replaced by two market rate 3 1/2 story 19 foot wide townhouses.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, OCTOBER 7, 2008:** On a motion by Mr. Jennings, seconded by Mr. Komoroske, the Planning Commission voted to adopt the Master Plan resolution, subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances, staff recommendations and an amendment to Recommendation 15 to reflect the stronger wording on page 49 regarding the use of affordable housing trust funds for off-siting units. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission supported the Braddock East Master Plan and, in so doing, recognized that the Plan supports the City's Strategic Plan to foster a diverse and affordable community in Alexandria. The Commission acknowledged the balancing act that had been necessary to pull the plan together and considered the outcome to be the best compromise that respects the diverse interests in the neighborhood. The Commission recognized the extraordinary level of community participation and outreach that resulted in the creation of the Plan and were impressed by the testimony from people not use to public speaking.

Speakers:

Heidi Ford of 1022 Oronoco Street stated that the Braddock East Plan has many good elements but there are some key omissions. The Plan talks a lot to Resolution 830, which is appropriate. However, since the stated policy of ARHA and the City is for deconcentration through scattered sites this should at least be recognized in the Plan, for example on page 2 where it talks about the MOU. She applauded the City for recognizing that due to height and density constraints in the Braddock neighborhood there is likely to be a need to off-site public housing units. She also applauded the City for taking the step of recommending the use of contributions from the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for this purpose. However, she considers that this should be increased from 50% to 75% and that there should be a firm commitment that the City and ARHA *will* begin to relocate public housing sites, rather than should.

Thomas Waddel of 2015 S. Langley Street indicated that public housing residents are having a lot of problems with the police. The manipulation of authority is not justified and is not giving anyone a chance. All the public housing residents want is to be able to live comfortably and to be addressed as individuals, not as a group. We do not want to be segregated or judged. We need to be given some chances. We want to be better and given the opportunity to be better. We deserve respect.

Helen McKethan, whose mother lives in The Berg, referred to harassment and biased treatment by the police and people taking photographs of kids playing in the playground.

Maria Jackson of 312 Hopkins Court stated that her son is being regularly harassed and threatened by a police officer. She also noted that residents in the new area [Chatham Square] are video taping all of our movements and activities and the kids playing in the playground.

Denise Elcock of 309 Oronoco Street noted that she has fifteen grandchildren and every time they come to visit, they are harassed or get a ticket. She stated that we cannot afford to live like others but we want to be able live on our income. We have a lot of kids and it is a shame that they cannot play outside because they are being chased by the police. I had a cookout for my daughter's second time in Iraq and it was closed down by the police even though there was no music. We need to be given the chance to prove that we can live like anyone else.

Amie Jordan of 314 Oronoco Place supports the proposed redevelopment of the public housing and considers that relocation sites should offer alternatives that meet resident's needs with access to transit, shops, good schools and jobs. There are some police harassment issues. We are not allowed to congregate outside without the police telling us to go inside due to complaints about noise.

Dianicia Brooks of 39 S. Bragg Street, ARHA Board Commissioner and President of the Alexandria Residents Council (ARC) speaking on behalf of 850 public housing families, indicated support for the redevelopment proposals in the Plan. She noted that many of the families in Braddock East have lived in Alexandria for generations. The only difference from other families is that they are low-income. Like other families, they are concerned about raising their children in good and safe neighborhoods. They are concerned about living in a City that values diversity. They are concerned about being able to provide input about their values in the decision making process. She acknowledged that ARHA and City Planning and Zoning staff were sensitive in its outreach to public housing residents during the Braddock East and Bland DSUP planning process. Residents appreciated the opportunity to learn about the plans, to share their opinions, and to find out whether there would be the opportunity to move back to the new community. ARC wants all the units to return but realizes the financial and market reality that this may not happen. Every effort should be made to maximize options for public housing residents to return to their home site.

Leslie Zupan of 1309 Queen Street, President of the Inner City Civic Association and a member of Braddock East Advisory Group, indicated that she was generally pleased with the latest revision to the Braddock East Master Plan. However, it is important to have round targets for the number of public housing units that could be scattered to other locations in the City. She supports the submission by Salena Zellers (attached) which proposes changes to language to strengthen some of the principles that have already been recognized in the Plan. In particular, the Plan should incorporate the language suggested in the MOU between the City and ARHA relating to deconcentration through scattered sites and the that the policy for replacement sites should look at the number of public housing units currently in the area and how many should be targeted for future off-siting.

Sylvia Sybrover of 915 Second Street, member of Braddock East Advisory Group, indicated concern regarding the proposed heights in the Plan. She noted that her understanding was that the objective of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan was to increase height gradually toward the Metro. In the Braddock East Plan, some of the heights further away are taller than those close to the Metro station. The diagram on page 46 of the Plan shows 40-50 foot heights one block from the Metro but 60-70 foot heights four blocks from the Metro. Even worse, the 60-70 foot building is being placed across the street from two-story townhomes. Simply providing a lower shoulder to the building does not protect residents from a monolithic building. The proposed open space at the north end of the Samuel Madden block does not mitigate the overwhelming size of the proposed structure. The height on the northern block of Samuel Madden should be reduced.

Mariella Posey of 915 Second Street indicated that the proposed 70-foot building height opposite the two-story buildings on First Street does not respect neighboring properties with regard to scale and massing. This height needs to be reduced. As President of the North East Citizen's Association, she wanted to make it clear that the Association does not advocate reducing the number of public housing units.

Julie Crenshaw Van Fleet of 816 Queen Street noted that she liked the wooden benches proposed in the urban design guidelines. She indicated that Chatham Square is not a success and that people who live there and next to it are not happy. It is important to solve the social problems first. The Plan proposals are just going to make them worse. She is also unhappy that the family learning and resource center on Montgomery Street is being taken away. We cannot rely on the Charles Houston Recreation Center to meet this need as it has no big family rooms for people to go to and it will not replace the educational or social function of the resource center.

Salena Zellers of 1122 Madison Street, President of the Braddock Lofts HOA and member of Braddock East Advisory Group, acknowledged that staff has made every effort to incorporate her comments where possible. She then summarizes the key points in her written submission (Appendix 1, pg 15). She seeks clarification of the language regarding the Affordable Housing Trust Fund contributions and the City's new policy to proactively identify sites for replacement housing from potential redevelopment sites. She considered that it is important that the language is clear and concrete to give ARHA confidence that the City is going to be able to do these things so that finding replacement sites will not be a worry for ARHA in the future when redeveloping Samuel Madden and Andrew Adkins. The Plan should also incorporate the language from the MOU and Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan regarding deconcentration of public housing sites from the neighborhood by scattering it throughout the City

James Edward Ablard of 18 W. Del Ray Avenue noted that the relocation of the Post Office for a neighborhood park proposed in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan does not provide any relief for the public housing residents. Open space should be reserved

east of the Charles Houston Recreation Center, in addition to that proposed by the Bland DSUP.

Carlyle C. Ring Jr. of 308 Monticello Boulevard, Vice Chair of the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) and member of Braddock East Advisory Group, stated that the process has involved many good exchanges and compromises in language. He considers that the Braddock East Master Plan is basically a good document. He then commented on some of the changes in language being suggested by others. He pointed out that we are dealing with a group of people who have lived in public housing for a long while. They are residents of Alexandria and represent an important need in Alexandria. To say that a certain number must and shall move out is not showing them the respect that they are due. He strongly urged the Commission not to make the changes suggested by others. He noted that circumstances will determine whether we can move ahead or not with an individual project. As properly stated by Ms. Hamer, the Samuel Madden property, which is between two legs of Route 1, is probably not going to provide a suitable location for families in public housing and, therefore, will likely result in the need to find locations elsewhere. He urged the Commission not to poke their finger in the eye of people who deserve special consideration.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

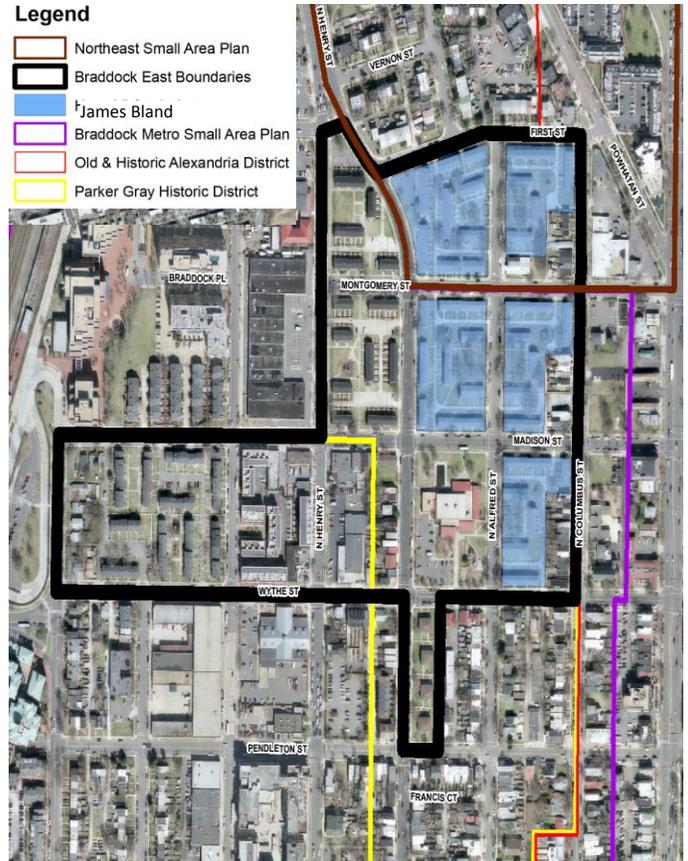
Staff recommends that the Planning Commission, on its own motion, initiate an amendment to the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and the North East Small Area Plan to include the Braddock East Master Plan.

**BACKGROUND**

The Braddock East Master Plan provides a long-range vision for the redevelopment of nine blocks of public housing in the Braddock East neighborhood as mixed-income, mixed-use, urban and pedestrian-oriented residential communities. This Plan is the result of a thorough community planning process that began in February 2008.

**INTRODUCTION**

This Master Plan relates to nine blocks of public housing in the Braddock East neighborhood - James Bland (and Bland Addition), Andrew Adkins, Samuel Madden (Uptown), and Ramsey Homes – owned by the Alexandria Housing and Redevelopment Authority (ARHA). It also includes ten privately owned single-family homes located to the east of West Street.



A March 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between the City and ARHA provides that, the City and ARHA will “jointly and cooperatively work in developing a Master Plan for ARHA’s East Braddock Road properties...” The Braddock East Master Plan provides guidance and parameters for the potential redevelopment of these properties as mixed-income, mixed-use, urban and pedestrian-oriented residential communities, while preserving all the public housing units, as required by Resolution 830. This joint endeavor has involved a City Council appointed Advisory Group, representing neighbors, public housing residents and other stakeholders, and a comprehensive community outreach process.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **I. Conformance with Existing City Plans and Policies**

#### **A. Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan**

The framework and recommendations in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan are based on seven guiding principles. The Braddock East Master Plan is an amendment to the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan which expands upon the principle of promoting mixed-income communities through the redevelopment of the existing public housing sites within the Braddock East planning area.

The Braddock East Master Plan also incorporates the other six principles of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan into the planning framework for these sites. In particular, the urban design guidelines set out in Appendix A of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan apply equally to the Braddock East sites. The recommendations of Chapter 8 of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan relating to traffic impact and transportation management also apply to the Braddock East sites and there is no separate traffic analysis as part of the Braddock East Plan.

#### **B. North East Small Area Plan**

The Braddock East Master Plan amends the North East Small Area Plan only in respect of the two northern blocks of the James Bland site that lie within its plan boundary. No other aspect of the North East Small Area Plan is proposed to be amended.

#### **C. City Council's 2004-2015 Strategic Plan**

The Braddock East Master Plan embraces the goals outlined in City Council's 2004-2015 Strategic Plan:

- *Quality Development and Redevelopment:* The Braddock East Master Plan establishes urban design guidelines for the height, mass and architecture of new development to ensure quality building materials, longevity, and consistency with the neighborhood context.
- *Respects, Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment:* The Braddock East Master Plan supports and enhances the natural environment by recommending new green spaces on each redevelopment block and a consolidated, centrally located public park within the James Bland redevelopment. It also continues the strategic recommendations for encouraging biking and walking and reducing vehicle use, as advocated in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan. In addition, new development is encouraged to integrate greenbuilding design, landscaping and street trees.
- *Integrated multimodal transportation system:* The Braddock East Master Plan embraces the transportation recommendations in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan, which aspire to transform the neighborhood into a more multi-modal community, using the Metro Station more effectively and better

incorporating it into the community fabric. The goals in that chapter are consistent with the City’s **2008 Transportation Master Plan**, including transportation demand management (TDM) recommendations and a district-wide transportation management program (TMP).

- *Strong economy with varied small businesses:* One of the primary redevelopment goals of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan is an infusion of new retail opportunities, particularly neighborhood serving retail, as well as additional office, residential, and hotel space as the market dictates. It recommends financial assistance to maintain small businesses and local retailers and recruit new ones, especially at key areas for neighborhood-serving retail. In support of these objectives, the Braddock East Master Plan identifies locations for neighborhood serving ground floor retail along Madison, Patrick and Henry Streets. In support of the recommendations of the **Economic Sustainability Task Force** for higher density development at the City’s Metro Stations, the Braddock East Master Plan recommends increasing development potential from approximately 560,000 square feet of solely residential development to 1,300,000 square feet of mixed use development including mixed-income residential, office, hotel and retail uses, including a potential grocery store
- *Community that is diverse and affordable:* The primary goal of the Braddock East Master Plan is to encourage and guide future redevelopment of the public housing sites in the Braddock East area into diverse mixed-income communities. The Braddock East Master Plan requires the one-for-one replacement of public housing units in the neighborhood and elsewhere in the City in accordance with **Resolution 830**. This is consistent with the Strategic Plan’s vision for choices of housing opportunities for a variety of income and age levels and for workers in Alexandria.

## II. Community Process

City Council appointed a twelve person Braddock East Advisory Group (BEAG) to represent the diverse interests in the Braddock East area. The Advisory Group met monthly from February through October (excluding August), for a total of eight meetings. All the meetings were open to the public and were attended by neighborhood citizens and other concerned Alexandrians.

This process developed a community-wide dialogue addressing the future of public housing and the transition to mixed-income housing developments. Creating a community vision involved many lively and important discussions among the Advisory Group and community members, all of whom brought diverse points of view to the process.

The primary objective of the entire group is to ensure that the City keep its commitment to the public housing residents to provide safe and affordable housing in Alexandria, with appropriate social services to help them succeed. This can be achieved by integrating new housing to create communities with a broad mix of income levels that produces physical, economic, and social benefits for the whole community. The report of the

Advisory Group is attached at *Appendix I*. There is generally collective support for the goals, guidelines, development framework and overall recommendations in the Plan. While Staff has worked diligently to address the concerns expressed by specific stakeholder groups, there are still a number of outstanding issues that are stated in the BEAG Report and addressed later in this Staff Report.

Several members of the Advisory Group seek to ensure that the Plan maintains equity for the existing public housing residents in the Braddock East area and that the existing public housing residents are given the opportunity to return to the community if they wish to do so. However, it is also recognized by most that due to a variety of considerations (e.g. density and height constraints, available funding, market conditions), it may be necessary to consider replacement of some units at other locations in the City, rather than replace all of the public housing units on the original sites within the Braddock East area.

Specific efforts were made to engage the public housing residents in the overall planning process, through a series of meetings, focus groups and a community barbeque. In addition, ARHA employed a consultant to help with outreach efforts with the public housing residents. There is general support from public housing residents for redevelopment, provided:

- current residents wishing to continue living in the neighborhood are able to do so;
- private open space and children’s play areas are provided;
- supportive services are provided;
- relocation sites offer residents good alternatives of where to live;
- the number of moves they would have to make is minimized; and
- options for homeownership are made available.

The Plan endeavors to be sensitive to the needs of the public housing residents, recognizing that low-income public housing has been part of the Braddock East community for generations and deserves equity within the new community.

A Design Charrette was held in June 2008 that involved members of the Advisory Group, and representatives from the public housing, the wider community, ARHA and other interested persons. The purpose of the charrette was to establish the scale of new development that would be appropriate for this neighborhood. Participants confirmed that the height of any new building should be sensitive to the scale of adjacent development. It was suggested that new buildings should be generally no more than one-story higher than adjacent buildings (with greater height permissible further away). New buildings should also incorporate shoulders along sensitive edges, to transition taller buildings to smaller context and create consistent façade heights along street edges.



### **III. Goals of the Braddock East Plan**

#### **A. Creating Mixed Income Communities**

The primary goal of the Braddock East Master Plan is to encourage and guide future redevelopment of the public housing sites in the Braddock East area into diverse mixed-income, mixed-use urban communities, in a manner sensitive to the interests of the residents of the public housing that has been in the area for generations. The Plan promotes a diversity of housing types at differing levels of affordability. A mix of housing types, unit sizes, and affordability levels will help to encourage a mix of people with different lifestyles, family sizes, and other characteristics that will promote the neighborhood's livability.

The objective is to create communities with a mix of income levels and that is large enough to sustain a critical mass of public housing residents in order to maintain the strong social and support networks. Adding a range of housing options, including workforce and affordable housing, to the new development is desirable, as it will contribute to the diversity of the neighborhood. Workforce and affordable housing will also help to "bridge" the social and economic gap between the market-rate and public housing residents. Subsidized ownership housing may also provide the potential for public housing residents to improve their economic standing while remaining in the neighborhood.

Mixed-income housing helps draw together individuals with different backgrounds and histories. When families of different income brackets live in the same development together, their children gain opportunities to meet each other and play together without regard to income level. Adults in a mixed-income community are drawn into a shared sense of community as they work together to manage their housing and address issues of shared concern to residents. Anecdotes from residents who have moved into the existing mixed-income communities at Chatham Square and Quaker Hill demonstrate how being part of a social network with residents of higher education and/or incomes has helped expand their education, job and home ownership opportunities (page 18 of Plan).

The Braddock East Plan provides the necessary framework to guide the future redevelopment of public housing into mixed-income, mixed-use, urban and pedestrian-orientated development, thereby improving the quality of life for public housing residents and the wider community.



In overall terms BEAG support the recommendations set out in the Development Framework, with the exception of the following concerns expressed by the representatives of specific stakeholder groups (refer to BEAG Report at *Appendix 1*):

Braddock Lofts consider that the proposed height for the western half of the Andrew Adkins block is inconsistent with the outcome of the community design charrette, which proposed 50 feet rather than the 70 feet variable height proposed by the Plan. They argue that the proposed western block should be divided, with a maximum of 60 feet on the Payne Street side and 70 feet on the West Street side. Staff has had to balance these concerns with the desire of ARHA to maintain the flexibility to maximize the value of this key site close to the Metro, the Economic Sustainability Task Force recommendation for higher density close to Metro and the recommendation in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan for 77-foot tall buildings on the Metro Site. Accordingly, having regard to these wider objectives, the Development Framework proposes a variable height across the western half of the Adkins block, up to a maximum of 70 feet.

ARHA does not support the recommended extension of Payne Street through the Adkins site and suggests that this objective should be dependant upon the assembly of the privately owned single-family homes east of West Street and good design. Staff regards the extension of Payne Street an important urban design objective and, while it may be influenced by what happens with the adjacent privately owned properties, it is not dependent on these properties being assembled.

The North East Citizens' Association contends that the proposed height on the northern part of the Samuel Madden block does not respect the height of properties on First Street and should be no higher than 50 feet, with the outer edge sufficiently set back and no higher than 30 feet. Staff considers that this concern is adequately addressed by the amendments to the Plan that require variation in building height across the block and particular attention to be given to the relationship with existing residential townhomes to the northeast.

### Land Use

A mix of public housing, market-rate housing and, where feasible, affordable and/or workforce housing is recommended to accommodate households with a broad range of income levels within the community. The precise ratio for this mix should be determined through the development planning process, as it will be influenced primarily by the funding available at that time.

Ground floor retail uses are recommended to contribute to the walkability and security of key walking streets in the neighborhood. A grocery store is identified as a potential use for the Samuel Madden blocks. An important issue for BEAG and public housing residents was that the retail uses should be neighborhood serving and should meet the needs of the whole community. This is reflected in the Plans recommendations.

Office use is recommended as a potential use for the western half of Adkins and the northern Samuel Madden block in order to help balance the overall mix of residential and retail uses within the plan area. The inclusion of office as a potential use for the Madden blocks was requested by ARHA to provide more options for future redevelopment. A hotel use is recommended for the western edge of the Adkins block that is currently occupied by the single-family properties, consistent with the land use recommendations of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan.

The provision of improved community facilities/supportive services as part of any redevelopment plan is encouraged, but the location and programming of such facilities will be determined by an analysis of resident needs and should complement the Recreation Center program. This is an essential element of the Plan for BEAG and public housing residents alike.

The Plan recommends the provision of a variety of open spaces to meet the needs of the new residents of the proposed mixed-income communities, with particular focus on the recreational needs of young children and teenagers. The open spaces should complement the programmed activities at the new Charles Houston Recreation Center and the community park planned for the Post Office site in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan. Focusing recreation provision on facilities that serve the whole community will help to integrate the diverse population within the neighborhood.

The Braddock East Plan adopts the parking requirements recommended in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan. These parking standards are reductions from the City zoning code requirements, which reflects the proximity of the area to Metro and the goal of promoting sustainability and minimizing traffic generation.

### Urban Design

The Plan requires that new development within Braddock East should observe the Design Guidelines of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan. These set out specific guidance related to spatial definition of streets, scale and proportion of buildings, ground floor relationships to sidewalks, streetscape, trees and landscaping, lighting, street furniture, public art, and public information, among other things.

In particular, all new development in the plan area is required to:

- Provide appropriate transitions in scale and massing;
- Include architectural variety reflecting neighborhood tradition;
- Create green edges along streets;
- Contribute to walkable streets; and
- Provide underground parking.

New developments will be encouraged to meet LEED, Earthcraft or other equivalent sustainability standards.

The core priority of this plan is to provide high quality housing for everyone. To this end, the exterior facades of public and/or affordable housing should be designed to be indistinguishable from the market rate housing. The public housing units should be integrated throughout the new development, and not concentrated in any one location on the site. ARHA prefers building designs that minimize shared corridors and elevators and provide individual exterior entrances at ground level to each unit. The Plan suggests that increased density thresholds necessary to make mixed-income development financially viable may require some moderation of this policy, provided the design can still avoid past pitfalls of multifamily public housing buildings.

**C. Implications for Public Housing in Braddock East**

There are 365 public housing units today in the James Bland (and Bland addition), Andrew Adkins, Ramsey Homes and Samuel Madden (Uptown) complexes on approximately 18 acres combined. The primary goal of the Braddock East Master Plan is to encourage and guide future redevelopment of these public housing sites into diverse mixed-income, mixed-use urban communities. At the same time, it recognizes ARHA’s role as stewards of public assets and the welfare of its residents. The one-for-one replacement policy of Resolution 830 is embraced by this Master Plan.

As the City and ARHA have worked through this process with the community, it has become apparent that, due to a multitude of variable factors influenced by market conditions and public policy (such as land values, development costs, funding availability), it is not practical within this Plan to be prescriptive about the mix of housing within the new community or the resultant number of public housing units that may need to be replaced elsewhere in the City.

However, as specific proposals are evaluated, it may become appropriate for the City and ARHA to consider replacement of some units at other locations in the City, rather than to replace all of the public housing units on the original sites within the Braddock East area.

The retention of existing public housing in the Braddock East area will be contingent upon:

- constraints on the overall density and height on each individual site;
- open space, parking and urban design requirements;
- the market conditions that prevail at the time of redevelopment;
- the public funding available at the time of redevelopment ; and
- the availability of secured sites elsewhere in the City to accommodate the replacement units.

This has been demonstrated by both the Chatham Square and James Bland redevelopments. Approximately one-third to one-half of the existing public housing units on these sites were/are to be relocated off-site. This is due to constraints on the development of these sites, such as the need for open space, the limitation on heights and

the need for compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods, as well as the available funding and market conditions, which are different in each case.

Similarly, as redevelopment opportunities are presented for Samuel Madden and Andrew Adkins, the needs and wishes of public housing residents in these complexes may be in part met by off-site locations better situated for families than between streets carrying Route 1 traffic and high-density uses next to the metro station.

In summary, it is likely that the densities needed to replace all of the public housing on-site in Braddock East, while adding enough market rate units to make the development feasible, may not be viable. Consequently, it may be necessary to replace some of the existing public housing units in Braddock East at other locations in the City. Based on the experience of the similar redevelopments in Alexandria referred to above, this may be somewhere in the region of one-third to one-half. In order to responsibly plan for this possibility, the City and ARHA should work together to identify and secure replacement sites to anticipate this potential requirement for replacement public housing units.

As it is likely to be a number of years before the Samuel Madden and Andrew Adkins sites redevelop, it is not possible or practical to identify these sites now. For the same reason, basing any recommendation regarding unit mix/unit retention on current market conditions and current funding expectations would be unreliable.

Accordingly, despite the desires of some members of the community, this Plan does not make a specific recommendation regarding the number of public housing units that will be relocated out of the Braddock East neighborhood. The Braddock East Master Plan seeks to identify the appropriate strategy for ensuring that adequate and appropriate replacement housing sites are available when they are required to meet the needs of any future redevelopment.

As part of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan recommendations, developers are expected to contribute to the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund. In order to support the objective of securing opportunities for replacement public housing, the Braddock East Master Plan recommends that 50% of the available Affordable Housing Trust Funds generated from the Braddock area be reserved for off-site replacement of public housing from the Braddock East area. This recommendation was added to the Plan at the specific request of the Braddock Lofts and ICCA representatives on BEAG.

The above recommendations relating to the replacement housing strategy are generally supported by BEAG with the exception of the following concerns expressed by specific stakeholder interests (refer to BEAG report at *Appendix 1*):

ARHA consider that: "with respect to the feasibility of a proposal not yet articulated, it is premature to even suggest that a particular percentage of public housing should be relocated elsewhere in the City and with respect to the people impacted, highly insensitive and prejudicial towards the public housing residents by suggesting that they

should be removed from their neighborhood, to make room for the newcomers.” (refer to BEAG report at *Appendix I*).

Staff considers that ARHA has misinterpreted the intent of the Plan, which seeks simply to provide a strategy for finding replacement public housing opportunities by reference to similar projects elsewhere in Alexandria. The objective is to ensure that the City and ARHA effectively plan for the possibility that this range (one third to one-half) of units may need to be accommodated elsewhere in the City, rather than having to be retroactive when specific development proposal for each site comes forward. As stated clearly in the Plan, there is no specific recommendation regarding the number of public housing units that will be relocated out of the Braddock East neighborhood.

Conversely, it should also be noted that the Inner City Civic Association (ICCA) take the opposite view and consider that the Plan should specifically recommend that a minimum of 50% of the existing public housing units be moved out of the Braddock East to locations elsewhere in the City. They contend that this should included a timetable for ARHA property redevelopment that dovetails off-siting needs with opportunities offered by new private developments elsewhere in the City, where public housing units could be purchased or negotiated as contributions For the reasons expressed above, Staff considers that this would be inappropriate.

ICCA also consider that all of the available Affordable Housing Trust Funds generated from the Braddock area be reserved for off-site replacement of public housing from the Braddock East area, rather than 50% as recommended in the Plan.

#### **IV. Implementation**

##### **A. Implementation Process**

Staff recognizes the importance of follow through on the Plan’s action items and the need for a defined implementation process. The majority of the implementation of the Braddock East Master Plan is within the control of and at the discretion of ARHA. Those items that are the responsibility of the City will be subsumed by the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan implementation process, which is in the Work Program to begin in early 2009. As part of that process, the City will set up an internal working group and appoint an advisory group that will meet regularly to advance the implementation program. ARHA will be included in these discussions as it relates to the Braddock East public housing sites.

##### **B. Coordination and Cooperation between the City and ARHA**

The City and ARHA have worked closely through their respective staffs, both internally and through community meetings, in developing the guidance and parameters for this Master Plan. In order to accomplish the goals and recommendations of the Braddock East Plan, the Plan includes a commitment by the City and ARHA to the following:

- The City and ARHA will work together to identify and pursue appropriate measures to tap into the multiple sources of funds available for the redevelopment of public housing.
- The City’s Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities will coordinate with ARHA and other appropriate City agencies regarding the programming of the Charles Houston Recreation Center to ensure that the interests of the public housing residents are equitably represented.
- The City’s Department of Human Services will coordinate with ARHA to ensure that public housing residents are made fully aware of all the existing City social services that are available to assist their transition into mixed-income housing.
- The City Housing Master Plan will provide a strategy for identifying and securing sites for replacement public housing units to support the redevelopment proposal in the Plan, anticipating the possibility that it may be necessary to accommodate existing public housing units in Braddock East elsewhere in the City.

**C. Zoning**

The Plan does not rezone any portion of the planning area, but recommends a Coordinated Development District (CDD) for James Bland (and Bland Addition), Samuel Madden Uptown and Andrew Adkins blocks. The CDD Guidelines in Section 8 of the Plan implement the principles established in the Development Framework and provide details regarding massing and height.

The recommended parking standards will be executed by an amendment to the zoning ordinance through the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan implementation process.

**CONCLUSION**

The Braddock East Master Plan is the result of an extensive and inclusive planning process. It engaged a broad cross-section of the community and addressed difficult issues head-on with the benefit of tools and information to ensure that the community could effectively discuss tradeoffs and reach an informed consensus or community vision as laid out in the Plan.

The Braddock East Master Plan is the first step in the process of redeveloping the public housing sites in Braddock East to create new mixed-income, mixed-use, urban communities. It creates a framework to encourage and guide future improvement and potential redevelopment of the public housing sites.

The decision to redevelop these public housing sites is ultimately at ARHA’s discretion and is highly dependent upon what will be economically feasible at the time. The

Braddock East Master Plan provides sufficient flexibility to enable ARHA to achieve its mission of providing quality housing to persons of low income in a manner that allows ARHA to capitalize on its major asset – its land, which is held in trust primarily for the benefit of its residents. At the same time, the Master Plan provides guidance for new development that is intended to be physically, visually and socially integrated into the existing community so that quality of life is enhanced for all residents in the community.

Optimistically, the future will provide opportunities for building a strong, vibrant and diverse community, consistent with the goals of the City’s Strategic Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends adoption of the amendment to the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and North East Small Area Plan chapters of the City’s Master Plan to include the Braddock East Master Plan.

**STAFF**

Faroll Hamer, Director, P&Z  
Jeffrey Farner, Deputy Director, Urban Design  
Kathleen Beeton, Division Chief, Neighborhood Planning  
Andrea Barlow, Principal Planner  
Andrew Spurgin, Urban Planner  
Brandi Collins, Urban Planner  
Roy Priest, Acting Executive Director, ARHA  
Mildrilyn Davis, Director, Office of Housing  
Helen McIlvaine, Deputy Director, Office of Housing

# Report of the Braddock East Advisory Group

The City Council appointed a twelve person Braddock East Advisory Group to represent the diverse interests in the Braddock East area.

NAME	AFFILIATION
Carlyle C. Ring	Alexandria Redevelopment & Housing Authority Commissioner
Nakia Johnson	Public Housing Resident
Gwen Menefee	Public Housing Advocate
Leslie Zupan	Inner City Civic Association Representative
Sylvia Sibrover	Northeast Citizens Association Representative
Salena Zellers	Braddock Neighborhood Resident
Harvey Gray	Person knowledgeable about Parker Gray history
Howard Katz	Developer who has experience with affordable housing and workforce housing development
John Komoroske	Planning Commissioner
Janice Howard	At-Large Member
John DuPree	At-Large Member
Merrick Malone	At-Large Member

The Advisory Group met monthly from February through October (excluding August), for a total of eight meetings. All the meetings were open to the public and were attended by neighborhood citizens and other concerned Alexandrians. This process helped to facilitate a community-wide dialogue about the future of public housing and the transition to mixed-income housing developments. Creating a community vision involved many lively and important discussions among the Advisory Group and community members, all of whom brought diverse points of view to the process.

The primary objective of the entire group is to ensure that the City keep its commitment to the public housing residents to provide safe and affordable housing in Alexandria, with appropriate social services to help them succeed. This can be achieved by integrating new housing to create communities with a broad mix of income levels that produces physical, economic, and social benefits for the whole community.

Several members of the Advisory Group seek to ensure that the Plan maintains equity for the existing public housing residents in the Braddock East area and that the existing public housing residents are given the opportunity to return to the community if they wish to do so. However, it is also recognized by most that due to a variety of considerations (e.g. density and height constraints, available funding, market conditions), it may be necessary to consider replacement of some units at other locations in the City, rather than replace all of the public housing units on the original sites within the Braddock East area.

Through discussion with the group and individual members, some of the concerns identified with the original draft plan have been resolved. There is now collective support for the goals, guidelines, development framework and overall recommendations in the Plan, with the exception of the following outstanding issues articulated by specific stakeholder groups:

### **Replacement of Public Housing:**

*ARHA:* It is not possible at this time to determine whether all of the public housing units can be placed in a mixed income attractive community on site in any redevelopment until it unfolds. As stated in the Plan, residents of public housing should have an opportunity to return to, or stay in, their neighborhood which has been their home and where their social clubs, support networks, and churches they attend are located. With respect to the feasibility of a proposal not yet articulated, it is premature to even suggest that a particular percentage of public housing should be relocated elsewhere in the City and with respect to the people impacted, highly insensitive and prejudicial towards the public housing residents by suggesting that they should be removed from their neighborhood, to make room for the newcomers.

*ICCA:* The Plan should specifically recommend that a minimum of 50% of the existing public housing units should be moved out of the Braddock East to locations elsewhere in the City. This should included a timetable for ARHA property redevelopment that dovetails off-siting needs with opportunities offered by new private developments elsewhere in the City, where public housing units could be purchased or negotiated as contributions.

*ICCA:* 100% of the monies paid into the Affordable Housing Trust Fund generated by future developments within the Braddock Metro area should be used to pay for the off-siting of public housing from Braddock East.

### **Site Specific issues:**

*ARHA:* The extension of Payne Street through the Andrew Adkins site should be dependant upon the assembly of properties on West Street and good design.

*Braddock Lofts:* The proposed height for the western half of the Andrew Adkins block is inconsistent with the outcome of the community design charrette, which proposed 50 feet rather than the 70 feet variable height proposed by the Plan. The proposed western block should be divided, with a maximum of 60 feet on the Payne Street side and 70 feet on the West Street side.

*NECA:* The proposed height on the northern part of the Samuel Madden block does not respect the height of properties on First Street and should be no higher than 50 feet, with the outer edge sufficiently set back and no higher than 30 feet. The additional height should be put on the southern block.

RESOLUTION NO. MPA 2008-005

WHEREAS, under the Provisions of Section 9.05 of the City Charter, the Planning Commission may adopt amendments to the Master Plan of the City of Alexandria and submit to the City Council such revisions in said plans as changing conditions may make necessary; and

WHEREAS, the City initiated an extensive community participation process to establish a shared vision and direction for the future development and enhancement of the Braddock East Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the community planning process culminated in the development of the Braddock East Master Plan that represents a comprehensive approach to guide and manage the future development in the Braddock East area; and

WHEREAS, a duly advertised public hearing on the proposed amendment was held on October 7, 2008 with all public testimony and written comment considered; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that:

1. The proposed amendment is necessary and desirable to guide and accomplish the coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the Braddock East Master Plan within the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and the North East Small Area Plan sections of the City; and
2. The proposed amendment is generally consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the 1992 Master Plan and with the specific goals and objectives set forth in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and the North East Small Area Plan chapters of the 1992 Master Plan (2008 ed.); and
3. The proposed amendment shows the Planning Commission's long-range recommendations for the general development of the subject areas within the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and the North East Small Area Plan; and
4. Based on the foregoing findings and all other facts and circumstances of which the Planning Commission may properly take notice in making and adopting a master plan for the City of Alexandria, adoption of this amendment to the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and the North East Small Area Plan chapters of the 1992 Master Plan (2008 ed.) will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the City;

RESOLUTION NO. MPA 2008-005

Page 2

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria that:

1. The Braddock East Master Plan is hereby adopted in its entirety as an amendment to the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and the North East Small Area Plan chapters of the 1992 Master Plan (2008 ed.) of the City of Alexandria, Virginia in accordance with Section 9.05 of the Charter of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.
2. This resolution shall be signed by the Chairman of the Planning Commission and attested by its secretary, and a true copy of this resolution forwarded and certified to the City Council.

ADOPTED the **7th day of October, 2008.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Eric Wagner, Chairman  
Alexandria Planning Commission

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Faroll Hamer, Secretary



