

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON HOUSING
KELLEN MACBETH, CHAIR

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January 23, 2023

Paul Bernard, President and CEO
AHC Inc.
2230 Fairfax Dr.
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Concerns Regarding Conditions at The Serrano

Dear Mr. Bernard:

The Citizens Advisory Commission on Housing (Housing Commission) met on January 12, 2023, and heard public testimony from a Serrano Apartments resident regarding ongoing concerns at The Serrano, a property of AHC, Inc., (AHC) located at 5535 Columbia Pike. Additionally, we received a letter from tenant advocates the day prior listing concerns about conditions at the Serrano. The Commission was very concerned to hear about the issues raised by the Serrano tenant as well as those in the advocates' letter and voted unanimously to send a letter to AHC expressing our concerns. The concerns raised either in the letter or during public testimony include:

- Water shut-offs without proper planning or communication with vulnerable residents about alternative water supplies during the shut-off
- Heat shut-offs for sometimes more than a day without proper planning and communication with vulnerable residents about alternative heat sources or arrangements during the heat outages
- Extended elevator outages impacting one or both elevators in a building
- Reports of non-response from AHC or the property management firm after residents contacted the emergency line
- Poor communication with residents that fosters an environment of mistrust
- Deteriorating relationships/communication between the property management firm, AHC, and tenant advocates
- Reports that residents fear retaliation when raising concerns or issues with the property management firm

Additionally, we have received reports from the NAACP Arlington Branch of ongoing maintenance issues at multiple units/common areas within the Serrano including poor cleanup of canine bodily fluids in the hallway, rodent droppings in hallways, yellow water coming from faucets, implied threats of retaliation from office staff to residents who raise concerns, and dirty air vents within units.

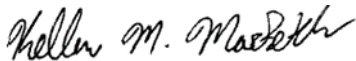
We appreciate AHC's efforts to work with Serrano residents, county staff, advocates, and the Housing Commission to resolve prior issues at the property. However, we are very concerned about these new reports of ongoing issues negatively impacting some of the residents. To help ensure Serrano residents live in safe, healthy, and decent housing, the Housing Commission requests the following:

Immediate Resolution of Issues: We request AHC immediately address the concerns raised in this letter by Serrano residents and advocates in coordination with Arlington County.

Public Status Update: We request AHC attend the March 9th Housing Commission meeting to provide a public update on your efforts to address the concerns raised and provide information about AHC's planning for the rehabilitation/redevelopment of the Serrano property. We will also invite tenants and advocates to attend this meeting to share their perspectives.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to these issues and working with the Housing Commission and Arlington County to resolve them.

Sincerely,



Kellen MacBeth
Chair, Citizens Advisory Commission on Housing

cc: Ginger Brown, Chair, AHC Inc. Board of Directors
Christian Dorsey, Chair, Arlington County Board
Matt de Ferranti, County Board Liaison
Mark Schwartz, County Manager
Anne Venezia, Housing Director
David Timm, Chair, Tenant-Landlord Commission