



Arlington Partnership  
For Affordable Housing



**PRESS RELEASE**

*For immediate release*

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## **Central United Methodist Church and Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing Break Ground on Ballston Redevelopment**

Arlington, VA (December 9, 2021) – Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH) and Central United Methodist Church (CUMC) are excited to announce the beginning of construction of Ballston Station, the multi-use redevelopment of the church property located at 4201 Fairfax Drive in Arlington. Located across from Ballston-MU Metrorail station, the project will replace the existing church with an eight-story building that includes 144 committed affordable homes, CUMC’s new sanctuary space, and community amenities including a commercial kitchen for onsite food distribution, a meeting hall, and an early childhood education space to accommodate approximately 90 children.

“We are thrilled to partner with CUMC to realize their vision to serve the community through affordable housing, childcare, and other services for our low-income neighbors,” said Carmen Romero, APAH’s President and CEO. “Ballston Station will bring 144 greatly needed affordable apartments to an incredible location right in the heart of Ballston with direct access to transportation and jobs.”

This project would not be possible without the support of the community and key partners, including Virginia Housing and Arlington County, which provided \$19,065,000 in support from the Affordable Housing Investment Fund. “Arlington County is pleased to support and be part of this outstanding project,” said Matt de Ferranti, Arlington County Board Chair. “Ballston Station moves us closer to achieving the county’s ambitious housing goals by providing quality, affordable apartments.”



*Rendering of the proposed Ballston Station, by DCS Design*

## **Path to Redevelopment**

Central United Methodist Church began feeding and serving the Arlington community in 2007 after a prayer walk through the Ballston neighborhood inspired the congregation's collective desire to provide food and hospitality to those experiencing homelessness and other neighbors in need. The program grew from morning coffee and donut service for just a few to hot breakfast, lunch, and fresh groceries for more than 200. As their ministry grew, partnerships with Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) and PathForward allowed CUMC to provide additional services, including medical care and referrals to other support, as they fed and welcomed members of the community. In 2014, the church congregation chose to expand upon this programming as the growing, diverse congregation formally expressed their dream to create new affordable housing on the aging church property.

In 2014, Rev. Sarah Harrison McQueen was appointed senior pastor with the charge to lead the church through the redevelopment process. Like all complex projects, the journey has had challenges: developing a design to incorporate so many needs in a single acre site, securing financing, planning to build immediately adjacent to a Metro tunnel, and honoring the rich history of the property while making way for the congregation's vision.



*Central United Methodist Church, photo by Jim Coates*

"For more than a decade, Central United Methodist Church has been tirelessly working toward transforming our property to better serve the Arlington community" said the Rev. Sarah Harrison-McQueen. We are thrilled to partner with APAH on this project which will create much needed new affordable rental units to serve diverse families and individuals. This new building will also support our mission to worship God, serve others, and embrace all."

## **Project Financing and Partners**

This \$84 million project secured 4% Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, low-cost loans from Virginia Housing and Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), in addition to CUMC's land lease proceeds, church fundraising, and financing provided by Truist Bank. The project will provide 144 committed affordable apartments, including 15 units reserved for very low-income residents earning 30% or less of the area median

income (AMI), 60 units for those earning 50% AMI or less, and the remaining 69 at 60% AMI. The project includes a mix of one-bedroom and larger, greatly needed, family-serving apartments including 24 two-bedroom units and 12 three-bedroom units.

APAH President and CEO, Carmen Romero, looks forward to beginning this long-awaited redevelopment. "The new Ballston Station will allow residents to easily access public transit and amenities with Metrorail and bus stations just across the street. We are proud to be part of CUMC's transformation and are eager to begin the next phase with our project partners." The project team includes DAVIS Construction, the general contractor, architect Davis Carter Scott (DCS) Design, and Truist Bank. Project financing closed on December 9, 2021. Construction will commence immediately with an estimated completion date of Spring 2024.



*Celebrating the launch from left to right: Charles Sims; Bill Krokowski, Matt Birenbaum; APAH CEO, Carmen Romero; Arlington County Board Chair, Matt De Ferranti; CUMC Pastor, Rev. Sarah Harrison-McQueen; Kathy Sibert; Gene Cross; APAH Board Chair, Susan Bell, and Jill Norcross. Photo by Lloyd Wolf*

### **Community Impact**

The eight-story building will replace the existing church structure, will be more energy-efficient, and provide functional space for CUMC's many ministries to the Arlington community. The church's 26,699 SF condo unit will include the sanctuary, offices, classrooms, music suite, commercial kitchen, and a fellowship hall. The sanctuary will feature live-streaming technology, allowing more options for worship and community use of the space. The expanded Kinhaven School space will increase their capacity to provide pre-school for more children, daycare for infants, and expand their operating hours to better serve more families. APAH will own and operate the 137,000 SF residential space which will

provide 144 committed affordable rental units and more than 2,500 SF of dedicated amenity space for the delivery of resident services and programs.

The rich history of CUMC and the Ball family who donated the property for the building of the church in 1906 will be shared on a plaque adjacent to a 502 SF fenced, historic site where headstones of several members of the Ball family are displayed. Adding to the history, a 12-panel, 9 by 6-foot Tiffany stained glass window will be installed.

The project's location in the heart of Ballston will allow APAH to offer multi-faceted, onsite resident services programming that leverages neighborhood assets.

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### **About the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing**

Founded in 1989, APAH now helps more than 2,000 households live in stable, secure, and affordable rental homes. APAH has 500 affordable apartments under construction and an additional 1,000 in its development pipeline. APAH's Columbia Hills Apartments received the 2019 ULI Washington Trends Award for Excellence in Affordable Housing. And both Columbia Hills and Gilliam Place, APAH's most recent projects, were recognized as Virginia's Best Affordable Housing project by Virginia Housing. APAH was named one of the nation's Top 50 Affordable Housing Developers of 2019 by Affordable Housing Finance magazine. The organization was named 2021 Developer of the Year by HAND, the Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers.

### **About Central United Methodist Church**

Central United Methodist Church has served the community of Arlington, Virginia since 1911. Our property, located across from the Ballston-MU Metro station, is a space where this community of faith has worshiped God, served others, and embraced all. The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. During this season of property transformation, the congregation gathers in rented space for worship on Saturdays at 4:30 p.m. and also online for worship on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. Visit [cumcballston.org](http://cumcballston.org) for more information.