



District of Columbia Housing Authority

1133 North Capitol Street, NE Washington, DC 20002-7599

(202) 535-1000

Tyrone Garrett, Executive Director

Q&As*

Second Round RAD Resident Meeting

Potomac Gardens Family & Senior – Thursday, September 15, 2020

**Questions and Answers have been paraphrased and summarized*

2PM MEETING – POTOMAC GARDENS SENIOR

[**NOTE:** For general questions regarding immediate maintenance issues, please contact your property manager immediately. The RAD conversion process is a lengthy one; the rehabilitation will likely not begin for another 1.5 to 2 years. Residents are strongly encouraged to submit work orders to Mr. Dixon or Mr. Pitt to address any pressing issues in the meantime. Also, some of the questions below are regarding support provided by Resident Services and other departments of DCHA generally, not necessarily related to the RAD program.]

1. Q: [Ms. V]: Will there be virtual learning for those who are age 65 and over?

A: [Ron Fisher, DCHA]: [ORS is following-up with the Office on Aging to inquire about such services].

2. Q: [Ms. V]: Will you have brail learning for the blind?

A: [Ron Fisher, DCHA]: [The Office of Resident Services (“ORS”) is looking into available resources.]

3. Q: [Ms. V]: What about residents who are not computer literate? How can those residents benefit from ORS programs?

A: [Ron Fisher, DCHA]: ORS took a poll to try and assess tech literacy amongst DCHA residents; we will circle back once we have the results from this poll.

4. Q: [Ms. V]: Does ORS have a network with The Beacon senior newspaper for the purpose of our seniors benefitting from their cost effective program and AARP?

A: [Ron Fisher, DCHA]: ORS does not have a network with this organization/publication, but is open to exploring such relationship if there is interest from senior residents.



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5. [Ms. V]: Will there be Section 3 opportunities for clerical work?

A: [Ron Fisher, DCHA]: There will be Section 3 opportunities available; however we do not know at this time specifically what types of work these opportunities will entail.

6. Q: [Ms. V]: Will there be translations provided for residents who may need them?

A: [LaShawn Douglas, DCHA]: Yes, we have been working with Ms. Berry to determine if anyone needs translations and then providing translated materials to those individuals. We will also make appropriate referrals to our ADA 504 coordinator.

7. Q: [Ms. V]: What is going to be done regarding the vacancies at Potomac Gardens Senior? [Expressed that she does not want them to be filled.]

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: We know there are vacant units at Potomac Senior and it is in our interest to have these vacancies to help facilitate the phased renovations.

8. Q: [Ms. V]: Could the land value be used to leverage vouchers?

A: [DCHA]: RAD is project-based versus tenant-based. In connection with financing, the lender will take into consideration the project-based subsidy in determining loans for the project to finance the improvements. **The land and building value are also factored into the overall financial transaction. A high value can be used to leverage additional funds for the renovation work.**

9. Q: [Mr. M]: Are we all going to have to move out during the renovations? If so, does this include taking everything off the walls and moving all furniture? When would this move occur?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: Yes, due to the scope of the renovations, we have to temporarily relocate residents during the construction. The unit renovations for Potomac Gardens 700 building and Senior will take approximately 6 months per unit phase. We plan to utilize the currently vacant units in each building to serve as temporary housing units for families to move into while their units are being remodeled. That being said, we are still a bit down the road from these renovations. As part of the RAD application process we will apply for the Commitment to Enter into a Housing Assistance Payment ("CHAP") in about 3-6 months, then we will proceed with further RAD engagement, then submit the financing plan to HUD, then if HUD approves, the building is converted and we begin the renovations. This will take about 1.5 to 2 years to get to the renovation stage. We will be of course conducting day-to-day maintenance in the meantime and urge residents to contact property management with any maintenance issues.



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A: [Deborah Jackson, DCHA]: Going off of what Alex was saying, because this is a complete remodel of the units, you will need to completely move out for the construction time period, including removing items hanging on the walls. We will be with you every step of the way during this process. We as the Mobility Team will be coming around to do surveys, we will be asking individual questions, and we will accommodate you and your family's needs. We will do this as we get closer to renovations, so please do not feel the need to pack right now.

10. Q: [Ms. M]: Will there be a radical change in the apartments?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: We plan on doing a full renovation of the units, but the floor plan will likely largely remain the same. That being said, we are open to suggestions of what you would like to see in the remodeled units. Some suggestions we have heard include in-unit laundry, separate door to bathroom, etc. We will look at all of these suggestions and see if we can work them into the renovation plans. Again, if you see something that you think the building is lacking please let us know. We are happy to take these suggestions into consideration.

11. Q: [Ms. L]: Is RAD who fixed the elevators in the 700 building? Where can this funding come from? There is a lot of gossip going on about how DCHA is going to fund Potomac Gardens. DCHA is offering things that have never been done before, like AC and transforming rooms, it's a big deal, there are rumors going around that you're just promising these things. Usually people get the money before making plans and promises, and I understand you still have to get the funds.

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: RAD is a program run by HUD. HUD offers RAD to public housing authorities to convert traditional Section 9 public housing to project-based Section 8 RAD. This allows us to borrow money to make improvements. This access to funds will allow us to do the in-depth renovations that will make Potomac Gardens sustainable long term. The reason DCHA wants to pursue this conversion is because we currently do not get enough funding to do the major repairs that our public housing portfolio needs. However, by converting to RAD, this allows us to solicit private investors to get the funds we need to start doing a major renovation campaign. We do not know how much money we can raise yet, as we are just starting the RAD conversion application process. Once we get the CHAP from HUD, we can go out and find investors to fund us. These investors include banks, nonprofits, etc.

12. Q: [Ms. L]: [Expressed concern regarding mold, water damage and security].

A: [Rochelle Berry, DCHA]: [Ms. Berry is addressing these concerns with the resident offline.]



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13. Q: [Ms. C]: [Shared ideas and suggestions for additions to the units such as washer and dryer and walk-in shower. Also expressed maintenance concern and potential ADA request.]

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: [DCHA is making note of Ms. C’s suggestions, and is following up with her maintenance concerns.]

14. Q: [Ms. C.]: Even though you just moved us out to another unit do we still get our voucher?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: To clarify, there are no tenant protection vouchers in the RAD conversion. If you are in a unit that is going to be converted to RAD, then you will be temporarily moved during the renovations within DCHA public housing, most likely onsite at Potomac Gardens.

15. Q: [Ms. B]: If I do decide to move [outside of RAD], would I have to pay for the move? I might just want to move somewhere else.

A: [Katrina Jeter, DCHA]: I work for Relocation, if it’s a voluntary choice on your own it is your own responsibility, and you must supply movers, etc. However, if you are moving for the RAD renovations, then DCHA will assist by providing movers and packing materials if needed and comply with all relocation requirements.

16. Q: [Ms. R]: I prefer to stay here at Potomac Gardens; if I move out would I be able to move back in?

A: [Katrina Jeter, DCHA]: Yes, as part of HUD’s RAD program you have a right to return to Potomac Gardens and we will assist you with moving both from and to your unit during the renovations.

17. Q: [Anonymous]: Will residents see the application before it is submitted?

A: [DCHA]: As required by HUD PIH Notice 19-23, DCHA will provide residents with a copy of the RAD Information Notice (“RIN”), RAD resident meeting presentation materials, answers to questions and comments from RAD resident meetings and make available public comment from the Board of Commissioners meetings.



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18. Q: [Anonymous]: What is the cost to get those units up to standards to relocate tenants?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: We are early in the process and it is not yet possible to determine cost at this time. As we move forward with the project, we will keep you up to date on financials.

6PM – Potomac Gardens Family

1. Q: [Ms. V]: [Addressed the possibility of residents requesting vouchers that do not want to participate in RAD]

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: The RAD conversion does not include tenant protection vouchers.

2. Q: [Ms. V]: [Addressed issue of Unit Compliance, i.e. someone who needs to be in a one bedroom but is currently in a two bedroom or vice versa and if individuals may shift between the 700 building and the Senior building based on unit size need]

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: [DCHA RAD team is taking the comments about unit size into consideration.]

[Further clarification on Unit Compliance: DCHA urges residents to submit an interim recertification with property management if there has been a change in their family composition. DCHA needs to know family size prior to temporarily relocating residents in order to ensure residents are in a properly sized unit for their family.]

3. Q: [Ms. V]: [Expressed concern with DCHA leasing out the vacant units in the 700 building]

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: Our plan is to retain enough vacant units so we can do a full phase renovation and utilize those vacant units as temporary units for the first phase.

4. Q: [Ms. V]: [Discussed at Risk Resident Voucher, as well as expressed a desire for more virtual and conference learning opportunities from the Office of Resident Services. Additionally, Ms. V expressed that residents would still have a Resident Council under RAD.]

A: [DCHA]: [DCHA made note of and acknowledges resident's comments and suggestions.]



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A: [DCHA]: Yes, RAD does provide for Resident Councils.

5. Q: [Ms. V]: Explain what is Unit Compliance? [In reference to “right-sizing”].

A: [Andrea Powell, DCHA]: The HUD RAD program ensures that residents are given the right to return to the site, not necessarily to your exact unit. One reason for this is if residents are currently over or under housed. The movement of a family to a unit that is the correct size for their family composition is called “right-sizing”. DCHA will work to make sure you are in a properly-sized unit for your family size. We encourage residents to work with Property Management to make sure they have the same number of family members living in the unit as listed in the the family composition.

6. Q: [Ms. V]: What is flat rent and rent ceiling?

A: [Andrea Powell, DCHA]: We encourage residents who are unsure if they are paying ceiling rent to reach out to DCHA to determine if they are currently paying ceiling rent. Under RAD, tenants will need to pay 30% of their Adjusted Median Income (“AMI”) as rent. This means that if you are currently paying ceiling rent, your rent would need to be adjusted after the conversion to meet the 30% of AMI requirement. We will work with residents who fall into this category and your rent payment will be phased in over five years. [When we converted the Colorado and Columbia properties to RAD, we were able to successfully assist residents who were paying ceiling rent phase into this adjusted 30% of AMI.]

7. Q: [Ms. V]: What is bond issuance?

A: [DCHA]: DCHA will explore various financing tools including bond issuance and loans in order to finance the improvements on the site. More information will be provided in later meetings.

8. Q: [Ms. V]: What is the difference between the 4% or 9% you referred to? What is that?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: These percentages are in reference to Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (“LIHTC”). These credits provide tax incentive to investors. There are 4% LIHTC and 9% LIHTC. 4% is great, because it is granted to anyone who can meet the criteria, and we will get them automatically as long as there is capacity available in the program. The 9% LIHTC, while more money, is much more competitive, meaning DCHA has to compete against other owners and developers and there is no guarantee that we will get them.



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9. Q: [Ms. V]: What are human capital opportunities?

A: [Ron Fisher, DCHA]: ORS provides several non-profit resources to assist with credit building, an opportunity for case management support and other viable resources will be connected to the Human Capital plan.

10. Q: [Ms. C]: How long would it take for the process to begin?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: The RAD application process will take about 1.5-2 years before the renovations begin.

11. Q: [Mr. T]: How long until construction?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: It will be about 1.5-2 years before construction can start.

12. Q: [Ms. P]: What if you are behind on rent at the time of conversion? Will this prevent you from returning to the site?

A: [Andrea Powell, DCHA]: It will not keep you from coming back to the site, however please work with the property manager to set up a repayment plan. We went through this process when we converted Colorado to RAD. We made sure that everyone who was behind on rent was put on a repayment plan.

13. Q: [Ms. D]: Will we be moved back to our same unit?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: HUD's RAD program guarantees that residents have the right to return to the property, but not necessarily the same unit. However, we will try to move residents back to their original unit if possible. There may be a few exceptions; however, such as if you are currently over or under housed. In that case, we will make every effort to rehouse you in a renovated unit appropriate for your family composition size on site. Additionally, depending on the phasing of the renovations, some residents may have the opportunity to move just once into a newly renovated unit. Regardless of your situation, DCHA is dedicated to ensuring that the relocation process is as simple and seamless as possible.

14. Q: [Ms. D]: What will my rent look like after the conversion if I currently pay ceiling rent?

A: [Andrea Powell, DCHA]: Under Project-Based Section 8, tenants need to pay 30% of their AMI, this means that if you are currently paying ceiling rent, your rent would



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need to be adjusted after the conversion to meet the 30% of AMI requirement. We will work with residents who fall into this category and your rent payment adjustment would be phased in over five years. [When we converted the Colorado and Columbia properties to RAD, we were able to successfully helped residents who were paying ceiling rent phase into this adjusted 30% of AMI.]

15. Q: [Ms. T]: Do residents have a say as to whether or not they want to move forward with RAD?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: You always have a say. There are several opportunities to voice your opinion, whether it is in these RAD resident meetings or DCHA Board Meetings which are public. Additionally, you have a Commissioner in your building who can hear your concerns.

16. Q: [Ms. L]: In terms of next steps for RAD, is your next interaction with HUD?

A: [Alex Morris]: We go to the DCHA Board of Commissioners next, and we will be presenting these projects. The public portions of these meetings are public, and we invite you to join. A transcript of those meetings is on the DCHA website.

17. Q: [Ms. L]: You received \$55 million correct?

A: [Alex Morris]: Each year we are allocated funds from the Council of the District of Columbia. For fiscal year 2020, the Council of the District of Columbia provided around \$25 million and another \$15 million from the Repair and Maintenance Fund for a total of just-under \$40 million. The Council of the District of Columbia has approved \$50 million to DCHA for fiscal year 2021. When we receive money each year from the District, this money must be spread across our entire portfolio. While we are happy to receive this money from the Council, it is only a small portion of the over \$2 Billion DCHA needs for its portfolio, which is why we are always advocating for more money.

18. Q: [Ms. L]: Will you be hiring folks from the housing property?

A: [Ron Fisher]: There will be Section 3 opportunities available for DCHA residents.

19. Q: [Ms. R]: [Expressed personal concern regarding ADA].

A: [DCHA]: [DCHA takes ADA requests seriously and strongly encourages residents to reach out to Property Manager and or the ADA 504 coordinator with any ADA related requests.]

20. Q: [Ms. C]: Who do I contact about employment opportunities and certificates?



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A: [Ebony Borden, DCHA]: Call Mr. Ronnie Friday at 202 579-0434 and his email is rfriday@dchousing.org.

21. Q: [Ms. C]: Will the bars on the windows be replaced? Will the gates stay up?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: [DCHA is making note of these comments and suggestions.]

22. Q: [Ms. R]: I have a question about the voucher....my question is that you guys don't have vouchers for folks who don't want to participate in the RAD program? [Also expressed personal maintenance concern.]

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: The HUD project-based Section 8 RAD program does not include tenant protection vouchers. [**Please Note:** If a resident wants to transfer out of the Potomac Gardens property, the resident must put in a transfer request, at that point DCHA will work with the resident to find alternative housing within DCHA's public housing portfolio.][Ms. Berry is addressing the maintenance concern offline with resident.]

23. Q: [Ms. C]: Are recertifications still being processed? [Expressed personal concern about recertification.]

A: [Rochelle Berry, DCHA]: Yes, recertifications are still being processed. [Ms. Berry is addressing resident's concern offline.]

24. Q: [Ms. H]: I have a question about the process of moving, when they start the renovations, how will this look? Also, what about the folks who are not in the phase being worked on? I am concerned about those folks breathing in toxic air. [Expressed concern regarding interior and walls.]

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: In order for us to do a phased rehabilitation, we are going to have to move folks in vertical tiers of units. Further, we will be doing a physical needs assessment to determine exactly what needs to be worked on in the units and in the building. We will be addressing major issues such as air quality during these renovations. We encourage residents to let us know about areas of concern or improvement.

25. Q: [Anonymous]: Is the sign-in list submitted?

A: [LaShawn Douglas, DCHA]: Yes this is submitted to HUD.



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26. Q: [Anonymous]: Will there be more meetings if residents need clarification?

A: [Alex, Morris DCHA]: Yes, we are open to having further meetings with residents. In fact, HUD encourages PHAs to hold additional meetings if residents need further clarification or if there are changes to the project [*also see HUD PIH Notice 19-23*].

27. Q: [Anonymous]: What is the incentive for the investors in the RAD development?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: Investors receive what are called Low-Income Housing Tax Credits also known as LIHTC, which are essentially tax breaks. There are 4% and 9% LIHTC.

28. Q: [Anonymous]: 4% is that the LITC you were referring to?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: The 4% refers to one type of LIHTC. The 4% provide less money to the project than the 9% LIHTC, but are less competitive and it is more certain we will get it.

29. Q: [Anonymous]: What is DCHA's intention for acquiring third party investors? Who would ultimately manage this property, the investor or DCHA?

A: [DCHA]: The intention is to utilize outside investors which will provide a stable funding stream for the property. Our intention is to keep managing the building.

30. Q: [Anonymous]: Will the third party investors be sought out locally, or how does that work?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: LIHTC is federal and can be used by anyone, we don't typically limit to just the District, but it's not limited against the District either, meaning investors in the District can get the tax credit as well. DCHA is not precluded against soliciting folks in the District and will seek the best opportunity possible.

A: [Andrea Powell, DCHA]: Ultimately, we want to make sure we get the best deal possible, so we don't want to geographically limit ourselves.

31. Q: [Anonymous]: With the RAD conversion, what's the difference? Our units are based on our incomes, what will be different with project-based section 8?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: The conversion to RAD will allow us to do major renovations to your units and to the property. In addition to new renovation, HUD built in several benefits for residents including: resident right to return, no rescreening upon



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return, no recalculation in rent (unless paying a ceiling rent). So ultimately, residents will be able to return with very few day-to-day changes while benefiting from better living conditions. The key difference with the conversion, aside from major renovations, is the conversion allows DCHA to seek financing which in turn creates a much more stable funding stream for the property. This will ensure there are enough funds to continue maintaining and updating the property.

32. Q: [Anonymous]: When it comes to the income portion, will there be a cap? Once we convert to RAD, will the cap be moved up?

A: [DCHA]: Under RAD, tenants will be required to pay 30% of their adjusted gross income, just like most residents of public housing do now. If you are currently in public housing and paying a ceiling rent, this will be adjusted over the course of five years after the RAD conversion is complete to bring you up to 30% of AMI.

33. Q: [Anonymous]: Is it true that persons living in Public Housing do not qualify for FSS? If so why?

A: [Ron Fisher, DCHA]: Public Housing residents DO qualify for FSS. In fact, there are folks on this call who have enrolled. We continue to work with office of Public Affairs and your Community Navigator to advertise FSS. We are a Moving to Work agency and we have certain requirements that differ from a traditional FSS program. Also, please note that the ORS section on the DCHA website is currently under construction, so the information may not be currently online; however, we encourage residents to reach out to their community navigator with any questions regarding FSS or any other resident service.

34. Q: [Mr. D]: When was the last time/or have you ever checked the air quality in this building?

A: [Dawn Boyd, DCHA]: At this time, I do not believe that there has been one, I will look into this and get back to you.

35. Q: [Mr. D]: Are they going to replace the air ducts or thoroughly clean?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: As part of a RAD conversion/rehabilitation of Potomac Gardens, DCHA will perform a thorough review of all required work to bring the building up to a state of good repair. As part of the comprehensive rehabilitation of the building, a replacement or cleaning of the air exhaust ducts will be performed.



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36. Q: [Mr. D]: What if I want to transfer [out of Potomac Gardens]? Or if I want to live in a privately owned complex?

A: [Alex Morris, DCHA]: It is important to note that the HUD RAD program does not give us tenant protection vouchers which would allow you to go out on the open market to seek housing from a private landlord. However, if you no longer wish to live at Potomac Gardens you can apply to be placed on the transfer list. DCHA will work with you to find another housing option within DCHA’s portfolio.

FURTHER RESIDENT QUESTIONS – Part 2

1. Q: Where are you with the application? Will residents receive a complete copy of the application, questions, and answers before submission?

A: [DCHA]: At this point we are still conducting resident engagement, and our next step is to go to the DCHA Board of Commissioners for Board approval. As required by HUD PIH Notice 19-23, DCHA will provide residents with a copy of the RAD Information Notice (“RIN”), RAD resident meeting presentation materials, answers to questions and comments from RAD resident meetings and make available public comment from the Board of Commissioners meetings.

2. Q: Are vouchers being offered to residents under RAD?

A: [DCHA]: RAD is a conversion from Section 9 Public Housing to Project-Based Section 8. The only vouchers affiliated with the HUD RAD program are project-based, meaning that subsidy or “voucher” is tied to the property and not to the tenant. Thus, when a tenant moves, the subsidy or “voucher” stays with the property.

3. Q: Is there a guarantee that residents will return to their unit if RAD is the next step?

A: [DCHA]: HUD RAD provides a right to return to the site but not to the unit. DCHA will endeavor whenever possible to move residents back to the prior unit subject to family composition, right-sizing requirements and other factors.

4. Q: Do residents have a say in the decision making for this RAD conversion?

A: [DCHA]: DCHA encourages resident participation and input throughout the RAD process. To date, DCHA held two RAD resident engagement meetings for the Potomac Gardens property [one for Senior and one for Family] on August 25, 2020 and held two more resident engagement meetings on September 15, 2020. These meetings are an



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opportunity for residents to ask questions, receive information, and also provide input on what they would like to see happen in the project.

Additionally, residents are encouraged to send questions, concerns and suggestions to transformationplan@dchousing.org and/or can leave a message at (202) 996-8526. DCHA is posting questions and answers received throughout the RAD conversion process on the DCHA.us website for residents to review. Additionally, HUD requires that residents are continually engaged throughout the process and DCHA must hold at least two additional meetings with residents before conversion is approved.

5. Q: Will residents be placed on a waiting list for any reason during the RAD conversion?

A: [DCHA]: DCHA will, as part of the RAD conversion, facilitate temporary moves for Potomac Gardens Senior and Family residents within the Public Housing portfolio during renovations and then move residents back to the site when the renovations are complete.

6. Q: Will residents have to under-go any credit check for the units under the RAD conversion?

A: [DCHA]: One of the resident benefits of RAD is that there is no rescreening at conversion (no credit check upon re-entry to the converted project).

7. Q: Will this be an actual renovation or a touch-up?

A: [DCHA]: Part of HUD's requirement for a successful RAD conversion is for DCHA to conduct renovations that bring the building(s) up to "20-year viability". By HUD definition, this means that for the duration of the next 20 years, the building will be in state of good repair with no major renovations, other than minor scheduled replacements of equipment and basic maintenance. For Potomac Gardens Family and Senior, given the age of the property, DCHA expects the renovations to be fairly extensive.

8. Q: What is the budget for the RAD conversion?

A: [DCHA]: The budget is unknown at this time but we will keep you updated as the project proceeds.

9. Q: Is there a way to relocate the security booth so the air conditioner isn't giving off fumes in the building?

A: [DCHA]: [DCHA has made note of this concern.]



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10. Q: What is the timeframe for the RAD conversion?

A: [DCHA]: The RAD conversion timeframe is lengthy. As part of the RAD application process we will apply for the CHAP in about 3-6 months, then we proceed with further RAD engagement, then submit the financing plan to HUD. If HUD approves, the building is converted and we begin the renovations. This will take about 1.5 to 2 years to get to the renovation stage. The unit renovations for Potomac Gardens 700 building and Senior will take approximately 6 months per unit phase. We plan to utilize the currently vacant units in each building to serve as temporarily units for families to move into while their units are being remodeled. That being said, we are still a bit down the road from these renovations. We will be of course conducting day-to-day maintenance in the meantime and urge residents to contact property management with any maintenance issues.