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LAURA K. DREWRY
CITY ATTORNEY

July 28, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL:

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Steven Nesmith, Chief Executive Officer
Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority
600 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

W.R. "Bill" Johnson, Jr., Chair
Charlene Pitchford, Vice Chair
Dyanne Broidy, Commissioner
Kyle R. Elliott, Commissioner
Barrett Hardiman, Commissioner
Eddie L. Jackson, Jr., Commissioner
Gregory E. Lewis, Commissioner
Marika F. McCray, Commissioner
Harold Parker, Jr., Commissioner
c/o Steven Nesmith, Chief Executive Officer
RRHA Board of Commissioners
600 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Re: Invalidity of Gilpin Court Master Development Agreement Signed in May 2025
Due to Lack of RRHA Board Authorization and Richmond City Council Approval

Dear Mr. Nesmith and Honorable Members of the RRHA Board of Commissioners,

On behalf of the Richmond City Council, I am writing to address the validity of the Master Development Agreement (MDA) for the Gilpin Court redevelopment, reportedly signed in May 2025 between the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) and HRI Communities, LLC. The City Council has reviewed available public information and found no evidence that the RRHA Board of Commissioners authorized this agreement, as required by RRHA governance. Furthermore, under Virginia Code § 36-19.2 and § 36-51, the MDA, as part of a redevelopment plan, requires Richmond City Council approval following a public hearing,

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which has not occurred. The City Council asserts that, absent both Board authorization and Council approval, the MDA is not valid and cannot proceed to implementation.

The absence of RRHA Board authorization and City Council approval, combined with ongoing community engagement, violates Virginia law, and undermines public trust in the redevelopment process.

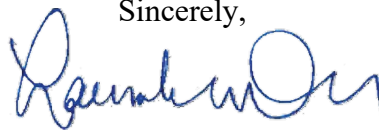
On behalf of City Council, I respectfully request the following:

1. Confirmation of whether the RRHA Board of Commissioners authorized the MDA's signing in May 2025, including the date and details of any such vote or resolution.
2. If there is no Board authorization and without City Council approval, a formal statement declaring the MDA invalid until these requirements are met, per Virginia Code § 36-51 and § 36-19.2.

The Gilpin Court redevelopment is vital to Richmond's future, and compliance with RRHA governance and Virginia law is essential to protect residents' rights and maintain public confidence. The City Council urges the RRHA Board to address these issues promptly and transparently. The Council will withhold approval of the redevelopment plan until a public hearing confirms resident support and statutory compliance is met.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Laura K. Drewry
City Attorney

LKD/kec

cc: The Honorable Members of Richmond City Council