

AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC

Form 424B2

December 31, 2008

Use these links to rapidly review the document

[TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

[Table of Contents](#)

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2)

Registration No. 333-139839

In accordance with Rule 457(r), a registration fee of \$9,282 has been calculated for 4,250,000 shares of Common Stock with an aggregate offering price of \$236,172,500.

Prospectus Supplement

(To Prospectus dated January 8, 2007)

4,250,000 Shares Common Stock

This prospectus supplement relates to the issuance of up to 4,250,000 shares of common stock ("common stock") that we may issue in payment of a combined regular and special dividend that we have declared on our common stock in the amount of \$2.70 per share, payable to our stockholders of record at the close of business on December 29, 2008 (the "Record Date"). The combined dividend consists of a regular quarterly dividend in the amount of \$0.8925 per share and a special dividend in the amount of \$1.8075 per share. The actual number of shares that will be issued in the dividend will depend on (1) stockholder elections, (2) the volume weighted average of the trading prices of our common stock on the New York Stock Exchange on January 22 and 23, 2009 and (3) whether we exercise our right to pay the dividend entirely in cash, notwithstanding stockholder elections, all as described in greater detail below. Unless the context requires otherwise, we refer to the combined dividend as the "dividend" or the "combined dividend" in this prospectus supplement. The dividend is expected to be paid on January 29, 2009.

Each stockholder has the option to elect to receive the dividend in (1) cash, (2) shares of our common stock or (3) a combination of cash (\$0.8925 per share) and shares of common stock (\$1.8075 per share), as described below under "The Election," except that we will pay no more cash than the amount equal to the regular dividend amount of \$0.8925 per share multiplied by the number of shares of common stock outstanding on the Record Date (the "Cash Limit"). If stockholder elections would result in payment of cash in excess of the Cash Limit, we will allocate the cash among stockholders as described below under "Effect of Cash Limit" and pay the remaining portion in shares of our common stock. We will pay cash in lieu of issuing any fractional shares, but cash paid in lieu of fractional shares will not count toward the Cash Limit. As an alternative to paying the dividend in the form of cash and/or stock pursuant to stockholder elections as described above, we reserve the right to determine, at any time up to midnight on January 27, 2009, to pay the dividend entirely in cash, notwithstanding any elections we have received and without prior notice to stockholders.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "AVB." The value per share of our common stock for purposes of the dividend will be the volume weighted average of the trading prices of our common stock on the New York Stock Exchange for the two-day period January 22 - 23, 2009.

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

If you want to elect payment in cash, shares of common stock or a combination of cash and shares of common stock, complete and sign the enclosed election form and deliver it to BNY Mellon Shareowner Services, the transfer agent for our common stock and the information agent for the dividend, no later than 5:00 P.M., Eastern time, on January 22, 2009. If the transfer agent does not receive a valid election from you by that time, we will elect on your behalf whether the dividend on your shares will be paid in cash, shares of our common stock, or a combination of cash (\$0.8925 per share) and shares of common stock (\$1.8075 per share), valued as described above, in our sole discretion.

If you are not a record holder of our common stock but instead hold shares through a bank, broker or other nominee, please contact that bank, broker or nominee and inform them of the election they should make on your behalf.

Before making your election, you are urged to carefully read the risk factors incorporated herein by reference from our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2007, as updated by our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission (the "SEC") nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus supplement is December 29, 2008.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Prospectus Supplement	
<u>The Election</u>	S-1
<u>Reason for the Dividend</u>	S-3
<u>Effect of Cash Limit</u>	S-3
<u>Effect of Ownership Limitation</u>	S-3
<u>Certain United States Federal Income Taxation Considerations</u>	S-4
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	S-6
Prospectus	
<u>Risk Factors</u>	1
<u>Forward-looking Statements</u>	9
<u>About this Prospectus</u>	10
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	11
<u>About AvalonBay Communities, Inc.</u>	12
<u>Ratios of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends</u>	13
<u>Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	13
<u>How We Intend to Use the Proceeds</u>	14
<u>Description of the Debt Securities</u>	14
<u>Description of Preferred Stock</u>	30
<u>Description of Common Stock</u>	35
<u>Limits on Ownership of Stock</u>	37
<u>Federal Income Tax Considerations and Consequences of Your Investment</u>	39
<u>How We Plan to Sell the Securities</u>	55
<u>Experts</u>	57
<u>Legal Matters</u>	57

This document consists of two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the terms of the dividend and also adds to and updates information contained in the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference into the prospectus. The second part is the accompanying prospectus, which gives more general information, some of which may not apply to the dividend. To the extent there is a conflict between the information contained in this prospectus supplement, on the one hand, and the information contained in the accompanying prospectus or any document incorporated by reference, on the other hand, you should rely on the information in this prospectus supplement.

Unless otherwise stated or the context otherwise requires, references in this prospectus to "AvalonBay," "we," "our," and "us" refer to AvalonBay Communities, Inc. and its direct and indirect subsidiaries.

You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with information that is different from that contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. The offering of our shares of common stock in the dividend may be restricted by law in certain non-U.S. jurisdictions. This prospectus supplement is not an offer to sell nor does it seek an offer to buy any shares of our common stock in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. Elections made by any person in such a jurisdiction may be deemed invalid.

Table of Contents

THE ELECTION

You may elect to receive the dividend in the form of cash, shares of our common stock or a combination of cash and shares of common stock consisting of \$0.8925 cash per share and shares of common stock equal to \$1.8075 per share, valued as described above. You may make your election by choosing one of the election options in the accompanying election form:

the Cash Election. You elect to receive payment of the dividend in cash; this election is subject to proration as described in this prospectus supplement, and stockholders who elect this option may receive cash and shares of common stock notwithstanding their election to receive cash.

the Stock Election. You elect to receive payment of the dividend in the form of common stock.

the Combined Election. You elect to receive payment of the dividend in the form of \$0.8925 cash per share and shares of common stock equal to \$1.8075 per share, valued as described above.

Your election may be limited by the total limitation on the amount of the Cash Limit and the limitation on ownership of our common stock, both of which are described below, and you will not receive cash or common stock to the extent these limitations require that a different allocation be made to you. In any case, we will pay cash in lieu of issuing any fractional shares.

If a properly completed election form is not received with respect to any shares of common stock before the deadline for receipt by the transfer agent, we will elect on your behalf the Cash Election, the Stock Election or the Combined Election, in our sole discretion.

As an alternative to paying the dividend in the form of cash and/or stock pursuant to stockholder elections as described above, we reserve the right to determine, at any time up to midnight on January 27, 2009, to pay the dividend entirely in cash, notwithstanding any elections we have received and without prior notice to stockholders.

Because we will calculate the per share value of our common stock for purposes of determining the number of shares to be paid to stockholders who receive common stock as a partial or full payment of the dividend based on the weighted average of the trading prices of our common stock on the New York Stock Exchange for the two-day period January 22-23, 2009 (the "Calculation Value"), the market value of shares received on January 29, 2009, which is the dividend payment date, may be greater or less than their Calculation Value.

Stockholders of Record

In order to make your election, please complete and sign the accompanying election form and return it to the transfer agent in the enclosed envelope as soon as possible. For your election to be effective, the election form must be received by the transfer agent no later than 5:00 P.M., Eastern time, on January 22, 2009. You may revoke or change your election at any time up to 5:00 P.M., Eastern time, on January 22, 2009 by delivering a properly completed and signed election form to the transfer agent. Additional election forms may be obtained by contacting the transfer agent using the contact information noted below. The delivery will be deemed made only when actually received by the transfer agent. In all cases, you should allow sufficient time to ensure delivery before the deadline. The submission of an election form with respect to the dividend will constitute your representation and warranty that you have full power and authority to make your election.

Elections with respect to the dividend on each specific share of the common stock may be made only by the holder of record of that share at the close of business on December 29, 2008, which is the record date for the dividend.

Table of Contents

Beneficial Stockholders

If your shares are held in the name of a bank, broker or other nominee, you should promptly inform the bank, broker or nominee of the election they should make on your behalf.

General

All questions as to the validity, form, eligibility (including time of receipt) and acceptance by us of any dividend election form will be resolved by us, in our sole discretion, and our determination as to the resolution of any such questions shall be final and binding on all parties. We reserve the absolute right to reject, in our sole discretion, any and all election forms determined by us not to be in proper form, not timely received, ineligible or otherwise invalid, or if acceptance may, in the opinion of our counsel, be unlawful. We also reserve the absolute right to waive any defect or irregularity in the election form submitted by any particular stockholder, whether or not we choose to waive any similar defects or irregularities in the case of other stockholders. No election will be deemed to have been validly made until all defects and irregularities have been cured to our satisfaction or waived. Neither we nor the transfer agent nor any other person will be under any duty to give notification of any defects or irregularities in election forms or incur any liability for failure to give any such notification. Our interpretation of the terms and conditions of the special dividend and the terms and conditions of stockholder elections will be final and binding.

All shares of our common stock issued in the dividend will be issued only in book-entry form. This means that we will not issue any certificates representing shares of our common stock issued in payment of the dividend. On January 29, 2009, the transfer agent will issue and mail to each of our stockholders of record that receives shares of our common stock in the dividend a statement listing the number of shares credited to that stockholder's book-entry account and a payment check or direct deposit for any cash to which such stockholder is entitled (including, if applicable, cash in lieu of fractional shares) in the dividend.

For stockholders who hold through a bank, broker or other nominee, the shares of our common stock and cash to which such stockholder is entitled in the dividend will be delivered by the transfer agent to that stockholder's bank, broker or nominee. The bank, broker or nominee will then allocate the shares and cash to such stockholder's individual account. All cash payments to which a stockholder is entitled in the dividend will be rounded to the nearest penny. Neither we nor the transfer agent will have any responsibility or liability for the distribution, interpretation or administration of any instruction forms distributed by banks, brokers or other nominees, or for any allocations made by these banks, brokers or other nominees to the accounts of stockholders who hold our common stock through these intermediaries.

Completed election forms must be delivered to our transfer agent, BNY Mellon Shareowner Services, which is also acting as information agent for stockholder elections with respect to the dividend, **no later than 5:00 P.M., Eastern time, on January 22, 2009**, in the enclosed envelope in accordance with the following delivery instructions:

By Regular Mail:
BNY Mellon Shareowner Services
Attn: Corporate Actions Dept.
P.O. Box 3301
South Hackensack, NJ 07606

By Overnight Courier or Hand Delivery:
BNY Mellon Shareowner Services
Attn: Corporate Actions, 27th Floor
480 Washington Blvd.
Jersey City, NJ 07310

If you are a stockholder of record and need additional information about completing the election form or other matters relating to the dividend, please contact the information agent toll-free at (866) 205-7271.

Table of Contents

If your shares are held through a bank, broker or other nominee, please contact that bank, broker or nominee if you have any questions or need additional information about the dividend or the election they may make on your behalf.

REASON FOR THE DIVIDEND

AvalonBay is taxed as a real estate investment trust, or REIT, for federal income tax purposes. In order to qualify as a REIT and minimize taxes, we have historically chosen to distribute to our stockholders at least 100% of our "taxable income," as determined for federal income tax purposes. During 2008 we completed sales of apartment communities that produced taxable income that, together with our taxable income from other sources, exceeded our typical dividend levels. As a result, we are paying a special dividend in the amount of \$1.8075 per share in addition to the regular quarterly cash dividend in the amount of \$0.8925 per share that would otherwise have been paid in January 2009. We intend that the combined dividend will be treated as a taxable dividend to our stockholders for federal income tax purposes, without regard to the form of payment.

EFFECT OF CASH LIMIT

The total amount of cash payable in the dividend is limited to \$0.8925 multiplied by the number of shares of common stock outstanding on the Record Date, not including any cash payments in lieu of fractional shares. The Cash Limit will not affect stockholders who choose the Combined Election. Whether the Cash Limit will affect stockholders who choose the Cash Election depends on how many stockholders choose the Cash Election. If satisfying stockholder elections for the Cash Election and the Combined Election would result in the payment of cash in excess of the Cash Limit, then the total amount of cash will be prorated as follows. First, we will pay in full all cash amounts necessary to pay stockholders who made the Combined Election. Then, we will allocate the amount remaining, up to the Cash Limit, on a pro rata basis among those stockholders who made the Cash Election. As a result, if you choose the Cash Election, and if the total amount of cash payments to all stockholders who choose the Cash Election and the Combined Election would exceed the Cash Limit, you will not receive your entire dividend in the form of cash. Instead, you would receive a portion (but not less than \$0.8925 per share) in cash and the remaining portion in shares of common stock, valued based on the volume weighted average of the trading prices of the common stock on the New York Stock Exchange for the two-day period January 22 - 23, 2009 (subject to the ownership limitation described below and the payment of cash in lieu of any fractional shares, and subject to our right to pay the dividend entirely in cash, as described above). All cash payments to which a stockholder is entitled will be rounded to the nearest penny.

EFFECT OF OWNERSHIP LIMITATION

To maintain our qualification as a REIT for federal income tax purposes, not more than 50% in value of our outstanding stock may be owned, directly or indirectly, by or for five or fewer "individuals" (which for this purpose include private foundations, charitable trusts and certain other entities) at any time during the last half of any taxable year. To maintain this qualification, and to otherwise address concerns about concentrations of ownership of our stock, our charter generally prohibits ownership (directly, indirectly by virtue of certain attribution provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), or beneficially as defined in Section 13 of the Securities Exchange Act (the "Exchange Act")) by any single stockholder of more than 9.8% of the issued and outstanding shares of any class or series of our stock. In general, under our charter, pension plans and mutual funds may directly and beneficially own up to 15% of the outstanding shares of any class or series of stock. Under our charter, our board of directors may in its sole discretion waive or modify the ownership limit for one or more persons. Nonetheless, if you elect to receive common stock and your receipt of common stock would cause you to exceed the applicable ownership limit, you will

Table of Contents

receive cash to the extent required to bring you within this ownership limit. If you elect to receive common stock and it is issued to you in violation of the applicable ownership limit, all of the remedies applicable under the ownership limit will apply to this common stock. For a more detailed description of the ownership limit and the remedies applicable thereunder, see "Description of Common Stock" in the accompanying prospectus.

CERTAIN UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME TAXATION CONSIDERATIONS

The following summary of certain U.S. federal income tax considerations regarding the dividend and the acquisition, holding and disposition of our common stock is based on current law, is for general information only and is not tax advice. This summary supplements the discussion set forth under the heading "Federal Income Tax Considerations and Consequences of Your Investment" in the accompanying prospectus. This discussion does not purport to deal with all aspects of taxation that may be relevant to particular holders of our common stock in light of their personal investment or tax circumstances.

Certain U.S. Federal Income Tax Consequences of the Dividend

The tax consequences of the dividend will depend on a stockholder's particular tax circumstances. Holders of our common stock are urged to consult their tax advisors regarding the specific U.S. federal, state and local, and foreign income and other tax consequences of the dividend.

The special dividend is intended to assist us in meeting the requirement that we distribute to our stockholders an amount equal to our 2008 taxable income. For a discussion of this requirement, see "Federal Income Tax Considerations and Consequences of Your Investment Annual Distribution Requirements Applicable to REITs" in the accompanying prospectus. Each stockholder of record at the close of business on December 29, 2008, will receive in the combined dividend, expected to be paid on January 29, 2009, shares of our common stock, cash or a combination thereof at such stockholder's election, subject to the Cash Limit and the ownership limitation described above and subject to our right to pay the dividend entirely in cash notwithstanding any such election.

We are limiting the maximum aggregate amount of cash to be distributed as part of the dividend. In accordance with Revenue Procedure 2008-68, (1) the Internal Revenue Service (the "IRS") will treat the dividend as a taxable dividend for U.S. federal income tax purposes and (2) the IRS will treat the amount of the dividend paid in common stock as equal to the amount of cash that could have been received instead of the common stock.

Taxation of U.S. Stockholders

When we refer to a U.S. stockholder, we mean a beneficial owner of a share of our common stock that is, for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

- (1) a citizen or resident, as defined in Code Section 7701(b), of the United States;
- (2) a corporation or other entity treated as a corporation for federal income tax purposes, created or organized under the laws of the United States, any state or the District of Columbia;
- (3) an estate the income of which is subject to federal income taxation regardless of its source; or
- (4) a trust that is subject to the primary supervision of a United States court and the control of one or more United States persons or that has a valid election in effect under the applicable Treasury Regulations to be treated as a U.S. person under the Code.

A non-U.S. stockholder is any individual, corporation (or other entity treated as such), estate or trust that is not a U.S. stockholder. Generally, in the case of a partnership that holds our common

Table of Contents

stock, any partner that would be a U.S. stockholder or a non-U.S. stockholder if it held the common stock directly is also a U.S. stockholder or a non-U.S. stockholder, respectively.

Each U.S. stockholder must include the sum of the value of the shares of our common stock and the amount of cash, if any, received pursuant to the dividend in its gross income as dividend income to the extent that the dividend is made out of our current and accumulated earnings and profits. (For example, if 90% of the dividend were made out of our earnings and profits, then 90% of cash and stock received by a U.S. stockholder must be included in that stockholder's gross income as dividend income.) Revenue Procedure 2008-68 confirms that, for this purpose, the amount of the dividend paid in common stock will be equal to the amount of cash that could have been received instead of the common stock. A stockholder that receives shares of our common stock pursuant to the dividend would have a tax basis in such stock equal to the amount of cash that could have been received instead of such stock as described above, and the holding period in such stock would begin on the day following the payment date for the dividend.

The dividend will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction generally available to corporations. Corporate stockholders should also consider the possible effects of section 1059 of the Code, which reduces a corporate holder's basis in its shares, but not below zero, by the non-taxed portion of an "extraordinary dividend," where the holder has not held such shares for more than two years before the dividend announcement date. Corporate stockholders should also consider the effect of the corporate alternative minimum tax, which imposes a maximum tax rate of 20% on a corporation's alternative minimum taxable income for the taxable year and which is calculated without regard to the dividends received deduction.

For certain U.S. stockholders, the dividend may be an "extraordinary dividend." An "extraordinary dividend" is a dividend that is equal to at least 10% of a stockholder's adjusted basis in its shares of our common stock. A U.S. stockholder that receives an extraordinary dividend and later sells its underlying shares at a loss will be treated as realizing a long-term capital loss, regardless of its holding period in its shares, to the extent of the extraordinary dividend.

For additional discussion of certain federal income tax consequences relating to the acquisition, holding and disposition of the common stock, please see the description under the headings "Federal Income Tax Considerations and Consequences of Your Investment Taxation of U.S. stockholders" and "Federal Income Tax Considerations and Consequences of Your Investment Taxation of tax-exempt stockholders" in the accompanying prospectus.

Taxation of Non-U.S. Stockholders

The following discussion is applicable to non-U.S. stockholders that did not own more than 5% of our common stock at any time during the one-year period ending on the payment date of the dividend.

A non-U.S. holder of our common stock will treat the amount of the dividend as ordinary income.

For non-U.S. stockholders, the dividend (to the extent made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits) will be subject to United States federal income tax on a gross basis at a 30% rate or such lower rate as may be specified by an applicable income tax treaty, unless it is treated as effectively connected with the conduct by the non-U.S. stockholder of a United States trade or business. Certain certification and disclosure requirements must be satisfied for the stockholder to be exempt from withholding under the effectively connected income exemption or to take advantage of a lower treaty rate. If the dividend is effectively connected with such a trade or business, a non-U.S. stockholder will be subject to tax on the dividend on a net basis (that is, after allowance of deductions) at graduated rates and generally will not be subject to withholding. A non-U.S. stockholder that is a corporation may also be subject to an additional branch profits tax on the dividend at a 30% rate or such lower rate as may be specified by an applicable income tax treaty.

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

Table of Contents

We generally will withhold and remit to the IRS 30% of the amount of the combined dividend; if such withholding exceeds your actual U.S. federal income tax liability you may be entitled to a refund or credit for such excess.

Generally, information reporting will apply to the payment of the dividend, and backup withholding at the rate of 28% may apply, unless the payee certifies that it is not a U.S. person or otherwise establishes an exemption.

For additional discussion of certain U.S. federal income tax consequences relating to the acquisition, holding and disposition of our common stock, please see the description under the heading "Federal Income Tax Considerations and Consequences of Your Investment U.S. taxation of non-U.S. stockholders" in the accompanying prospectus.

Legislative or Other Actions Affecting REITS

The rules dealing with federal income taxation are constantly under review by persons involved in the legislative process and by the IRS and the U.S. Treasury Department. The base prospectus was prepared as of January 8, 2007, and does not reflect certain favorable changes to the law since that date. For example, the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 (the "2008 Act") liberalizes the rules relating to foreign currency income and income from hedging transactions associated with real estate activities and permits the value of taxable REIT subsidiaries to represent up to 25% of a REIT's assets (rather than the current 20% limit). Most importantly for us, the 2008 Act, among other things, shortens from four years to two years the minimum holding period under the safe harbor provisions of the Code that prevent the imposition of the 100% prohibited transactions tax. While the 2008 Act generally applies for taxable years beginning after July 30, 2008, the rules relating to the prohibited transaction safe harbor apply to sales made after such date.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We are subject to the information requirements of the Exchange Act, and in accordance with the Exchange Act, we file annual, quarterly, and current reports, proxy statements, and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document we file at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the Public Reference Room. Our SEC filings are also available to the public from the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov>. In addition, you may read AvalonBay's SEC filings at the offices of the New York Stock Exchange (the "NYSE"), which is located at 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005.

We have a website located at <http://www.avalonbay.com>. The information on our website is not a part of this prospectus supplement.

The information incorporated by reference herein is an important part of this prospectus supplement. Any statement contained in a document which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement is automatically updated and superseded if information contained in this prospectus supplement, or information that we later file with the SEC prior to the termination of this offering, modifies or replaces this information. AvalonBay's SEC file number is 001-12672. We are incorporating by reference the documents listed below, which were previously filed by us with the SEC:

Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2007 filed on February 29, 2008;

those portions of our definitive Proxy Statement for the 2008 Annual Meeting of Stockholders that are incorporated by reference in our Form 10-K;

Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the periods ended September 30, 2008, June 30, 2008 and March 31, 2008, filed on November 10, 2008, August 11, 2008 and May 9, 2008, respectively;

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

Table of Contents

the description of the AvalonBay Communities, Inc. common stock in AvalonBay Communities, Inc.'s Registration Statement on Form 8-B filed on June 8, 1995;

Current Reports on Form 8-K filed on February 12, 2008, March 11, 2008, May 19, 2008, May 22, 2008, July 14, 2008, September 2, 2008, September 11, 2008 and December 18, 2008; and

all documents filed by us with the SEC pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the date of this offering memorandum and prior to the termination of this offering, except as to any portion of any future report or document that is not deemed filed under such provisions.

Upon request, we will provide, without charge, to each person, including any beneficial owner, to whom a copy of this prospectus supplement is delivered a copy of the documents incorporated by reference in this offering memorandum. You may request a copy of these filings, and any exhibits we have specifically incorporated by reference as an exhibit in this prospectus supplement, by writing or telephoning us at the following:

AvalonBay Communities, Inc.
2900 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite 300
Alexandria, VA 22314
Attention: Investor Relations
(703) 329-6300

S-7

Prospectus

Debt Securities
Preferred Stock
Common Stock

This prospectus provides you with a general description of debt and equity securities that AvalonBay Communities, Inc. may offer and sell from time to time. We may sell these securities independently, or together in any combination that may include other securities set forth in an accompanying prospectus supplement, in one or more offerings, for sale directly to purchasers or through underwriters, dealers or agents to be designated at a future date. Each time we sell securities we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that sale and may add to or update the information in this prospectus, including the names of any underwriters, dealers or agents involved in the sale of any securities. You should read this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement carefully before you invest in our securities.

Our common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol "AVB."

Investing in our securities involves various risks. Beginning on page 1, we have discussed several "Risk Factors" that you should consider before investing in our securities.

January 8, 2007

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

<u>Risk Factors</u>	1
<u>Forward-looking Statements</u>	9
<u>About this Prospectus</u>	10
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	11
<u>About AvalonBay Communities, Inc.</u>	12
<u>Ratios of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends</u>	13
<u>Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	13
<u>How We Intend to Use the Proceeds</u>	14
<u>Description of the Debt Securities</u>	14
<u>Description of Preferred Stock</u>	30
<u>Description of Common Stock</u>	35
<u>Limits on Ownership of Stock</u>	37
<u>Federal Income Tax Considerations and Consequences of Your Investment</u>	39
<u>How We Plan to Sell the Securities</u>	55
<u>Experts</u>	57
<u>Legal Matters</u>	57

Unless the context otherwise requires, all references to "we," "us," "our," "our company," "AvalonBay," or similar expressions in this prospectus refer collectively to AvalonBay Communities, Inc., a Maryland corporation, and its subsidiaries, and their respective predecessor entities for the applicable periods, considered as a single enterprise.

Table of Contents

Risk Factors

Before you invest in our securities, you should be aware that there are risks in making the investment, including those described below. You should consider carefully these risk factors together with all of the information included or incorporated by reference in this prospectus before you decide to purchase our securities. This section includes or refers to forward-looking statements. You should refer to the explanation of the qualifications and limitations on forward-looking statements discussed on page 9.

Development, redevelopment and construction risks could affect our profitability.

We intend to continue to develop and redevelop apartment home communities. These activities may be exposed to the following risks:

we may be unable to obtain, or experience delays in obtaining, necessary zoning, occupancy, or other required governmental or third party permits and authorizations, which could result in increased costs or the delay or abandonment of opportunities;

we may abandon opportunities that we have already begun to explore for a number of reasons, including changes in local market conditions or increases in construction or financing costs, and, as a result, we may fail to recover costs already incurred in exploring those opportunities;

we may incur costs that exceed our original estimates due to increased material, labor or other costs;

occupancy rates and rents at a community may fail to meet our expectations for a number of reasons, including changes in market and economic conditions beyond our control and the development by competitors of competing communities;

we may be unable to complete construction and lease up of a community on schedule, resulting in increased construction and financing costs and a decrease in expected rental revenues;

we may be unable to obtain financing with favorable terms, or at all, for the proposed development of a community, which may cause us to delay or abandon an opportunity;

we may incur liabilities to third parties during the development process, for example, in connection with managing existing improvements on the site prior to tenant terminations and demolition (such as commercial space) or in connection with providing services to third parties, such as the construction of shared infrastructure or other improvements; and

we may incur liability if our communities are not constructed and operated in compliance with the accessibility provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Acts or the Fair Housing Act. Noncompliance could result in imposition of fines, an award of damages to private litigants, and a requirement that we undertake structural modifications to remedy the noncompliance. We are currently engaged in a lawsuit alleging noncompliance with these statutes.

We project construction costs based on market conditions at the time we prepare our budgets, and our projections include changes that we anticipate but cannot predict with certainty. Construction costs have been increasing, particularly for materials such as steel, concrete and lumber, and, for some of our Development Communities and Development Rights, the total construction costs may be higher than the original budget. Total capitalized cost includes all capitalized costs projected to be incurred to develop or redevelop a community, determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principals ("GAAP"), including:

land and/or property acquisition costs;

construction or reconstruction costs;

costs of environmental remediation;

Table of Contents

real estate taxes;

capitalized interest;

loan fees;

permits;

professional fees;

allocated development or redevelopment overhead; and

other regulatory fees.

Costs to redevelop communities that have been acquired have, in some cases, exceeded our original estimates and similar increases in costs may be experienced in the future. We cannot assure you that market rents in effect at the time new development or redevelopment communities complete lease-up will be sufficient to fully offset the effects of any increased construction or reconstruction costs.

Unfavorable changes in market and economic conditions could hurt occupancy or rental rates.

Local conditions in our markets significantly affect occupancy or rental rates at our communities. The risks that may adversely affect conditions in those markets include the following:

plant closings, industry slowdowns and other factors that adversely affect the local economy;

an oversupply of, or a reduced demand for, apartment homes;

a decline in household formation or employment or lack of employment growth;

the inability or unwillingness of residents to pay rent increases; and

rent control or rent stabilization laws, or other laws regulating housing, that could prevent us from raising rents to offset increases in operating costs.

Changes in applicable laws, or noncompliance with applicable laws, could adversely affect our operations or expose us to liability.

We must operate our communities in compliance with numerous federal, state and local laws and regulations, including landlord tenant laws and other laws generally applicable to business operations. Noncompliance with laws could expose us to liability.

Compliance with changes in (i) laws increasing the potential liability for environmental conditions existing on properties or the restrictions on discharges or other conditions, (ii) rent control or rent stabilization laws or (iii) other governmental rules and regulations or enforcement policies affecting the use and operation of our communities, including changes to building codes and fire and life-safety codes, may result in lower revenue growth or significant unanticipated expenditures.

Short-term leases expose us to the effects of declining market rents.

Substantially all of our apartment leases are for a term of one year or less. Because these leases generally permit the residents to leave at the end of the lease term without penalty, our rental revenues are impacted by declines in market rents more quickly than if our leases were for longer terms.

Competition could limit our ability to lease apartment homes or increase or maintain rents.

Our apartment communities compete with other housing alternatives to attract residents, including other rental apartments, condominiums and single-family homes that are available for rent, as well as

Table of Contents

new and existing condominiums and single-family homes for sale. Competitive residential housing in a particular area could adversely affect our ability to lease apartment homes and to increase or maintain rental rates.

Attractive investment opportunities may not be available, which could adversely affect our profitability.

We expect that other real estate investors, including insurance companies, pension funds, other real estate investment trusts ("REITs") and other well-capitalized investors, will compete with us to acquire existing properties and to develop new properties. This competition could increase prices for properties of the type we would likely pursue and adversely affect our profitability.

Insufficient cash flow could affect our debt financing and create refinancing risk.

We are subject to the risks associated with debt financing, including the risk that our cash flow will be insufficient to meet required payments of principal and interest. In this regard, we note that we are required to annually distribute dividends generally equal to at least 90% of our REIT taxable income, computed without regard to the dividends paid deduction and our net capital gain, in order for us to continue to qualify as a REIT, and this requirement limits the amount of our cash flow available to meet required principal and interest payments. The principal outstanding balance on a portion of our debt will not be fully amortized prior to its maturity. Although we may be able to repay our debt by using our cash flows, we cannot assure you that we will have sufficient cash flows available to make all required principal payments. Therefore, we may need to refinance at least a portion of our outstanding debt as it matures. There is a risk that we may not be able to refinance existing debt or that a refinancing will not be done on as favorable terms, either of which could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

Rising interest rates could increase interest costs and could affect the market price of our common stock.

We currently have, and may in the future incur, variable interest rate debt. Accordingly, if interest rates increase, our interest costs will also rise, unless we have made arrangements that hedge the risk of rising interest rates. In addition, an increase in market interest rates may lead purchasers of our common stock to demand a greater annual dividend yield, which could adversely affect the market price of our common stock.

Bond financing and zoning compliance requirements could limit our income, restrict the use of communities and cause favorable financing to become unavailable.

We have financed some of our apartment communities with obligations issued by local government agencies because the interest paid to the holders of this debt is generally exempt from federal income taxes and, therefore, the interest rate is generally more favorable to us. These obligations are commonly referred to as "tax-exempt bonds" and generally must be secured by communities. As a condition to obtaining tax-exempt financing, or on occasion as a condition to obtaining favorable zoning in some jurisdictions, we will commit to make some of the apartments in a community available to households whose income does not exceed certain thresholds (e.g., 50% or 80% of area median income), or who meet other qualifying tests. As of December 31, 2005, approximately 6.1% of our apartment homes at current operating communities were under use limitations such as these. These commitments, which may run without expiration or may expire after a period of time (such as 15 or 20 years) may limit our ability to raise rents aggressively and, in consequence, can also limit increases in the value of the communities subject to these restrictions.

In addition, some of our tax-exempt bond financing documents require us to obtain a guarantee from a financial institution of payment of the principal of, and interest on, the bonds. The guarantee may take the form of a letter of credit, surety bond, guarantee agreement or other additional collateral.

Table of Contents

If the financial institution defaults in its guarantee obligations, or if we are unable to renew the applicable guarantee or otherwise post satisfactory collateral, a default will occur under the applicable tax-exempt bonds and the community could be foreclosed upon.

Risks Related to Indebtedness.

We have a \$650,000,000 revolving variable rate unsecured credit facility with JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., and Wachovia Bank, National Association, serving together as syndication agent and as banks, Bank of America, N.A., serving as administrative agent, swing lender, issuing bank and a bank, Morgan Stanley Bank, Wells Fargo Bank, National Association, and Deutsche Bank Trust Company Americas, serving collectively as documentation agent and as banks, and a syndicate of other financial institutions, serving as banks. Our organizational documents do not limit the amount or percentage of indebtedness that may be incurred. Accordingly, subject to compliance with outstanding debt covenants, we could incur more debt, resulting in an increased risk of default on our obligations and an increase in debt service requirements that could adversely affect our financial condition and results of operations.

The mortgages on those of our properties subject to secured debt, our unsecured credit facility and the indentures under which a substantial portion of our debt was issued contain customary restrictions, requirements and other limitations, as well as certain financial and operating covenants including maintenance of certain financial ratios. Maintaining compliance with these restrictions could limit our flexibility. A default in these requirements, if uncured, could result in a requirement that we repay indebtedness, which could severely affect our liquidity and increase our financing costs.

Failure to generate sufficient revenue could limit cash flow available for distributions to stockholders.

A decrease in rental revenue could have an adverse effect on our ability to pay distributions to our stockholders and our ability to maintain our status as a REIT. Significant expenditures associated with each community such as debt service payments, if any, real estate taxes, insurance and maintenance costs are generally not reduced when circumstances cause a reduction in income from a community.

Debt financing may not be available and equity issuances could be dilutive to our stockholders.

Our ability to execute our business strategy depends on our access to an appropriate blend of debt and equity financing. Debt financing may not be available in sufficient amounts or on favorable terms. If we issue additional equity securities, the interests of existing stockholders could be diluted.

Difficulty of selling apartment communities could limit flexibility.

Federal tax laws may limit our ability to earn a gain on the sale of a community (unless we own it through a subsidiary which will incur a taxable gain upon sale) if we are found to have held, acquired or developed the community primarily with the intent to resell the community, and this limitation may affect our ability to sell communities without adversely affecting returns to our stockholders. In addition, real estate in our markets can at times be hard to sell, especially if market conditions are poor. These potential difficulties in selling real estate in our markets may limit our ability to change or reduce the apartment communities in our portfolio promptly in response to changes in economic or other conditions.

Table of Contents

Acquisitions may not yield anticipated results.

Subject to the requirements related to AvalonBay Value Added Fund, L.P., a private, discretionary investment vehicle (the "Fund") discussed below, we may in the future acquire apartment communities on a select basis. Our acquisition activities and their success may be exposed to the following risks:

an acquired property may fail to perform as we expected in analyzing our investment; and

our estimate of the costs of repositioning or redeveloping an acquired property may prove inaccurate.

Failure to succeed in new markets or in activities other than the development, ownership and operation of residential rental communities may have adverse consequences.

We may from time to time commence development activity or make acquisitions outside of our existing market areas if appropriate opportunities arise. We also own and operate ancillary retail space when a retail component represents the best use of the space, as is often the case with large urban in-fill residential developments. We expect to develop, through a taxable REIT subsidiary, directly or through a joint venture partnership, one or more parcels with the intent to sell, which we believe represents the best use for those parcels. Our historical experience in our existing markets in developing, owning and operating rental communities does not ensure that we will be able to operate successfully in new markets, should we choose to enter them, or that we will be successful in these other activities. We may be exposed to a variety of risks if we choose to enter new markets, including an inability to evaluate accurately local apartment market conditions; an inability to obtain land for development or to identify appropriate acquisition opportunities; an inability to hire and retain key personnel; and lack of familiarity with local governmental and permitting procedures. We may be unsuccessful in owning and operating retail space at our communities or in developing real estate with the intent to sell.

Risks involved in real estate activity through joint ventures.

Instead of acquiring or developing apartment communities directly, at times we invest as a partner or a co-venturer. Partnership or joint venture investments involve risks, including the possibility that our partner might become insolvent or otherwise refuse to make capital contributions when due; that we may be responsible to our partner for indemnifiable losses; that our partner might at any time have business goals which are inconsistent with ours; and that our partner may be in a position to take action or withhold consent contrary to our instructions or requests. Frequently, we and our partner may each have the right to trigger a buy-sell arrangement, which could cause us to sell our interest, or acquire our partner's interest, at a time when we otherwise would not have initiated such a transaction.

Risks associated with our discretionary investment fund.

We have formed the Fund, which, through a wholly-owned subsidiary, we manage as the general partner and to which we have committed \$50,000,000, representing a 15% equity interest. This presents risks, including the following:

investors in the Fund may fail to make their capital contributions when due and, as a result, the Fund may be unable to execute its investment objectives;

our subsidiary that is the general partner of the Fund is generally liable, under partnership law, for the debts and obligations of the Fund, subject to certain exculpation and indemnification rights pursuant to the terms of the partnership agreement of the Fund;

investors in the Fund holding a majority of the partnership interests may remove us as the general partner without cause, subject to our right to receive an additional nine months of

Table of Contents

management fees after such removal and our right to acquire one of the properties then held by the Fund;

while we have broad discretion to manage the Fund and make investment decisions on behalf of the Fund, the investors or an advisory committee comprised of representatives of the investors must approve certain matters, and as a result we may be unable to cause the Fund to make certain investments or implement certain decisions that we consider beneficial;

we are generally prohibited from making acquisitions of apartment communities outside of the Fund until the earlier of March 16, 2008 or until 80% of the Fund's committed capital is invested, subject to certain exceptions; and

we may be liable if either the Fund, or the REIT through which a number of investors have invested in the Fund and which we manage, fails to comply with various tax or other regulatory matters.

Risk of earthquake damage.

Many of our West Coast communities are located in the general vicinity of active earthquake faults. We cannot assure you that an earthquake would not cause damage or losses greater than insured levels. In the event of a loss in excess of insured limits, we could lose our capital invested in the affected community, as well as anticipated future revenue from that community. We would also continue to be obligated to repay any mortgage indebtedness or other obligations related to the community. Any such loss could materially and adversely affect our business and our financial condition and results of operations.

A significant uninsured property or liability loss could have a material adverse effect on our financial condition and results of operations.

In addition to the earthquake insurance discussed above, we carry commercial general liability insurance, property insurance and terrorism insurance with respect to our communities on terms we consider commercially reasonable. There are, however, certain types of losses (such as losses arising from acts of war) that are not insured, in full or in part, because they are either uninsurable or the cost of insurance makes it, in management's view, economically impractical. If an uninsured property loss or a property loss in excess of insured limits were to occur, we could lose our capital invested in a community, as well as the anticipated future revenues from such community. We would also continue to be obligated to repay any mortgage indebtedness or other obligations related to the community. If an uninsured liability to a third party were to occur, we would incur the cost of defense and settlement with, or court ordered damages to, that third party. A significant uninsured property or liability loss could materially and adversely affect our business and our financial condition and results of operations.

We may incur costs and increased expenses to repair property damage resulting from inclement weather.

Particularly in the Northeast and Midwest we are exposed to risks associated with inclement winter weather, including increased costs for the removal of snow and ice as well as from delays in construction. In addition, inclement weather could increase the need for maintenance and repair of our communities.

We may incur costs due to environmental contamination.

Under various federal, state and local environmental laws, regulations and ordinances, we may be required, regardless of knowledge or responsibility, to investigate and remediate the effects of hazardous or toxic substances or petroleum product releases at our properties and may be held liable to a governmental entity or to third parties for property or personal injury damages and for

Table of Contents

investigation and remediation costs incurred as a result of the contamination. These damages and costs may be substantial. The presence of such substances, or the failure to properly remediate the contamination, may adversely affect our ability to borrow against, sell or rent the affected property.

In addition, some environmental laws create a lien on the contaminated site in favor of the government for damages and costs it incurs as a result of the contamination.

Certain federal, state and local laws, regulations and ordinances govern the removal, encapsulation or disturbance of asbestos containing materials ("ACMs") when such materials are in poor condition or in the event of renovation or demolition of a building. These laws may impose liability for release of ACMs and may allow third parties to seek recovery from owners or operators of real properties for personal injury associated with exposure to ACMs. We are not aware that any ACMs were used in the construction of the communities we developed. ACMs were, however, used in the construction of several of the communities that we acquired. We implement an operations and maintenance program at each of the communities at which ACMs are detected. We do not anticipate that we will incur any material liabilities as a result of the presence of ACMs at our communities.

We are aware that some of our communities have lead paint and have implemented an operations and maintenance program at each of those communities. We do not anticipate that we will incur any material liabilities as a result of the presence of lead paint at our communities.

All of our stabilized operating communities, and all of the communities that we are currently developing or redeveloping, have been subjected to at least a Phase I or similar environmental assessment, which generally does not involve invasive techniques such as soil or ground water sampling. These assessments, together with subsurface assessments conducted on some properties, have not revealed, and we are not otherwise aware of, any environmental conditions that we believe would have a material adverse effect on our business, assets, financial condition or results of operation. In connection with our ownership, operation and development of communities, from time to time we undertake substantial remedial action in response to the presence of subsurface or other contaminants. In some cases, an indemnity exists upon which we may be able to rely if environmental liability arises from the contamination or remediation costs exceed estimates. There can be no assurance, however, that all necessary remediation actions have been or will be undertaken at our properties or that we will be indemnified, in full or at all, in the event that environmental liability arises.

Mold growth may occur when excessive moisture accumulates in buildings or on building materials, particularly if the moisture problem remains undiscovered or is not addressed over a period of time. Although the occurrence of mold at multifamily and other structures, and the need to remediate such mold, is not a new phenomenon, there has been increased awareness in recent years that certain molds may in some instances lead to adverse health effects, including allergic or other reactions. To help limit mold growth, we educate residents about the importance of adequate ventilation and request or require that they notify us when they see mold or excessive moisture. We have established procedures for promptly addressing and remediating mold or excessive moisture from apartment homes when we become aware of its presence regardless of whether we or the resident believe a health risk is presented. However, we cannot assure that mold or excessive moisture will be detected and remediated in a timely manner. If a significant mold problem arises at one of our communities, we could be required to undertake a costly remediation program to contain or remove the mold from the affected community and could be exposed to other liabilities.

Additionally, we have occasionally been involved in developing, managing, leasing and operating various properties for third parties. Consequently, we may be considered to have been an operator of such properties and, therefore, potentially liable for removal or remediation costs or other potential costs which could relate to hazardous or toxic substances. We are not aware of any material

Table of Contents

environmental liabilities with respect to properties managed or developed by us or our predecessors for such third parties. We cannot assure you that:

the environmental assessments described above have identified all potential environmental liabilities;

no prior owner created any material environmental condition not known to us or the consultants who prepared the assessments;

no environmental liabilities have developed since the environmental assessments were prepared;

the condition of land or operations in the vicinity of our communities, such as the presence of underground storage tanks, will not affect the environmental condition of our communities;

future uses or conditions, including, without limitation, changes in applicable environmental laws and regulations, will not result in the imposition of environmental liability; or

no environmental liabilities will arise at communities that we have sold for which we may have liability.

Failure to qualify as a REIT would cause us to be taxed as a corporation, which would significantly reduce funds available for distribution to stockholders.

If we fail to qualify as a REIT for federal income tax purposes, we will be subject to federal income tax on our taxable income at regular corporate rates (subject to any applicable alternative minimum tax). In addition, unless we are entitled to relief under applicable statutory provisions, we would be ineligible to make an election for treatment as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year in which we lose our qualification. The additional tax liability resulting from the failure to qualify as a REIT would significantly reduce or eliminate the amount of funds available for distribution to our stockholders. Furthermore, we would no longer be required to make distributions to our stockholders. Thus, our failure to qualify as a REIT could also impair our ability to expand our business and raise capital, and would adversely affect the value of our common stock.

We believe that we are organized and qualified as a REIT, and we intend to operate in a manner that will allow us to continue to qualify as a REIT. However, we cannot assure you that we are qualified as a REIT, or that we will remain qualified in the future. This is because qualification as a REIT involves the application of highly technical and complex provisions of the Internal Revenue Code for which there are only limited judicial and administrative interpretations and involves the determination of a variety of factual matters and circumstances not entirely within our control. In addition, future legislation, new regulations, administrative interpretations or court decisions may significantly change the tax laws or the application of the tax laws with respect to qualification as a REIT for federal income tax purposes or the federal income tax consequences of this qualification.

Even if we qualify as a REIT, we will be subject to certain federal, state and local taxes on our income and property and on taxable income that we do not distribute to our shareholders. In addition, we may engage in activities through taxable subsidiaries and will be subject to federal income tax at regular corporate rates on the income of those subsidiaries.

Table of Contents

The ability of our stockholders to control our policies and effect a change of control of our company is limited by certain provisions of our charter and bylaws and by Maryland law.

There are provisions in our charter and bylaws that may discourage a third party from making a proposal to acquire us, even if some of our stockholders might consider the proposal to be in their best interests. These provisions include the following:

Our charter authorizes our board of directors to issue up to 50,000,000 shares of preferred stock without stockholder approval and to establish the preferences and rights, including voting rights, of any series of preferred stock issued. The board of directors may issue preferred stock without stockholder approval, which could allow the board to issue one or more classes or series of preferred stock that could discourage or delay a tender offer or a change in control.

To maintain our qualification as a REIT for federal income tax purposes, not more than 50% in value of our outstanding stock may be owned, directly or indirectly, by or for five or fewer individuals at any time during the last half of any taxable year. To maintain this qualification, and to otherwise address concerns about concentrations of ownership of our stock, our charter generally prohibits ownership (directly, indirectly by virtue of the attribution provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or beneficially as defined in Section 13 of the Securities Exchange Act) by any single stockholder of more than 9.8% of the issued and outstanding shares of any class or series of our stock. In general, under our charter, pension plans and mutual funds may directly and beneficially own up to 15% of the outstanding shares of any class or series of stock. Under our charter, our board of directors may in its sole discretion waive or modify the ownership limit for one or more persons. These ownership limits may prevent or delay a change in control and, as a result, could adversely affect our stockholders' ability to realize a premium for their shares of common stock.

Our bylaws provide that the affirmative vote of holders of a majority of all of the shares entitled to be cast in the election of directors is required to elect a director. In a contested election, if no nominee receives the vote of holders of a majority of all of the shares entitled to be cast, the incumbent directors would remain in office. This requirement may prevent or delay a change in control and, as a result, could adversely affect our stockholders' ability to realize a premium for their shares of common stock.

As a Maryland corporation, we are subject to the provisions of the Maryland General Corporation Law. Maryland law imposes restrictions on some business combinations and requires compliance with statutory procedures before some mergers and acquisitions may occur, which may delay or prevent offers to acquire us or increase the difficulty of completing any offers, even if they are in our stockholders' best interests. In addition, other provisions of the Maryland General Corporation Law permit the Board of Directors to make elections and to take actions without stockholder approval (such as classifying our Board such that the entire Board is not up for reelection annually) that, if made or taken, could have the effect of discouraging or delaying a change in control.

Forward-looking Statements

This prospectus, including the information incorporated by reference into this prospectus, contains statements that are forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. You can identify forward-looking statements by the use of the words "believe," "expect," "anticipate," "intend," "estimate," "assume," "plan," "project," "may," "shall," "will," "outlook" and other similar expressions that predict or indicate future events and trends and which do not relate to historical matters. These statements include, among other things, statements regarding our intent, belief or expectations with respect to:

our potential development, redevelopment, acquisition or disposition of communities;

Table of Contents

the timing and cost of completion of apartment communities under construction, reconstruction, development or redevelopment;

the timing of lease-up, occupancy and stabilization of apartment communities;

the pursuit of land on which we are considering future development;

the anticipated operating performance of our communities;

cost, yield and earnings estimates;

our declaration or payment of distributions;

our joint venture and discretionary fund activities;

our policies regarding investments, indebtedness, acquisitions, dispositions, financings and other matters;

our qualification as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code;

the real estate markets in Northern and Southern California and markets in selected states in the Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, Midwest and Pacific Northwest regions of the United States and in general;

the availability of debt and equity financing;

interest rates;

general economic conditions; and

trends affecting our financial condition or results of operations.

We cannot assure the future results or outcome of the matters described in these statements; rather, these statements merely reflect our current expectations of the approximate outcomes of the matters discussed. You should not rely on forward-looking statements because they involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors, some of which are beyond our control. These risks, uncertainties and other factors, which we describe in "Risk Factors" elsewhere in this prospectus, may cause our actual results, performance or achievements to differ materially from the anticipated future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements.

In addition, these forward-looking statements represent our estimates and assumptions only as of the date of this prospectus. We do not undertake to update these forward-looking statements, and therefore they may not represent our estimates and assumptions after the date of this prospectus.

About this Prospectus

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the SEC utilizing a shelf registration process. Under this shelf process, we may sell an indeterminate number or amount of any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement together with additional information described below under the heading "Where You Can Find More Information."

Table of Contents

Where You Can Find More Information

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document we file at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 450 Fifth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the operation of the Public Reference Room. Our SEC filings are also available to the public from the SEC's Web site at www.sec.gov or our Web site at www.avalonbay.com. In addition, you may read our SEC filings at the offices of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), which is located at 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005. Our SEC filings are available at the NYSE because our common stock and an outstanding series of preferred stock are listed on the NYSE.

In accordance with Section 2-210 of the Maryland General Corporation Law, our board of directors may authorize the issuance of some or all of the shares of any or all of our classes or series of stock without certificates. In addition, we have the authority to designate and issue more than one class or series of stock having various preferences, conversion and other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to dividends, qualifications, and terms and conditions of redemption. See "Description of Preferred Stock" and "Description of Common Stock." Our charter imposes limitations on the ownership and transfer of our stock. See "Limits on Ownership of Stock." We will furnish a full statement of the relative rights and preferences of each class or series of our stock which has been so designated and any restrictions on the ownership or transfer of our stock to any stockholder upon request and without charge. Written requests for such copies should be directed to: AvalonBay Communities, Inc., 2900 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite 300, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, Attention: Chief Financial Officer.

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with it, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to these documents. The information incorporated by reference is an important part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede the information already incorporated by reference. We are incorporating by reference the documents listed below, which we have already filed with the SEC, and any future filings we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 until we sell all of the securities.

AvalonBay SEC Filings (File No. 001-12672)	Period or Date Filed
Annual Report on Form 10-K	Year ended December 31, 2005
Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q	Quarter ended March 31, 2006
Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q	Quarter ended June 30, 2006
Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q	Quarter ended September 30, 2006
Current Report on Form 8-K	February 14, 2006
Current Report on Form 8-K	March 13, 2006
Current Report on Form 8-K	September 25, 2006
Current Report on Form 8-K	November 17, 2006

In addition, we are incorporating by reference the description of our common stock from our Registration Statement on Form 8-B filed June 8, 1995.

You may request a copy of these filings, and any exhibits we have specifically incorporated by reference as an exhibit in this prospectus, at no cost by writing or telephoning us at the following: AvalonBay Communities, Inc., 2900 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite 300, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, Attention: Chief Financial Officer. Our telephone number is 703-329-2300.

This prospectus is part of a registration statement we filed with the SEC. We have incorporated exhibits into this registration statement. You should read the exhibits carefully for provisions that may be important to you.

Table of Contents

You should rely only on the information incorporated by reference or provided in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different information. We are not making an offer of these securities in any state where the offer is not permitted. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus or in the documents incorporated by reference is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of this prospectus or those documents.

About AvalonBay Communities, Inc.

AvalonBay Communities, Inc. is a Maryland corporation that has elected to be treated as a real estate investment trust, or REIT, for federal income tax purposes. We engage in the development, redevelopment, acquisition, ownership and operation of multifamily communities in high barrier-to-entry markets of the United States. These barriers-to-entry generally include a difficult and lengthy entitlement process with local jurisdictions and dense urban or suburban areas where zoned and entitled land is in limited supply. Our markets are located in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Midwest, Pacific Northwest, and Northern and Southern California regions of the United States. We focus on these markets because we believe that, long term, the limited new supply of apartment homes and lower housing affordability in these markets will result in larger increases in cash flows relative to other markets over an entire business cycle. In addition to increasing the rental revenues of our operating assets, we believe these market attributes will increase the value of our operating assets and enable us to create additional value through the development and selective acquisition of multifamily housing.

At December 31, 2006, we owned or held a direct or indirect ownership interest in 150 operating apartment communities containing 43,141 apartment homes in ten states and the District of Columbia, of which 6 communities containing 2,381 apartment homes were under reconstruction. In addition, we owned or held a direct or indirect ownership interest in 17 communities under construction that are expected to contain an aggregate of 5,153 apartment homes when completed. At November 30, 2006, we also owned a direct or indirect ownership interest in rights to develop an additional 52 communities that, if developed in the manner expected, will contain an estimated 13,678 apartment homes.

AvalonBay is the surviving entity from the merger of Avalon Properties, Inc. with and into Bay Apartment Communities, Inc. on June 4, 1998. In October 1998, we changed our name to AvalonBay Communities, Inc. Our common stock is listed on the NYSE under the symbol "AVB."

AvalonBay elected to qualify as a REIT for federal income tax purposes for the taxable year ended December 31, 1994 and has not terminated or revoked such election. As a REIT, with limited exceptions, we will not be taxed under federal and certain state income tax laws at the corporate level on our net income to the extent net income is distributed to our stockholders. We have historically made sufficient distributions to avoid tax on retained income, and we intend to make sufficient distributions to avoid income tax at the corporate level. While we believe that we are organized and qualified as a REIT and we intend to operate in a manner that will allow us to continue to qualify as a REIT, there can be no assurance that we will be successful in this regard. Qualification as a REIT involves the application of highly technical and complex provisions of the Internal Revenue Code for which there are limited judicial and administrative interpretations and involves the determination of a variety of factual matters and circumstances not entirely within our control.

Table of Contents**Ratios of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends**

Our ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends for each of the periods indicated is as follows:

	Nine Months Ended September 30, 2006	Year Ended December 31, 2005	Year Ended December 31, 2004	Year Ended December 31, 2003	Year Ended December 31, 2002	Year Ended December 31, 2001
Ratios	1.8x	1.50x	1.30x	1.30x	1.23x	1.43x

The ratios of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends were computed by dividing earnings by combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends. For this purpose, earnings consist of pre-tax income from continuing operations before adjustment for minority interests in consolidated subsidiaries plus fixed charges less capitalized interest. Fixed charges consist of interest expense (including the amortization of debt issuance costs) and capitalized interest.

During the five year period covered by the table above, the following series of preferred stock of AvalonBay have been outstanding:

2,300,000 shares of 8.50% Series C Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock were issued in June 1997, all of which were redeemed in July 2002;

3,267,700 shares of 8.00% Series D Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock were issued in December 1997, all of which were redeemed in March 2003;

4,455,000 shares of 9.00% Series F Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock were issued in June 1998, all of which were redeemed in June 2001;

4,300,000 shares of 8.96% Series G Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock were issued in June 1998, all of which were redeemed in October 2001;

4,000,000 shares of 8.70% Series H Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock were issued in October 1998, all of which are currently outstanding;

592,000 shares of Series I Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock were issued in June 2002, all of which were redeemed in August 2002; and

3,336,611 shares of Series J Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock were issued in March 2003, all of which were redeemed in May 2003.

In addition, AvalonBay designated 1,000,000 shares of Series E Junior Participating Cumulative Preferred Stock in March 1998 in connection with our shareholder rights agreement. The shareholder rights agreement was subsequently terminated in March 2003.

Ratios of Earnings to Fixed Charges

Our ratio of earnings to fixed charges for each of the periods indicated is as follows:

	Nine Months Ended September 30, 2006	Year Ended December 31, 2005	Year Ended December 31, 2004	Year Ended December 31, 2003	Year Ended December 31, 2002	Year Ended December 31, 2001

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

Ratios	1.9x	1.59x	1.37x	1.39x	1.38x	1.91x
--------	------	-------	-------	-------	-------	-------

The ratios of earnings to fixed charges were computed by dividing earnings by fixed charges. For this purpose, earnings consist of pre-tax income from continuing operations before adjustment for minority interests in consolidated subsidiaries plus fixed charges less capitalized interest. Fixed charges consist of interest expense (including the amortization of debt issuance costs) and capitalized interest.

Table of Contents

How We Intend to Use the Proceeds

Unless we provide otherwise in a supplement to this prospectus, we intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities for one or more of the following:

working capital;

capital expenditures, including for the development and redevelopment of apartment communities;

repayment and refinancing of debt or redemption of prior issuances of preferred stock;

potential acquisitions; and

other general corporate purposes.

Description of the Debt Securities

This prospectus describes the general terms and provisions of the debt securities. When we offer to sell a particular series of debt securities, we will describe the specific terms of the securities in a supplement to this prospectus. The prospectus supplement will also indicate whether the general terms and provisions described in this prospectus apply to a particular series of debt securities. You should read the indentures referenced below for a more complete understanding of the general terms and provisions described in this prospectus.

The senior debt securities will be issued under an indenture, dated as of a date prior to such issuance, between us and U.S. Bank Trust National Association, as successor to State Street Bank and Trust Company, as trustee, as amended or supplemented from time to time. We will refer to any such indenture throughout this prospectus as the "senior indenture." The subordinated debt securities will be issued under a separate indenture, dated as of a date prior to such issuance, between us and the trustee. We will refer to any such indenture throughout this prospectus as the "subordinated indenture" and to a trustee under any senior or subordinated indenture as the "trustee." The senior indenture and the subordinated indenture are sometimes collectively referred to in this prospectus as the "indentures." The indentures will be subject to and governed by the Trust Indenture Act of 1939. We included copies of the indentures as exhibits to our registration statement and they are incorporated into this prospectus by reference. The following summarizes the material provisions of the indentures but may not contain all of the information that is important to you. Except as otherwise indicated, the terms of the indentures are identical. As used under this caption, the term "debt securities" includes the debt securities being offered by this prospectus and all other debt securities issued by us under the indentures.

General

The indentures:

do not limit the amount of debt securities that we may issue;

allow us to issue debt securities in one or more series;

do not require us to issue all of the debt securities of a series at the same time;

allow us to reopen a series to issue additional debt securities without the consent of the debt securityholders of such series;
and

provide that the debt securities will be unsecured.

Table of Contents

Unless we give you different information in the prospectus supplement, the senior debt securities will be our unsubordinated obligations and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured and unsubordinated indebtedness. Payments on the subordinated debt securities will be subordinated to the prior payment in full of all of our senior indebtedness, as described under " Subordination" and in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Each indenture provides that we may, but need not, designate more than one trustee under an indenture. Any trustee under an indenture may resign or be removed and a successor trustee may be appointed to act with respect to the series of debt securities administered by the resigning or removed trustee. If two or more persons are acting as trustee with respect to different series of debt securities, each trustee shall be a trustee of a trust under the applicable indenture separate and apart from the trust administered by any other trustee. Except as otherwise indicated in this prospectus, any action described in this prospectus to be taken by each trustee may be taken by each trustee with respect to, and only with respect to, the one or more series of debt securities for which it is trustee under the applicable indenture.

The prospectus supplement for each offering will provide the following terms, where applicable:

the title of the debt securities and whether they are senior or subordinated;

the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities being offered, the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities outstanding as of the most recent practicable date and any limit on their aggregate principal amount, including the aggregate principal amount of debt securities authorized;

the price at which the debt securities will be issued, expressed as a percentage of the principal;

the portion of the principal payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity, if other than the principal amount;

the date or dates, or the method for determining the date or dates, on which the principal of the debt securities will be payable;

the fixed or variable interest rate or rates of the debt securities, or the method by which the interest rate or rates is determined;

the date or dates, or the method for determining the date or dates, from which interest will accrue;

the dates on which interest will be payable;

the record dates for interest payment dates, or the method by which we will determine those dates;

the persons to whom interest will be payable;

the basis upon which interest will be calculated if other than that of a 360-day year of twelve 30-day months;

any make-whole amount, which is the amount in addition to principal and interest that is required to be paid to the holder of a debt security as a result of any optional redemption or accelerated payment of such debt security, or the method for determining the make-whole amount;

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

the place or places where the principal of, and any premium (or make-whole amount) and interest on, the debt securities will be payable;

where the debt securities may be surrendered for registration of transfer or exchange;

Table of Contents

where notices or demands to or upon us in respect of the debt securities and the applicable indenture may be served;

the times, prices and other terms and conditions upon which we may redeem the debt securities;

any obligation we have to redeem, repay or purchase the debt securities under any sinking fund or analogous provision or at the option of holders of the debt securities, and the times and prices at which we must redeem, repay or purchase the debt securities as a result of such an obligation;

the currency or currencies in which the debt securities are denominated and payable if other than United States dollars, which may be a foreign currency or units of two or more foreign currencies or a composite currency or currencies and the terms and conditions relating thereto, and the manner of determining the equivalent of such foreign currency in United States dollars;

whether the principal of, and any premium (or make-whole amount) or interest on, the debt securities of the series are to be payable, at our election or at the election of a holder, in a currency or currencies other than that in which the debt securities are denominated or stated to be payable, and other related terms and conditions;

whether the amount of payments of principal of, and any premium (or make-whole amount) or interest on, the debt securities may be determined according to an index, formula or other method and how such amounts will be determined;

whether the debt securities will be in registered form, bearer form or both and (1) if in registered form, the person to whom any interest shall be payable, if other than the person in whose name the security is registered at the close of business on the regular record date for such interest, or (2) if in bearer form, the manner in which, or the person to whom, any interest on the security shall be payable if otherwise than upon presentation and surrender upon maturity;

any restrictions applicable to the offer, sale or delivery of securities in bearer form and the terms upon which securities in bearer form of the series may be exchanged for securities in registered form of the series and vice versa if permitted by applicable laws and regulations;

whether any debt securities of the series are to be issuable initially in temporary global form and whether any debt securities of the series are to be issuable in permanent global form with or without coupons and, if so, whether beneficial owners of interests in any such permanent global security may or shall be required to exchange their interests for other debt securities of the series, and the manner in which interest shall be paid;

the identity of the depository for securities in registered form, if such series are to be issuable as a global security;

the date as of which any debt securities in bearer form or in temporary global form shall be dated if other than the original issuance date of the first security of the series to be issued;

the applicability, if any, of the defeasance and covenant defeasance provisions described in this prospectus or in the applicable indenture;

whether and under what circumstances we will pay any additional amounts on the debt securities in respect of any tax, assessment or governmental charge and, if so, whether we will have the option to redeem the debt securities in lieu of

making such a payment;

the circumstances, if any, in the applicable prospectus supplement, under which beneficial owners of interests in the global security may obtain definitive debt securities and the manner in

Table of Contents

which payments on a permanent global debt security will be made if any debt securities are issuable in temporary or permanent global form;

any provisions granting special rights to holders of securities upon the occurrence of such events as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement;

the name of the applicable trustee and the nature of any material relationship with AvalonBay or with any of its affiliates, and the percentage of debt securities of the class necessary to require the trustee to take action;

any deletions from, modifications of, or additions to the events of default or covenants of AvalonBay, and any change in the right of any trustee or any of the holders to declare the principal amount of any of such debt securities due and payable; and

any other terms of such debt securities not inconsistent with the provisions of the applicable indenture.

We may issue debt securities at a discount below their principal amount and provide for less than the entire principal amount thereof to be payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity thereof. We will refer to any such debt securities throughout this prospectus as "original issue discount securities." The applicable prospectus supplement will describe the federal income tax consequences and other relevant considerations applicable to original issue discount securities.

Except as described under " Merger, consolidation or sale of assets" or as may be set forth in any prospectus supplement, the debt securities will not contain any provisions that (1) would limit our ability to incur indebtedness or (2) would afford holders of debt securities protection in the event of (a) a highly leveraged or similar transaction involving us or any of our respective affiliates or (b) a change of control or reorganization, restructuring, merger or similar transaction involving us that may adversely affect the holders of the debt securities. In the future, we may enter into transactions, such as the sale of all or substantially all of our assets or a merger or consolidation, that may have an adverse effect on our ability to service our indebtedness, including the debt securities, by, among other things, substantially reducing or eliminating our assets.

Neither the Maryland General Corporation Law nor the governing instruments of AvalonBay define the term "substantially all" as it relates to the sale of assets. Additionally, Maryland cases interpreting the term "substantially all" rely upon the facts and circumstances of each particular case. Consequently, to determine whether a sale of "substantially all" of our assets has occurred, a holder of debt securities must review the financial and other information that we disclosed to the public. AvalonBay's charter contains restrictions on ownership and transfers of its stock that are designed to preserve its status as a REIT and to otherwise address concerns about concentration of ownership of our stock, and, therefore, it may prevent or hinder a change of control. See "Limits on Ownership of Stock" beginning on page 37.

We will provide you with more information in the applicable prospectus supplement regarding any deletions, modifications, or additions to the events of default or covenants that are described below, including any addition of a covenant or other provision providing event risk or similar protection.

Payment

Unless we give you different information in the applicable prospectus supplement, the principal of, and any premium (or make-whole amount) and interest on, any series of the debt securities will be payable at the corporate trust office of the trustee. We will provide you with the address of the trustee in the applicable prospectus supplement. We may also pay interest by mailing a check to the address of the person entitled to it as it appears in the applicable register for the debt securities or by wire transfer of funds to that person at an account maintained within the United States.

Table of Contents

All monies that we pay to a paying agent or a trustee for the payment of the principal of, and any premium (or make-whole amount) or interest on, any debt security will be repaid to us if unclaimed at the end of two years after the obligation underlying payment becomes due and payable. After funds have been returned to us, the holder of the debt security may look only to us for payment, without payment of interest for the period which we hold the funds.

Denomination, interest, registration and transfer

Unless otherwise described in the applicable prospectus supplement, the debt securities of any series will be issuable in denominations of \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000.

Subject to the limitations imposed upon debt securities that are evidenced by a computerized entry in the records of a depository company rather than by physical delivery of a note, a holder of debt securities of any series may:

exchange them for any authorized denomination of other debt securities of the same series and of a like aggregate principal amount and kind upon surrender of such debt securities at the corporate trust office of the applicable trustee or at the office of any transfer agent that we designate for such purpose; and

surrender them for registration of transfer or exchange at the corporate trust office of the applicable trustee or at the office of any transfer agent that we designate for such purpose.

Every debt security surrendered for registration of transfer or exchange must be duly endorsed or accompanied by a written instrument of transfer, and the person requesting such action must provide evidence of title and identity satisfactory to the applicable trustee or transfer agent. Payment of a service charge will not be required for any registration of transfer or exchange of any debt securities, but we or the trustee may require payment of a sum sufficient to cover any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection therewith. If in addition to the applicable trustee, the applicable prospectus supplement refers to any transfer agent initially designated by us for any series of debt securities, we may at any time rescind the designation of any such transfer agent or approve a change in the location through which any such transfer agent acts, except that we will be required to maintain a transfer agent in each place of payment for such series. We may at any time designate additional transfer agents for any series of debt securities.

Neither we nor any trustee shall be required to:

issue, register the transfer of or exchange debt securities of any series during a period beginning at the opening of business 15 days before the day that the notice of redemption of any debt securities selected for redemption is mailed and ending at the close of business on the day of such mailing;

register the transfer of or exchange any debt security, or portion thereof, so selected for redemption, in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any debt security being redeemed in part; and

issue, register the transfer of or exchange any debt security that has been surrendered for repayment at the option of the holder, except the portion, if any, of such debt security not to be so repaid.

Table of Contents

Merger, consolidation or sale of assets

The indentures provide that we may, without the consent of the holders of any outstanding debt securities, (1) consolidate with, (2) sell, lease or convey all or substantially all of our assets to, or (3) merge with or into, any other entity provided that:

either we are the continuing entity, or the successor entity, if other than us, assumes our obligations (A) to pay the principal of, and any premium and interest on, all of the debt securities and (B) to duly perform and observe all of our covenants and conditions contained in each indenture;

immediately after giving effect to the transaction and treating any indebtedness that becomes our obligation or the obligation of any of our subsidiaries as having been incurred by us or by such subsidiary at the time of the transaction, no event of default under the indentures, and no event which, after notice or the lapse of time, or both, would become such an event of default, occurs and continues; and

an officers' certificate and legal opinion covering such conditions are delivered to each trustee.

Covenants

Existence. Except as permitted under " Merger, consolidation or sale of assets," the indentures require us to do or cause to be done all things necessary to preserve and keep in full force and effect our existence, rights and franchises. However, the indentures do not require us to preserve any right or franchise if we determine that any right or franchise is no longer desirable in the conduct of our business.

Maintenance of properties. If we determine that it is necessary in order to properly and advantageously carry on our business, the indentures require us to:

cause all of our material properties used or useful in the conduct of our business or the business of any of our subsidiaries to be maintained and kept in good condition, repair and working order and supplied with all necessary equipment; and

cause to be made all necessary repairs, renewals, replacements, betterments and improvements thereof.

However, the indentures do not prohibit us or our subsidiaries from selling or otherwise disposing of our respective properties for value in the ordinary course of business.

Insurance. The indentures require our insurable properties to be insured against loss or damage in an amount deemed reasonable by our board of directors with insurers of recognized responsibility.

Payment of taxes and other claims. The indentures require us to pay, discharge or cause to be paid or discharged, before they become delinquent:

all taxes, assessments and governmental charges levied or imposed on us, our subsidiaries or our subsidiaries' income, profits or property; and

all lawful claims for labor, materials and supplies which, if unpaid, might by law become a lien upon our or our subsidiaries' property.

However, we will not be required to pay, discharge or cause to be paid or discharged any such tax, assessment, charge or claim whose amount, applicability or validity is being contested in good faith by appropriate proceedings.

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

Table of Contents

Provision of Financial Information. The indentures require us, within 15 days of each of the respective dates by which we are required to file annual reports, quarterly reports and other documents with the SEC to:

mail to all holders of debt securities, as their names and addresses appear in the applicable register for such debt securities, without cost to such holders, copies of the annual reports, quarterly reports and other documents that we file with the SEC under Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Exchange Act; and

supply, promptly upon written request and payment of the reasonable cost of duplication and delivery, copies of such documents to any prospective holder.

Additional covenants. The applicable prospectus supplement will set forth any additional covenants of AvalonBay relating to any series of debt securities.

Events of default, notice and waiver

Unless the applicable prospectus supplement states otherwise, when we refer to "events of default" as defined in the indentures with respect to any series of debt securities, we mean:

default in the payment of any installment of interest on any debt security of such series continuing for 30 days;

default in the payment of principal of, or any premium (or make-whole amount) on, any debt security of such series at its maturity;

default in making any sinking fund payment as required for any debt security of such series;

default in the performance or breach of any other covenant or warranty of AvalonBay contained in the indenture continuing for 60 days after written notice to AvalonBay as provided in the applicable indenture;

(1) a default under any bond, debenture or note having an aggregate principal amount of at least \$25,000,000; or (2) a default under any indenture or instrument under which there may be issued, secured or evidenced any existing or later created indebtedness for money borrowed by us or our subsidiaries in an aggregate principal amount of at least \$25,000,000, if the default results in the indebtedness becoming or being declared due and payable prior to the date it otherwise would have, without such indebtedness having been discharged, or such acceleration having been rescinded or annulled, within 10 days after notice to the Company specifying such default;

bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization, or court appointment of a receiver, liquidator or trustee of AvalonBay or any significant subsidiary of AvalonBay; and

any other event of default provided with respect to a particular series of debt securities.

When we use the term "significant subsidiary," we refer to the meaning ascribed to such term in Rule 1-02 of Regulation S-X promulgated under the Securities Act.

If an event of default occurs and is continuing with respect to debt securities of any series outstanding, then the applicable trustee or the holders of 25% or more in principal amount of the debt securities of that series will have the right to declare the principal amount of all the debt securities of that series to be due and payable. If the debt securities of that series are original issue discount securities or indexed securities, then the applicable trustee or the holders of 25% or more in principal amount of the debt securities of that series will have the right to declare the portion of the principal amount as may be specified in the terms thereof to be due and payable. However, at any time after such a declaration of

acceleration has been made, but before a judgment or decree for payment of the

Table of Contents

money due has been obtained by the applicable trustee, the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of outstanding debt securities of such series or of all debt securities then outstanding under the applicable indenture may rescind and annul such declaration and its consequences if:

we have deposited with the applicable trustee all required payments of the principal, any premium (or make-whole amount), and interest, plus applicable fees, expenses, disbursements and advances of the applicable trustee; and

all events of default, other than the non-payment of accelerated principal, or a specified portion thereof, and any premium (or make-whole amount), have been cured or waived.

The indentures also provide that the holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series or of all debt securities then outstanding under the applicable indenture may on behalf of all holders waive any past default with respect to such series and its consequences, except a default:

in the payment of the principal, any premium (or make-whole amount) or interest;

in respect of a covenant or provision contained in the applicable indenture that cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holder of the outstanding debt security that is affected by the default; or

in respect of a covenant or provision for the benefit or protection of the trustee, without its express written consent.

The indentures require each trustee to give notice to the holders of debt securities within 90 days of a default unless such default has been cured or waived. However, the trustee may withhold notice if specified responsible officers of such trustee consider such withholding to be in the interest of the holders of debt securities. The trustee may not withhold notice of a default in the payment of principal, any premium or interest on any debt security of such series or in the payment of any sinking fund installment in respect of any debt security of such series.

The indentures provide that holders of debt securities of any series may not institute any proceedings, judicial or otherwise, with respect to such indenture or for any remedy under the indenture, unless the trustee fails to act for a period of 60 days after the trustee has received a written request to institute proceedings in respect of an event of default from the holders of 25% or more in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of such series, as well as an offer of indemnity reasonably satisfactory to the trustee. However, this provision will not prevent any holder of debt securities from instituting suit for the enforcement of payment of the principal of, and any premium (or make-whole amount) and interest on, such debt securities at the respective due dates thereof.

The indentures provide that, subject to provisions in each indenture relating to its duties in the case of a default, a trustee has no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers at the request or direction of any holders of any series of debt securities then outstanding under the indenture, unless the holders have offered to the trustee reasonable security or indemnity. The holders of at least a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series or of all debt securities then outstanding under an indenture shall have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the applicable trustee, or of exercising any trust or power conferred upon such trustee. However, a trustee may refuse to follow any direction which:

is in conflict with any law or the applicable indenture;

may involve the trustee in personal liability; or

may be unduly prejudicial to the holders of debt securities of the series not joining the proceeding.

Table of Contents

Within 120 days after the close of each fiscal year, we will be required to deliver to each trustee a certificate, signed by one of several specified officers of AvalonBay stating whether or not that officer has knowledge of any default under the applicable indenture. If the officer has knowledge of any default, the notice must specify the nature and status of the default.

Modification of the indentures

The indentures provide that modifications and amendments may be made only with the consent of the affected holders of at least a majority in principal amount of all outstanding debt securities issued under that indenture. However, no such modification or amendment may, without the consent of the holders of the debt securities affected by the modification or amendment:

change the stated maturity of the principal of, or any premium (or make-whole amount) on, or any installment of principal of or interest on, any such debt security;

reduce the principal amount of, the rate or amount of interest on or any premium (or make-whole amount) payable on redemption of any such debt security;

reduce the amount of principal of an original issue discount security that would be due and payable upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity thereof or would be provable in bankruptcy, or adversely affect any right of repayment of the holder of any such debt security;

change the place of payment or the coin or currency for payment of principal of, or any premium (or make-whole amount) or interest on, any such debt security;

impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on or with respect to any such debt security;

reduce the percentage in principal amount of any outstanding debt securities necessary to modify or amend the applicable indenture with respect to such debt securities, to waive compliance with particular provisions thereof or defaults and consequences thereunder or to reduce the quorum or voting requirements set forth in the applicable indenture; and

modify any of the foregoing provisions or any of the provisions relating to the waiver of particular past defaults or covenants, except to increase the required percentage to effect such action or to provide that some of the other provisions may not be modified or waived without the consent of the holder of such debt security.

The holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series may, on behalf of all holders of debt securities of that series, waive, insofar as that series is concerned, our compliance with material restrictive covenants of the applicable indenture.

AvalonBay and the respective trustee may make modifications and amendments of an indenture without the consent of any holder of debt securities for any of the following purposes:

to evidence the succession of another person to us as obligor under such indenture;

to add to the covenants of AvalonBay for the benefit of the holders of all or any series of debt securities or to surrender any right or power conferred upon us in such indenture;

to add events of default for the benefit of the holders of all or any series of debt securities;

to add or change any provisions of an indenture (1) to facilitate the issuance of, or to change or eliminate restrictions on the payment of principal of, or premium (or make-whole amount) or interest on, debt securities in bearer form, or (2) to permit or facilitate the issuance of debt securities in uncertificated form, provided that such action shall not adversely affect the interests of the holders of the debt securities of any series in any material respect;

Table of Contents

to change or eliminate any provisions of an indenture, provided that any such change or elimination shall become effective only when there are no debt securities outstanding of any series created prior thereto which are entitled to the benefit of such provision;

to secure the debt securities;

to establish the form or terms of debt securities of any series;

to provide for the acceptance of appointment by a successor trustee or facilitate the administration of the trusts under an indenture by more than one trustee;

to cure any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency in an indenture, provided that such action shall not adversely affect the interests of holders of debt securities of any series issued under such indenture; or

to supplement any of the provisions of an indenture to the extent necessary to permit or facilitate defeasance and discharge of any series of such debt securities, provided that such action shall not adversely affect the interests of the holders of the outstanding debt securities of any series.

Voting

The indentures provide that in determining whether the holders of the requisite principal amount of outstanding debt securities of a series have given any request, demand, authorization, direction, notice, consent or waiver under the indentures or whether a quorum is present at a meeting of holders of debt securities:

the principal amount of an original issue discount security that shall be deemed to be outstanding shall be the amount of the principal thereof that would be due and payable as of the date of such determination upon declaration of acceleration of the maturity thereof;

the principal amount of any debt security denominated in a foreign currency that shall be deemed outstanding shall be the United States dollar equivalent, determined on the issue date for such debt security, of the principal amount or, in the case of an original issue discount security, the United States dollar equivalent on the issue date of such debt security of the amount determined as provided in the preceding bullet point;

the principal amount of an indexed security that shall be deemed outstanding shall be the principal face amount of such indexed security at original issuance, unless otherwise provided for such indexed security under such indenture; and

debt securities owned by us or any other obligor upon the debt securities or by any affiliate of ours or of such other obligor shall be disregarded.

The indentures contain provisions for convening meetings of the holders of debt securities of a series. A meeting will be permitted to be called at any time by the applicable trustee, and also, upon request, by us or the holders of at least 25% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of such series, in any such case upon notice given as provided in such indenture. Except for any consent that must be given by the holder of each debt security affected by the modifications and amendments of an indenture described above, any resolution presented at a meeting or adjourned meeting duly reconvened at which a quorum is present may be adopted by the affirmative vote of the holders of a majority of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series represented at such meeting.

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

Notwithstanding the preceding paragraph, except as referred to above, any resolution relating to a request, demand, authorization, direction, notice, consent, waiver or other action that may be made, given or taken by the holders of a specified percentage, which is less than a majority, of the aggregate

Table of Contents

principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of a series may be adopted at a meeting or adjourned meeting duly reconvened at which a quorum is present by the affirmative vote of such specified percentage.

Any resolution passed or decision taken at any properly held meeting of holders of debt securities of any series will be binding on all holders of such series. The quorum at any meeting called to adopt a resolution, and at any reconvened meeting, will be persons holding or representing a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of a series. However, if any action is to be taken relating to a consent or waiver which may be given by the holders of at least a specified percentage in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of a series, the persons holding such percentage will constitute a quorum.

Notwithstanding the foregoing provisions, the indentures provide that if any action is to be taken at a meeting with respect to any request, demand, authorization, direction, notice, consent, waiver and other action that such indenture expressly provides may be made, given or taken by the holders of a specified percentage in principal amount of all outstanding debt securities affected by such action, or of the holders of such series and one or more additional series:

there shall be no minimum quorum requirement for such meeting; and

the principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of such series that vote in favor of such request, demand, authorization, direction, notice, consent, waiver or other action shall be taken into account in determining whether such request, demand, authorization, direction, notice, consent, waiver or other action has been made, given or taken under such indenture.

Subordination

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, subordinated securities will be subject to the following subordination provisions.

Upon any distribution to our creditors in a liquidation, dissolution or reorganization, the payment of the principal of and interest on any subordinated securities will be subordinated to the extent provided in the applicable indenture in right of payment to the prior payment in full of all senior debt. However, our obligation to make payments of the principal of and interest on such subordinated securities otherwise will not be affected. No payment of principal or interest will be permitted to be made on subordinated securities at any time if a default on senior debt exists that permits the holders of such senior debt to accelerate its maturity and the default is the subject of judicial proceedings or we receive notice of the default. After all senior debt is paid in full and until the subordinated securities are paid in full, holders of subordinated securities will be subrogated to the rights of holders of senior debt to the extent that distributions otherwise payable to holders of subordinated securities have been applied to the payment of senior debt. The subordinated indenture will not restrict the amount of senior debt or other indebtedness of AvalonBay and its subsidiaries. As a result of these subordination provisions, in the event of a distribution of assets upon insolvency, holders of subordinated securities may recover less, ratably, than our general creditors.

"Senior Debt" will be defined in the applicable indenture as the principal of and interest on, or substantially similar payments to be made by us in respect of, the following, whether outstanding at the date of execution of the applicable indenture or subsequently incurred, created or assumed:

indebtedness incurred by us for money borrowed or represented by purchase-money obligations;

indebtedness incurred by us evidenced by notes, debentures, bonds, or other securities issued under the provisions of an indenture, fiscal agency agreement or other agreement;

our obligations as lessee under leases of property either made as part of any sale and leaseback transaction to which we are a party or otherwise;

Table of Contents

indebtedness of partnerships and joint ventures which is included in our consolidated financial statements;

indebtedness, obligations and liabilities of others in respect of which we are liable contingently or otherwise to pay or advance money or property or as guarantor, endorser or otherwise or which we have agreed to purchase or otherwise acquire; and

any binding commitment we have to fund any real estate investment or to fund any investment in any entity making such real estate investment.

In each case, the following will not be Senior Debt:

any such indebtedness, obligation or liability referred to in the preceding clauses (1) that is outstanding and (2) the instrument creating or evidencing such indebtedness, obligation or liability provides that the same is not superior to or ranks on an equal basis with the subordinated securities with respect to right of payment;

any such indebtedness, obligation or liability that is subordinated to indebtedness incurred by us to substantially the same extent as or to a greater extent than the subordinated securities are subordinated; and

the subordinated securities.

No restrictions will be included in any indenture relating to subordinated securities upon the creation of additional senior debt.

If this prospectus is being delivered in connection with the offering of a series of subordinated securities, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the information incorporated in this prospectus by reference will set forth the approximate amount of senior debt outstanding as of the end of our most recent fiscal quarter.

Discharge, defeasance and covenant defeasance

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the indentures allow us to discharge our obligations to holders of any series of debt securities issued under any indenture when:

either (1) all securities of such series have already been delivered to the applicable trustee for cancellation; or (2) all securities of such series have not already been delivered to the applicable trustee for cancellation but (a) have become due and payable, (b) will become due and payable within one year, or (c) if redeemable at our option, are to be redeemed within one year, and we have irrevocably deposited with the applicable trustee, in trust, funds in such currency or currencies, currency unit or units or composite currency or currencies in which such debt securities are payable, an amount sufficient to pay the entire indebtedness on such debt securities in respect of principal (and any premium or make-whole amount) and interest to the date of such deposit if such debt securities have become due and payable or, if they have not, to the stated maturity or redemption date;

we have paid or caused to be paid all other sums payable; and

we have delivered to the trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel stating the conditions to discharging the debt securities have been satisfied.

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the indentures provide that, upon our irrevocable deposit with the applicable trustee, in trust, of an amount, in such currency or currencies, currency unit or units or composite currency or currencies in which such debt securities are payable at stated maturity, or government obligations, or both, applicable to such debt securities, which through the scheduled payment of principal and interest in accordance with their terms will provide

Table of Contents

money in an amount sufficient to pay the principal of, and any premium (or make-whole amount) and interest on, such debt securities, and any mandatory sinking fund or analogous payments thereon, on the scheduled due dates therefor, we may elect either:

to defease and be discharged from any and all obligations with respect to such debt securities; or

to be released from our obligations with respect to such debt securities under the applicable indenture or, if provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, our obligations with respect to any other covenant, and any omission to comply with such obligations shall not constitute an event of default with respect to such debt securities.

Notwithstanding the above, we may not elect to defease and be discharged from the obligation to pay any additional amounts upon the occurrence of particular events of tax, assessment or governmental charge with respect to payments on such debt securities and the obligations to register the transfer or exchange of such debt securities, to replace temporary or mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen debt securities, to maintain an office or agency in respect of such debt securities, or to hold monies for payment in trust.

The indentures only permit us to establish the trust described in the paragraph above if, among other things, we have delivered to the applicable trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of such debt securities will not recognize income, gain or loss for federal income tax purposes as a result of such defeasance or covenant defeasance and will be subject to federal income tax on the same amounts, in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if such defeasance or covenant defeasance had not occurred. Such opinion of counsel, in the case of defeasance, will be required to refer to and be based upon a ruling received from or published by the Internal Revenue Service or a change in applicable federal income tax law occurring after the date of the indenture. In the event of such defeasance, the holders of such debt securities would be able to look only to such trust fund for payment of principal, any premium (or make-whole amount), and interest.

When we use the term "government obligations," we mean securities that are:

direct obligations of the United States or the government that issued the foreign currency in which the debt securities of a particular series are payable, for the payment of which its full faith and credit is pledged; or

obligations of a person controlled or supervised by and acting as an agency or instrumentality of the United States or other government that issued the foreign currency in which the debt securities of such series are payable, the payment of which is unconditionally guaranteed as a full faith and credit obligation by the United States or such other government, which are not callable or redeemable at the option of the issuer thereof and shall also include a depository receipt issued by a bank or trust company as custodian with respect to any such government obligation or a specific payment of interest on or principal of any such government obligation held by such custodian for the account of the holder of a depository receipt. However, except as required by law, such custodian is not authorized to make any deduction from the amount payable to the holder of such depository receipt from any amount received by the custodian in respect of the government obligation or the specific payment of interest on or principal of the government obligation evidenced by such depository receipt.

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, if after we have deposited funds and/or government obligations to effect defeasance or covenant defeasance with respect to debt securities of any series, (a) the holder of a debt security of such series is entitled to, and does, elect under the terms of the applicable indenture or the terms of such debt security to receive payment in a currency, currency unit or composite currency other than that in which such deposit has been made in respect of such debt security, or (b) a conversion event occurs in respect of the currency, currency unit

Table of Contents

or composite currency in which such deposit has been made, the indebtedness represented by such debt security will be deemed to have been, and will be, fully discharged and satisfied through the payment of the principal of, and premium (or make-whole amount) and interest on, such debt security as they become due out of the proceeds yielded by converting the amount so deposited in respect of such debt security into the currency, currency unit or composite currency in which such debt security becomes payable as a result of such election or such cessation of usage based on the applicable market exchange rate.

When we use the term "conversion event," we mean the cessation of use of:

a currency, currency unit or composite currency both by the government of the country that issued such currency and for the settlement of transactions by a central bank or other public institutions of or within the international banking community;

the European Currency Unit both within the European Monetary System and for the settlement of transactions by public institutions of or within the European Communities; or

any currency unit or composite currency other than the European Currency Unit for the purposes for which it was established.

Unless otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, all payments of principal of, and premium, if any, and interest on, any debt security that is payable in a foreign currency that ceases to be used by its government of issuance shall be made in United States dollars.

In the event that (a) we effect covenant defeasance with respect to any debt securities and (b) such debt securities are declared due and payable because of the occurrence of any event of default, the amount in such currency, currency unit or composite currency in which such debt securities are payable, and government obligations on deposit with the applicable trustee, will be sufficient to pay amounts due on such debt securities at the time of their stated maturity but may not be sufficient to pay amounts due on such debt securities at the time of the acceleration resulting from such event of default. However, we would remain liable to make payments of such amounts due at the time of acceleration. Notwithstanding the first sentence of this paragraph, events of default in (b) above shall not include the event of default described in (1) the fourth bullet point under " Events of default, notice and waiver" with respect to specified sections of an indenture or (2) the seventh bullet point under " Events of default, notice and waiver" with respect to any other covenant as to which there has been covenant defeasance.

The applicable prospectus supplement may further describe the provisions, if any, permitting such defeasance or covenant defeasance, including any modifications to the provisions described above, with respect to the debt securities of or within a particular series.

Conversion rights

The terms and conditions, if any, upon which the debt securities are convertible into common stock or preferred stock will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. The terms will include whether the debt securities are convertible into shares of common stock or preferred stock, the conversion price (or manner of calculation thereof), the conversion period, provisions as to whether conversion will be at our option or the option of the holders, the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion price and provisions affecting conversion in the event of the redemption of the debt securities and any restrictions on conversion, including restrictions directed at maintaining our status as a REIT. If we issue debt securities that are convertible into shares of common stock or convertible into shares of preferred stock, in either case having rights, preferences or privileges with respect to voting, dividends, rights upon liquidation or otherwise that are on par with or senior to any class or series of common stock or preferred stock, then the rights of holders of such junior or parity classes or series of common stock or preferred stock may be materially adversely affected. In addition, the conversion of

Table of Contents

any such debt securities into common stock or preferred stock could result in the dilution of the holders of the then-existing shares of common stock or preferred stock.

Global securities

The debt securities of a series may be issued in whole or in part in the form of one or more global securities that will be deposited with, or on behalf of, a depository identified in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to such series. Global securities, if any, issued in the United States are expected to be deposited with The Depository Trust Company (DTC), as depository. We may issue global securities in either registered or bearer form and in either temporary or permanent form. We will describe the specific terms of the depository arrangement with respect to a series of debt securities in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to such series. We expect that unless the applicable prospectus supplement provides otherwise, the following provisions will apply to depository arrangements.

Once a global security is issued, the depository for such global security or its nominee will credit on its book-entry registration and transfer system the respective principal amounts of the individual debt securities represented by such global security to the accounts of participants that have accounts with such depository. Such accounts shall be designated by the underwriters, dealers or agents with respect to such debt securities or by us if we offer such debt securities directly. Ownership of beneficial interests in such global security will be limited to participants with the depository or persons that may hold interests through those participants.

We expect that, under procedures established by DTC, ownership of beneficial interests in any global security for which DTC is the depository will be shown on, and the transfer of that ownership will be effected only through, records maintained by DTC or its nominee (with respect to beneficial interests of participants with the depository) and records of participants (with respect to beneficial interests of persons who hold through participants with the depository). Neither we nor the trustee will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records of DTC or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records of DTC or any of its participants relating to beneficial ownership interests in the debt securities. The laws of some states require that certain purchasers of securities take physical delivery of such securities in definitive form. Such limits and laws may impair the ability to own, pledge or transfer beneficial interest in a global security.

So long as the depository for a global security or its nominee is the registered owner of such global security, such depository or such nominee, as the case may be, will be considered the sole owner or holder of the debt securities represented by the global security for all purposes under the applicable indenture. Except as described below or in the applicable prospectus supplement, owners of beneficial interest in a global security will not be entitled to have any of the individual debt securities represented by such global security registered in their names, will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of any such debt securities in definitive form and will not be considered the owners or holders thereof under the applicable indenture. Beneficial owners of debt securities evidenced by a global security will not be considered the owners or holders thereof under the applicable indenture for any purpose, including with respect to the giving of any direction, instructions or approvals to the trustee under the indenture. Accordingly, each person owning a beneficial interest in a global security with respect to which DTC is the depository must rely on the procedures of DTC and, if such person is not a participant with the depository, on the procedures of the participant through which such person owns its interests, to exercise any rights of a holder under the applicable indenture. We understand that, under existing industry practice, if DTC requests any action of holders or if an owner of a beneficial interest in a global security desires to give or take any action which a holder is entitled to give or take under the applicable indenture, DTC would authorize the participants holding the relevant beneficial interest to give or take such action, and such participants would authorize beneficial owners through

Table of Contents

such participants to give or take such actions or would otherwise act upon the instructions of beneficial owners holding through them.

Payments of principal of, and any premium (or make-whole amount) and interest on, individual debt securities represented by a global security registered in the name of a depository or its nominee will be made to or at the direction of the depository or its nominee, as the case may be, as the registered owner of the global security under the applicable indenture. Under the terms of the applicable indenture, we and the trustee may treat the persons in whose name debt securities, including a global security, are registered as the owners thereof for the purpose of receiving such payments. Consequently, neither we nor the trustee have or will have any responsibility or liability for the payment of such amounts to beneficial owners of debt securities including principal, any premium (or make-whole amount) or interest. We believe, however, that it is currently the policy of DTC to immediately credit the accounts of relevant participants with such payments, in amounts proportionate to their respective holdings of beneficial interests in the relevant global security as shown on the records of DTC or its nominee. We also expect that payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in such global security held through such participants will be governed by standing instructions and customary practices, as is the case with securities held for the account of customers in bearer form or registered in street name, and will be the responsibility of such participants. Redemption notices with respect to any debt securities represented by a global security will be sent to the depository or its nominee. If less than all of the debt securities of any series are to be redeemed, we expect the depository to determine the amount of the interest of each participant in such debt securities to be redeemed to be determined by lot. Neither we, the trustee, any paying agent nor the security registrar for such debt securities will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to or payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in the global security for such debt securities or for maintaining any records with respect thereto.

Neither we nor the trustee will be liable for any delay by the holders of a global security or the depository in identifying the beneficial owners of debt securities, and we and the trustee may conclusively rely on, and will be protected in relying on, instructions from the holder of a global security or the depository for all purposes. The rules applicable to DTC and its participants are on file with the SEC.

If a depository for any debt securities is at any time unwilling, unable or ineligible to continue as depository and we do not appoint a successor depository within 90 days, we will issue individual debt securities in exchange for the global security representing such debt securities. In addition, we may at any time and in our sole discretion, subject to any limitations described in the prospectus supplement relating to such debt securities, determine not to have any of such debt securities represented by one or more global securities and in such event will issue individual debt securities in exchange for the global security or securities representing such debt securities. Individual debt securities so issued will be issued in denominations of \$1,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000.

The debt securities of a series may also be issued in whole or in part in the form of one or more bearer global securities that will be deposited with a depository, or with a nominee for such depository, identified in the applicable prospectus supplement. Any such bearer global securities may be issued in temporary or permanent form. The specific terms and procedures, including the specific terms of the depository arrangement, with respect to any portion of a series of debt securities to be represented by one or more bearer global securities will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

No Recourse

There is no recourse under any obligation, covenant or agreement in the applicable indenture or with respect to any security against any of our or our successor's past, present or future stockholders, employees, officers or directors.

Table of Contents

Description of Preferred Stock

The following is a description of the material terms and provisions of our preferred stock. It may not contain all of the information that is important to you. Therefore, you should read our charter and bylaws before you purchase any shares of our preferred stock.

General

Under our charter, AvalonBay is authorized to issue 50,000,000 shares of preferred stock, of which 4,600,000 shares have been designated 8.70% Series H Cumulative Redeemable Preferred Stock and 4,000,000 of which are currently outstanding. The Series H Preferred Stock is listed on the NYSE under the symbol "AVB PrH."

Shares of preferred stock may be issued from time to time, in one or more series, as authorized by our board of directors. Prior to the issuance of shares of each series, the board of directors is required by the Maryland General Corporation Law and our charter to fix for each series, subject to the provisions of the charter regarding excess stock, the terms, preferences, conversion or other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to dividends or other distributions, qualifications and terms or conditions of redemption, as are permitted by Maryland law. The preferred stock will, when issued following the receipt of full consideration therefor, be fully paid and nonassessable and will have no preemptive rights. Our board of directors could authorize the issuance of shares of preferred stock with terms and conditions that could have the effect of discouraging a takeover or other transactions that holders of common stock might believe to be in their best interests or in which holders of some, or a majority, of the shares of common stock might receive a premium for their shares over the then market price of such shares of common stock.

Terms

You should refer to the prospectus supplement relating to the offering of a series of preferred stock for the specific terms of that series, including:

its title and stated value;

the number of shares of preferred stock offered, the liquidation preference per share, if applicable, and the offering price;

the applicable dividend rate(s) or amount(s), period(s) and payment date(s) or method(s) of calculation thereof;

the date from which dividends on the preferred stock shall accumulate, if applicable;

any procedures for auction and remarketing;

any provision for a sinking fund;

any applicable provision for redemption;

any securities exchange listing;

the terms and conditions of conversion into common stock, including the conversion price or rate or manner of calculation thereof;

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

any other specific terms, preferences, rights, limitations or restrictions;

a discussion of applicable federal income tax considerations;

the relative ranking and preference as to dividend rights and rights upon our liquidation, dissolution or the winding up of our affairs;

Table of Contents

any limitations on issuance of any series of preferred stock ranking senior to or on a parity with such series of preferred stock as to dividend rights and rights upon our liquidation, dissolution or the winding up of our affairs; and

any limitations on direct or beneficial ownership and restrictions on transfer, in each case as may be appropriate to preserve our status as a REIT.

Rank

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, the preferred stock will, with respect to dividend rights and rights upon a liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, rank:

senior to all classes and series of our common stock, and to all equity securities ranking junior to such preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs;

on a parity with all equity securities issued by us, the terms of which specifically provide that such equity securities rank on a parity with the preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs; and

junior to all equity securities issued by us, the terms of which specifically provide that such equity securities rank senior to the preferred stock with respect to dividend rights or rights upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs.

The term "equity securities" does not include convertible debt securities.

Dividends

Holders of the preferred stock of each series will be entitled to receive cash dividends when, as and if declared by our board of directors. We will pay dividends out of assets that are legally available for payment of dividends. We will specify the rate(s) or amount(s) of dividends and the dates that we will pay dividends in the applicable prospectus supplement. Dividends will be payable to holders of record as they appear on our stock transfer books on such record dates as fixed by our board of directors.

Dividends on any series of the preferred stock may be cumulative or non-cumulative, as provided in the applicable prospectus supplement. Dividends, if cumulative, will be cumulative from and after the date set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. If our board of directors fails to declare a dividend payable on a dividend payment date on any series of the preferred stock for which dividends are non-cumulative, then the holders of that series of the preferred stock will have no right to receive a dividend in respect of the dividend period ending on that dividend payment date. Accordingly, we will have no obligation to pay the dividend accrued for that period, whether or not dividends on that series are declared payable on any future dividend payment date.

If preferred stock of any series is outstanding, we will not declare, pay or set aside funds to pay dividends on any other series of our stock ranking, as to dividends, on a parity with or junior to the preferred stock of such series for any period unless:

if that series of preferred stock has a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full cumulative dividends on the preferred stock of such series for all past dividend periods and the then current dividend period; or

if that series of preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full dividends on the preferred stock of such series for the then current dividend period.

Table of Contents

We must declare all dividends pro rata on all series of preferred stock that rank on a parity with the series of preferred stock upon which we paid dividends if we did not pay or set aside funds to pay dividends on the series of preferred stock in full. We must declare dividends pro rata to ensure that the amount of dividends declared per share of preferred stock bears in all cases the same ratio that accrued dividends per share of preferred stock bears to each other. We will not accumulate unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods with respect to accrued dividends on preferred stock that does not have cumulative dividends. No interest, or sum of money in lieu of interest, will be payable in respect of any payments that may be in arrears.

Except as provided in the immediately preceding paragraph, unless:

if such series of preferred stock has a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full cumulative dividends for all past dividend periods and the then current dividend period; or

if such series of preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full dividends for the then current dividend period,

we will not: (1) declare, pay or set aside funds to pay dividends or declare or make any other distribution upon the common stock or any other shares of our stock ranking junior to or on a parity with the preferred stock of such series as to dividends or upon liquidation; (2) redeem, purchase or otherwise acquire for any consideration any common stock, or any other shares of our stock ranking junior to or on a parity with the preferred stock of such series as to dividends; nor (3) pay any monies to or make any monies available for a sinking fund to redeem any such shares, except by conversion into or exchange for other shares of our capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock of such series as to dividends or liquidation. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, we may declare or set aside dividends in common stock or other shares of stock ranking junior to the preferred stock of such series as to dividends and upon liquidation.

Any dividend payment we make on a series of preferred stock shall first be credited against the earliest accrued but unpaid dividend due with respect to shares of such series which remains payable.

Redemption

If so provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, the preferred stock will be subject to mandatory redemption or redemption at our option, in whole or in part, upon the terms, at the times and at the redemption prices set forth in the prospectus supplement.

The prospectus supplement relating to a series of preferred stock that is subject to mandatory redemption will specify the number of shares that will be redeemed in each year commencing after a specified date at a specified redemption price per share, together with an amount equal to all accrued and unpaid dividends thereon to the date of redemption. Unless the shares have a cumulative dividend, such accrued dividends will not include any accumulation in respect of unpaid dividends for prior dividend periods. We may pay the redemption price in cash or other property, as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement. If the redemption price for preferred stock of any series is payable only from the net proceeds of the issuance of shares of our stock, the terms of such preferred stock may provide that, if no such shares of our stock have been issued or to the extent the net proceeds from any issuance are insufficient to pay in full the aggregate redemption price then due, such preferred stock will automatically and mandatorily convert into the applicable shares of our stock under the conversion provisions specified in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

Notwithstanding the foregoing, we will not redeem any preferred stock of a series unless:

if that series of preferred stock has a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full cumulative dividends on the preferred stock for the past and current dividend periods; or

if that series of preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full dividends on the preferred stock for the current dividend period.

However, in no case will we redeem any preferred stock of a series unless we redeem all outstanding preferred stock of the series simultaneously.

In addition, except as described below, we will not acquire any preferred stock of a series unless:

if that series of preferred stock has a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full cumulative dividends on all outstanding shares of such series of preferred stock for all past dividend periods and the then current dividend period; or

if that series of preferred stock does not have a cumulative dividend, we have declared and paid or contemporaneously declare and pay or set aside funds to pay full dividends on the preferred stock of such series for the then current dividend period.

However, at any time we may purchase or acquire preferred stock of that series (1) to preserve our status as a REIT, (2) in accordance with a purchase or exchange offer made on the same terms to holders of all outstanding preferred stock of such series or (3) by conversion into or exchange for shares of our capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock of such series as to dividends and upon liquidation.

If fewer than all of the outstanding shares of preferred stock of any series are to be redeemed, we will determine the number of shares that may be redeemed pro rata from the holders of record of such shares in proportion to the number of such shares held or for which redemption is requested by such holder or by any other equitable manner that we determine. Such determination will reflect adjustments to avoid redemption of fractional shares.

We will mail notice of redemption at least 30 days but not more than 60 days before the redemption date to each holder of record of preferred stock to be redeemed at the address shown on our stock transfer books. Each notice shall state:

the redemption date;

the number of shares and series to be redeemed;

the redemption price;

the place or places where certificates are to be surrendered for payment of the redemption price;

that dividends on the shares to be redeemed will cease to accrue from and after the redemption date;

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

the date upon which the holder's conversion rights, if any, as to the shares shall terminate; and

the specific number of shares to be redeemed from each the holder if fewer than all the shares of any series are to be redeemed.

If notice of redemption has been given and we have set aside the funds necessary for the redemption in trust for the benefit of the holders of any shares so called for redemption, then from

Table of Contents

and after the redemption date, dividends will cease to accrue on those shares, and all rights of the holders of such shares will terminate, except the right to receive the redemption price.

Liquidation preference

Upon any voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, then, before we make any distribution or payment to the holders of any common stock or any other class or series of our capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock in the distribution of assets upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, the holders of each series of preferred stock will be entitled to receive, out of assets legally available for distribution to stockholders, liquidating distributions in the amount of the liquidation preference per share set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, plus any accrued and unpaid dividends thereon. Such dividends will not include any accumulation in respect of unpaid noncumulative dividends for prior dividend periods. After full payment of their liquidating distributions, holders will have no right or claim to any of our remaining assets. Upon any such voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, if our available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all outstanding preferred stock and the corresponding amounts payable on all other classes or series of our capital stock ranking on a parity with the preferred stock in the distribution of assets, then the holders of the preferred stock and all other such classes or series of capital stock will share ratably in any such distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be entitled.

Upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up and if we have made liquidating distributions in full to all holders of preferred stock, we will distribute our remaining assets among the holders of any other classes or series of capital stock ranking junior to the preferred stock according to their respective rights and preferences and, in each case, according to their respective number of shares. For such purposes, our consolidation or merger with or into any other corporation, trust or entity, or the sale, lease or conveyance of all or substantially all of our assets or business will not be deemed to constitute a liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs.

Voting rights

Holders of preferred stock will have no voting rights, except as described in the next paragraph, as otherwise from time to time required by law or as indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Unless otherwise provided for any series of preferred stock, so long as any preferred stock of a series remains outstanding, we will not, without the affirmative vote or consent of the holders of at least two-thirds of the preferred stock of such series outstanding at the time, given in person or by proxy, either in writing or at a meeting with each of such series voting separately as a class:

authorize or create, or increase the authorized or issued amount of, any class or series of shares of capital stock ranking senior to such series of preferred stock with respect to payment of dividends or the distribution of assets upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, or reclassify any of our authorized shares of capital stock into such shares, or create, authorize or issue any obligation or security convertible into or evidencing the right to purchase any such shares; or

amend, alter or repeal the provisions of our charter or the amendment to our charter designating the terms for such series of preferred stock, whether by merger, consolidation or otherwise, so as to materially and adversely affect any right, preference, privilege or voting power of such series of preferred stock or the holders thereof.

The occurrence of any of the events described above in the immediately preceding bullet shall not be deemed to materially and adversely affect the rights, preferences, privileges or voting power of holders of preferred stock, provided that, the preferred stock remains outstanding with the terms thereof materially unchanged, or, if we are not the surviving entity in such transaction, the preferred

Table of Contents

stock is exchanged for a security of a surviving entity with terms that are materially the same as the preferred stock. In addition, any increase in the amount of (1) authorized preferred stock or the creation or issuance of any other series of preferred stock, or (2) authorized shares of such series or any other series of preferred stock, in each case ranking on a parity with or junior to the preferred stock of such series with respect to payment of dividends or the distribution of assets upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, shall not be deemed to materially and adversely affect such rights, preferences, privileges or voting powers.

The foregoing voting provisions will not apply if, at or prior to the time when the act with respect to which such vote would otherwise be required will be effected, we have redeemed or called for redemption all outstanding shares of such series of preferred stock and, if called for redemption, have deposited sufficient funds in trust to effect such redemption.

Conversion rights

The terms and conditions upon which any series of preferred stock may be convertible into common stock will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to the offering of the series of preferred stock. Such terms will include the number of shares of common stock into which the shares of preferred stock are convertible, the conversion price, rate or manner of calculation thereof, the conversion period, provisions as to whether conversion will be at our option or at the holders' option, the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion price and provisions affecting conversion in the event of the redemption.

Restrictions on ownership

For us to qualify as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code, no more than 50% in value of our outstanding capital stock may be owned, directly or indirectly, by or for five or fewer individuals at any time during the last half of a taxable year. To assist us in meeting this requirement, we may take actions to limit the beneficial ownership, directly or indirectly, by a single person of our outstanding equity securities, including any of our preferred stock. Therefore, the amendment to our charter designating each series of preferred stock may contain provisions restricting the ownership and transfer of the preferred stock. The applicable prospectus supplement will specify any additional ownership limitation relating to a series of preferred stock. See "Limits on Ownership of Stock" beginning on page 37.

Transfer agent

The transfer agent and registrar for the preferred stock will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Description of Common Stock

The following is a description of the material terms and provisions of our common stock. You should read our charter and bylaws in their entirety before you purchase any shares of our common stock.

General

Under our charter, we have authority to issue 140,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$.01 per share. Under Maryland law, stockholders generally are not responsible for our debts or obligations. As of October 31, 2006, we had 74,602,809 shares of common stock issued and outstanding. Our common stock is listed on the NYSE under the symbol "AVB."

Table of Contents

Dividends

Subject to the preferential rights of any other class or series of stock and to the provisions of our charter regarding excess stock, which are described below, holders of shares of our common stock will be entitled to receive dividends on shares of common stock out of assets that we may legally use to pay dividends, if and when they are authorized and declared by our board of directors.

Voting rights

Except as otherwise required by law and except as provided by the terms of any other class or series of stock, holders of common stock have the exclusive power to vote on all matters presented to our stockholders, including the election of directors. Holders of common stock are entitled to one vote per share. There is no cumulative voting in the election of our directors, and, subject to any rights to elect directors that are granted to the holders of any class or series of preferred stock, the affirmative vote of the holders of a majority of all outstanding shares of common stock is required to elect a director.

Liquidation/dissolution rights

Subject to the preferential rights of any other class or series of stock and to the provisions of our charter regarding excess stock, holders of shares of our common stock share in the same proportion as our other stockholders in the assets that we may legally use to pay distributions in the event we are liquidated, dissolved or our affairs are wound up after we pay or make adequate provision for all of our known debts and liabilities.

Other rights

Subject to the preferential rights of any other class or series of stock and to provisions of our charter regarding excess stock, all shares of our common stock have equal dividend, distribution, liquidation and other rights, and have no preference, appraisal or exchange rights. Furthermore, holders of shares of our common stock have no conversion, sinking fund or redemption rights, or preemptive rights to subscribe for any of our securities.

Under Maryland law, a corporation generally cannot dissolve, amend its charter, merge, sell all or substantially all of its assets, engage in a share exchange or engage in similar transactions outside the ordinary course of business unless approved by the affirmative vote of stockholders holding at least two-thirds of the shares entitled to vote on the matter, unless a different percentage is set forth in the corporation's charter, which percentage shall not in any event be less than a majority of all of the shares entitled to vote on such matter. Our charter provides that whenever any vote of the holders of voting stock is required to amend or repeal any provision of the charter, then in addition to any other vote of the holders of voting stock that is required by the charter, (1) the affirmative vote of the holders of a majority of our outstanding shares of stock entitled to vote on such amendment or repeal, voting together as a single class, and (2) the affirmative vote of the holders of a majority of the outstanding shares of each class entitled to vote thereon as a class are required. However, with respect to the amendment or repeal of any of the provisions of our charter relating to the resignation or removal of directors, vacancies on the board of directors, independent directors, the rights and powers of our company, the board of directors and officers, and the limitation of liability of directors and officers, the affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of the outstanding shares entitled to vote on such amendment or repeal, voting together as a single class, and the affirmative vote of the holders of not less than two-thirds of the outstanding shares of each class entitled to vote thereon as a class, shall be required.

Table of Contents

Restrictions on ownership

For us to qualify as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code, no more than 50% in value of our outstanding capital stock may be owned, directly or indirectly, by or for five or fewer individuals at any time during the last half of a taxable year. To assist us in meeting this requirement, we may take actions such as the automatic conversion of shares in excess of this ownership restriction into shares of excess stock to limit the beneficial ownership of our outstanding equity securities, directly or indirectly, by one individual. See "Limits on Ownership of Stock" beginning on page 32.

Transfer Agent

The transfer agent and registrar for the common stock is Bank of New York, New York, New York.

Limits on Ownership of Stock

Ownership limits

For us to qualify as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code, among other things, no more than 50% in value of our outstanding capital stock may be owned, directly or indirectly, by or for five or fewer individuals at any time during the last half of a taxable year. Additionally, the shares of our capital stock must be beneficially owned by 100 or more persons during at least 335 days of a taxable year of twelve months or during a proportionate part of a shorter taxable year. To protect us against the risk of losing our status as a REIT due to a concentration of ownership among our stockholders, and to otherwise address concerns related to concentrated ownership of capital stock, our charter provides that no person may own (directly, indirectly by virtue of the attribution provisions of the Internal Revenue Code, or beneficially under Rule 13d-3 of the Securities Exchange Act) more than 9.8% of any class or series of our stock (15% for some entities as described below). Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, the board of directors at its option and in its sole discretion may approve ownership greater than the applicable ownership limitation by selected persons or entities. Our board of directors does not expect that it would waive the applicable ownership limit unless the board of directors receives evidence to its satisfaction that the waiver of the limit will not jeopardize our status as a REIT, and the board of directors also decides that the waiver is in our stockholders' best interests. Any transfer of shares of stock, including any security convertible into shares of stock, shall be void and have no effect if it: (1) would create a direct or indirect ownership of shares of stock in excess of the applicable ownership limit, absent a valid waiver of this ownership limit or (2) would result in our disqualification as a REIT, including any transfer that would (a) result in the shares of stock being owned by fewer than 100 persons, (b) result in us being "closely held" within the meaning of Section 856(h) of the Internal Revenue Code or (c) result in us constructively owning 10% or more of the ownership interests in a tenant within the meaning of Section 856(d)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code. In addition, if any purported transfer of stock or any other event would otherwise result in any person violating the applicable ownership limit, then the purported transfer will be void and of no force or effect with respect to the intended transferee as to that number of shares in excess of the ownership limit. The intended transferee will acquire no right or interest in the excess shares; or, in the case of any event other than a purported transfer, the person holding record title to any shares in excess of the ownership limit shall cease to own any right or interest in the excess shares. In both cases, neither the intended transferee nor the person holding record title to any shares in excess of the ownership limit shall have any right to: (1) transfer or otherwise dispose of the excess stock, (2) vote the excess stock or (3) receive any dividend or distribution paid with respect to the excess stock, as further explained below.

Under the Internal Revenue Code, some types of entities, which includes pension plans described in Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code and mutual funds registered under the Investment

Table of Contents

Company Act of 1940, will be looked through for purposes of the five or fewer test described above. Our charter limits these pension plans and mutual funds to owning no more than 15% of any class or series of our stock.

Shares owned in excess of the ownership limit

Stock owned, or deemed to be owned, or proposed to be transferred to a stockholder in excess of the ownership limit will be converted automatically into shares of excess stock and will be transferred, by operation of law, to a trust, the beneficiary of which shall be a qualified charitable organization selected by us. As soon as practicable after the transfer of shares to the trust, the trustee of the trust will be required to sell the shares of excess stock to a person who could own the shares without violating the ownership limit and distribute to the proposed transferee an amount equal to the lesser of (1) the price paid by the proposed transferee for the shares of excess stock or (2) the sales proceeds received by the trust for the shares of excess stock. In the case of any excess stock resulting from any event other than a transfer, or from a transfer for no consideration (such as a gift), the trustee will be required to sell the excess stock to a qualified person or entity and distribute to the person holding record title to the shares in excess of the ownership limit an amount equal to the lesser of (A) the fair market value of the excess stock as of the date of the event or (B) the sales proceeds received by the trust for the excess stock. In either case, any proceeds in excess of the amount distributable to the proposed transferee or person holding record title to the shares in excess of the ownership limit, as applicable, will be distributed to the beneficiary of the trust.

Upon the transfer of shares of excess stock by the trustee, the shares shall be converted automatically into an equal number of shares of the same class and series that were converted into the excess stock, and the shares of excess stock will be automatically retired and canceled and will thereupon be restored to the status of authorized but unissued shares of excess stock. Prior to a sale of any excess stock by the trustee, the trustee will be entitled to receive in trust for the beneficiary, all dividends and other distributions paid with respect to the excess stock. In addition, while the shares of excess stock are held in trust, the holder of shares will not be entitled to vote such shares, except when Maryland law mandates class voting rights. In the event voting rights are mandated by Maryland law, the trustee shall be entitled to vote the shares of excess stock.

Neither the proposed transferee nor any person holding record title to any excess stock shall have any right to receive any dividend or distribution paid with respect to the excess stock. Any dividend or distribution paid on excess stock prior to discovery by us of the violation of the applicable ownership limit shall be repaid to us. In addition, neither the proposed transferee nor any person holding record title to any excess stock shall have any voting rights with respect to the excess stock. Any vote of any excess stock prior to discovery by us of the violation of the applicable ownership limit shall, subject to applicable law, be rescinded and deemed void and shall be recast by the trustee acting for the benefit of the beneficiary; provided, however, that such vote shall not be rescinded and recast if we have already taken irreversible corporate action. Shares of excess stock are not treasury stock, but rather constitute a separate class of issued and outstanding stock.

Right to purchase excess stock

In addition to the foregoing transfer restrictions, we have the right for a period of 90 days to purchase all or any portion of the excess stock from the proposed transferee or any person holding record title to any excess stock for a price per share equal to the lesser of:

- (1) the price per share initially paid for the stock by the proposed transferee or, in the case of excess stock resulting from any event other than a transfer or from a transfer for no consideration (such as a gift), the average of the closing price per share for the class of shares from which the shares of excess stock were converted for the five consecutive trading days ending on the date of such event or transfer, as applicable; or

Table of Contents

(2)

the average closing price per share for the class or series of shares from which the shares of excess stock were converted for the five consecutive trading days ending on the date we elect to purchase the shares.

The 90-day period begins on the date of the purported transfer or non-transfer event that violated the applicable ownership limit if the proposed transferee or person holding record title to any excess stock gives notice to us of the transfer or non-transfer event, as applicable, or if no notice is given, the date our board of directors determines that such a transfer has been made or such a non-transfer event has occurred.

General

The foregoing restrictions on transferability and ownership will not apply if our board of directors determines that it is no longer in our best interest to continue to qualify as a REIT. The board may, in its sole discretion, waive the ownership limits if evidence is presented that such ownership of shares in excess of the ownership limit will not jeopardize our qualification as a REIT and the board otherwise decides in its sole discretion that such action is in our stockholders' best interest.

Our stockholders are required to disclose to us in writing any information with respect to their ownership of our stock that we may request in order to determine our status as a REIT and to ensure compliance with the ownership limits.

The ownership limits may have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change of control of our company.

Federal Income Tax Considerations and Consequences of Your Investment

The following discussion describes the material U.S. federal income tax consequences relating to our qualification as a REIT and the ownership and disposition of shares of our common stock and, to a lesser extent, our debt securities.

The federal income tax consequences of the ownership and disposition of shares of our preferred stock and of our debt securities depend to a high degree on the specific rights and terms of the preferred stock or debt securities issued. If we offer one or more additional series of preferred stock or debt securities, information about any income tax consequences to holders of those particular shares of preferred stock or debt securities will be included in the documents pursuant to which they are offered to the extent required by applicable law.

Because this is a summary that is intended to address only material federal income tax consequences relating to the ownership and disposition of our common stock and, to a lesser extent, our debt securities that will apply to all holders, it may not contain all the information that may be important to you. As you review this discussion, you should keep in mind that:

the tax consequences to you may vary depending on your particular tax situation;

special rules that are not discussed below may apply to you if, for example, you are a tax-exempt organization, a broker-dealer, a non-U.S. person, a trust, an estate, a regulated investment company, a financial institution, an insurance company, or otherwise subject to special tax treatment under the Internal Revenue Code;

this summary does not address state, local or non-U.S. tax considerations;

this summary deals only with common stockholders and holders of debt securities that hold common stock or debt securities, as applicable, as "capital assets" within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Internal Revenue Code; and

this discussion is not intended to be, and should not be construed as, tax advice.

Table of Contents

You are urged both to review the following discussion and to consult with your own tax advisor to determine the effect of ownership and disposition of our securities on your individual tax situation, including any state, local or non-U.S. tax consequences.

The information in this section is based on the current Internal Revenue Code, current, temporary and proposed Treasury regulations, the legislative history of the Internal Revenue Code, current administrative interpretations and practices of the Internal Revenue Service, including its practices and policies as endorsed in private letter rulings, which are not binding on the Internal Revenue Service except in the case of the taxpayer to whom a private letter ruling is addressed, and existing court decisions. Future legislation, regulations, administrative interpretations and court decisions could change current law or adversely affect existing interpretations of current law. Any change could apply retroactively. We have not obtained any rulings from the Internal Revenue Service concerning the tax treatment of the matters discussed below. Thus, it is possible that the Internal Revenue Service could challenge the statements in this discussion, which do not bind the Internal Revenue Service or the courts, and that a court could agree with the Internal Revenue Service.

Taxation of AvalonBay as a REIT

We have elected to be taxed as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code. A REIT generally is not subject to federal income tax on the income that it distributes to stockholders if it meets the applicable REIT distribution requirements and other requirements for qualification.

We believe that we are organized and have operated, and we intend to continue to operate, in a manner allowing us to qualify as a REIT, but there can be no assurance that we have qualified or will remain qualified as a REIT. Qualification and taxation as a REIT depend upon our ability to meet, through actual annual (or in some cases quarterly) operating results, requirements relating to income, asset ownership, distribution levels and diversity of share ownership, and the various other REIT qualification requirements imposed under the Internal Revenue Code. Given the complex nature of the REIT qualification requirements, the ongoing importance of factual determinations and the possibility of future changes in our circumstances, we cannot provide any assurance that our actual operating results will satisfy the requirements for taxation as a REIT under the Internal Revenue Code for any particular taxable year.

So long as we qualify for taxation as a REIT, we generally will not be subject to federal corporate income tax on our net income that is distributed currently to our stockholders. This treatment substantially eliminates "double taxation" (that is, taxation at both the corporate and stockholder levels) that generally results from an investment in a corporation. However, we will be subject to federal income tax as follows:

We will be taxed at regular corporate rates on any undistributed "REIT taxable income." REIT taxable income is the taxable income of the REIT subject to specified adjustments, including a deduction for dividends paid;

Under some circumstances, we may be subject to the "alternative minimum tax" on our items of tax preference;

If we have net income from the sale or other disposition of "foreclosure property" that is held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business, or other nonqualifying income from foreclosure property, we will be subject to tax at the highest corporate rate on this income;

Our net income from "prohibited transactions" will be subject to a 100% tax. In general, prohibited transactions are sales or other dispositions of property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business other than foreclosure property;

Table of Contents

If we fail to satisfy either the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test discussed below, but nonetheless maintain our qualification as a REIT because other requirements are met, we will be subject to a tax equal to the greater of (1) the amount by which 75% of our gross income exceeds the amount of our income qualifying under the 75% test for the taxable year or (2) the amount by which 95% of our gross income exceeds the amount of our income qualifying for the 95% income test for the taxable year, multiplied by a fraction intended to reflect our profitability;

If we fail to satisfy any of the asset tests (other than a failure by a de minimis amount of the 5% or 10% asset tests) and we qualify for and satisfy certain cure provisions, then we will have to pay an excise tax equal to the greater of (1) \$50,000 and (2) an amount determined by multiplying (x) the net income generated during a specified period by the assets that caused the failure by (y) the highest federal income tax applicable to corporations;

If we fail to satisfy any REIT requirements other than the income test or asset test requirements and we qualify for a reasonable cause exception, then we will have to pay a penalty equal to \$50,000 for each such failure;

We will be subject to a 4% excise tax on the excess of the required distribution over the sum of amounts actually distributed and amounts retained for which federal income tax was paid, if we fail to distribute during each calendar year at least the sum of:

- (1) 85% of our REIT ordinary income for the year;
- (2) 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for the year; and
- (3) any undistributed taxable income from prior taxable years;

We will be subject to a 100% penalty tax on some payments we receive (or on certain expenses deducted by a taxable REIT subsidiary) if arrangements among us, our tenants and our taxable REIT subsidiaries are not comparable to similar arrangements among unrelated parties;

If we should acquire any asset from a "C" corporation in a carry-over basis transaction and we subsequently recognize gain on the disposition of such asset during the ten-year recognition period beginning on the date on which we acquired the asset, then, to the extent of any built-in gain, such gain will be subject to tax at the highest regular corporate rate. Built-in gain means the excess of (a) the fair market value of the asset as of the beginning of the applicable recognition period over (b) the adjusted basis in such asset as of the beginning of such recognition period;

Income earned by our taxable REIT subsidiaries will be subject to tax at regular corporate rates; and

We may be required to pay penalties to the IRS in certain circumstances, including if we fail to meet record-keeping requirements intended to monitor our compliance with rules relating to the composition of our shareholders.

Requirements for qualification as a REIT

We elected to be taxable as a REIT for federal income tax purposes for our taxable year ended December 31, 1994 and for all subsequent taxable years. In order to have so qualified, we must have met and continue to meet the requirements discussed below, relating to our organization, sources of income, nature of assets and distributions of income to stockholders.

The Internal Revenue Code defines a REIT as a corporation, trust or association:

- (1) that is managed by one or more trustees or directors;

Table of Contents

- (2) the beneficial ownership of which is evidenced by transferable shares, or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest;
- (3) that would be taxable as a domestic corporation, but for Sections 856 through 859 of the Internal Revenue Code;
- (4) that is neither a financial institution nor an insurance company subject to applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code;
- (5) the beneficial ownership of which is held by 100 or more persons;
- (6) during the last half of each taxable year not more than 50% in value of the outstanding shares of which is owned directly or indirectly by five or fewer individuals, as defined in the Internal Revenue Code to include specified entities;
- (7) that makes an election to be taxable as a REIT, or has made this election for a previous taxable year which has not been revoked or terminated, and satisfies all relevant filing and other administrative requirements established by the Internal Revenue Service that must be met to elect and maintain REIT status;
- (8) that uses a calendar year for federal income tax purposes and complies with the recordkeeping requirements of the Internal Revenue Code and regulations promulgated thereunder; and
- (9) that meets other applicable tests, described below, regarding the nature of its income and assets and the amount of its distributions.

Conditions (1), (2), (3) and (4) above must be met during the entire taxable year and condition (5) above must be met during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months, or during a proportionate part of a taxable year of less than 12 months. For purposes of determining stock ownership under condition (6) above, a supplemental unemployment compensation benefits plan, a private foundation and a portion of a trust permanently set aside or used exclusively for charitable purposes generally are each considered an individual. A trust that is a qualified trust under Internal Revenue Code Section 401(a) generally is not considered an individual, and beneficiaries of a qualified trust are treated as holding shares of a REIT in proportion to their actuarial interests in the trust for purposes of condition (6) above.

We believe that we have issued sufficient shares of common stock with sufficient diversity of ownership to allow us to satisfy conditions (5) and (6) above. In addition, our charter contains restrictions regarding the transfer of shares of common stock and preferred stock that are intended to assist us in continuing to satisfy the share ownership requirements described in conditions (5) and (6) above. These restrictions, however, may not ensure that we will be able to satisfy these share ownership requirements.

To monitor its compliance with condition (6) above, a REIT is required to send annual letters to its stockholders requesting information regarding the actual ownership of its shares. If we comply with the annual letters requirement and we do not know or, exercising reasonable diligence, would not have known of our failure to meet condition (6) above, then we will be treated as having met condition (6) above.

To qualify as a REIT, we cannot have at the end of any taxable year any undistributed earnings and profits that are attributable to a non-REIT taxable year. We do not believe that we have any non-REIT earnings and profits and believe that we therefore satisfy this requirement.

Qualified REIT Subsidiaries. If a REIT owns a corporate subsidiary that is a "qualified REIT subsidiary," the separate existence of that subsidiary will be disregarded for federal income tax purposes. Generally, a qualified REIT subsidiary is a corporation, other than a taxable REIT subsidiary (discussed below), all of the stock of which is owned by the REIT. All assets, liabilities and items of

Table of Contents

income, deduction and credit of the qualified REIT subsidiary will be treated as assets, liabilities and items of income, deduction and credit of the REIT itself. A qualified REIT subsidiary of AvalonBay will not be subject to federal corporate income taxation, although it may be subject to state and local taxation in some states.

Taxable REIT Subsidiaries. A "taxable REIT subsidiary" of AvalonBay is a corporation in which we directly or indirectly own stock and that elects, together with us, to be treated as a taxable REIT subsidiary under Section 856(l) of the Internal Revenue Code. In addition, if one of our taxable REIT subsidiaries owns, directly or indirectly, securities representing 35% or more of the vote or value of a subsidiary corporation, that subsidiary will also be treated as our taxable REIT subsidiary. A taxable REIT subsidiary is a corporation subject to federal income tax, and state and local income tax where applicable, as a regular "C" corporation.

Generally, a taxable REIT subsidiary can perform some impermissible tenant services without causing us to receive impermissible tenant services income under the REIT income tests. A taxable REIT subsidiary also can recognize income that would be subject to the 100% prohibited transaction tax, or income that would be nonqualifying income under the gross income tests, if earned by a REIT. However, several provisions regarding the arrangements between a REIT and its taxable REIT subsidiaries ensure that a taxable REIT subsidiary will be subject to an appropriate level of federal income taxation. For example, a taxable REIT subsidiary is limited in its ability to deduct interest payments in excess of a certain amount made to us. In addition, we will be obligated to pay a 100% penalty tax on some payments that we receive or on certain expenses deducted by the taxable REIT subsidiary if the economic arrangements between us, our tenants and the taxable REIT subsidiary are not comparable to similar arrangements among unrelated parties.

Ownership of Partnership Interests by a REIT. A REIT that is a partner in a partnership (or a member in a limited liability company or other entity that is treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes) will be deemed to own its proportionate share of the assets of the partnership and will be deemed to earn its proportionate share of the partnership's income. The assets and gross income of the partnership retain the same character in the hands of the REIT for purposes of the gross income and asset tests applicable to REITs as described below. Thus, our proportionate share of the assets and items of income of any entity taxable as a partnership for federal income tax purposes in which we hold an interest will be treated as our assets and liabilities and our items of income for purposes of applying the requirements described in this prospectus. The assets, liabilities and items of income of any partnership in which we own an interest include such entity's share of the assets and liabilities and items of income with respect to any partnership in which it holds an interest.

Income Tests Applicable to REITs. To qualify as a REIT, we must satisfy two gross income tests. First, at least 75% of our gross income, excluding gross income from prohibited transactions, for each taxable year must be derived directly or indirectly from investments relating to real property or mortgages on real property, including "rents from real property," gains on the disposition of real estate, dividends paid by another REIT and interest on obligations secured by mortgages on real property or on interests in real property, or from some types of temporary investments. Second, at least 95% of our gross income, excluding gross income from prohibited transactions, for each taxable year must be derived from any combination of income qualifying under the 75% test and dividends, interest, and gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities.

Rents received by us will qualify as rents from real property in satisfying the gross income requirements for a REIT described above only if several conditions are met. First, the amount of rent must not be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. However, an amount received or accrued generally will not be excluded from the term "rents from real property" solely by reason of being based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales. Second, rents received from a "related party tenant" will not qualify as rents from real property in satisfying the gross income

Table of Contents

tests unless the tenant is a taxable REIT subsidiary and at least 90% of the property is leased to unrelated tenants and the rent paid by the taxable REIT subsidiary is substantially comparable to the rent paid by the unrelated tenants for comparable space, or the property leased to the taxable REIT subsidiary is a hotel and certain other requirements are satisfied. A tenant is a related party tenant if the REIT, or an actual or constructive owner of 10% or more of the REIT, actually or constructively owns 10% or more of the tenant. Third, if rent attributable to personal property, leased in connection with a lease of real property, is greater than 15% of the total rent received under the lease, then the portion of rent attributable to the personal property will not qualify as rents from real property.

Generally, for rents to qualify as rents from real property for the purpose of satisfying the gross income tests, we may provide directly only an insignificant amount of services, unless those services are "usually or customarily rendered" in connection with the rental of real property and not otherwise considered "rendered to the occupant." Accordingly, we may not provide "impermissible services" to tenants (except through an independent contractor from whom we derive no revenue and that meets other requirements or through a taxable REIT subsidiary) without giving rise to "impermissible tenant service income." Impermissible tenant service income is deemed to be at least 150% of our direct cost of providing the service. If the impermissible tenant service income exceeds 1% of our total income from a property, then all of the income from that property will fail to qualify as rents from real property. If the total amount of impermissible tenant service income from a property does not exceed 1% of our total income from the property, the services will not "taint" the other income from the property (that is, it will not cause the rent paid by tenants of that property to fail to qualify as rents from real property), but the impermissible tenant service income will not qualify as rents from real property.

We have not charged, and do not anticipate charging, rent that is based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. We have not derived, and do not anticipate deriving, rent attributable to personal property leased in connection with real property that exceeds 15% of the total rents.

We have provided and will provide services with respect to the multifamily apartment communities. We believe that the services with respect to our communities that have been and will be provided by us are usually or customarily rendered in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only and are not otherwise rendered to particular tenants, or, if considered impermissible services, income from the provision of such services with respect to a given property has not and will not exceed 1% of all amounts received by us from such property. Therefore, we believe that the provision of such services has not and will not cause rents received with respect to our communities to fail to qualify as rents from real property. We believe that services with respect to our communities that may not be provided by us directly without jeopardizing the qualification of rent as rents from real property have been and will be performed by independent contractors or taxable REIT subsidiaries.

We may in the future acquire equity stakes in additional taxable REIT subsidiaries, which do not constitute real estate assets. Gain from a sale or other taxable disposition of these interests will constitute income satisfying the 95% income test, but not the 75% income test. The need to satisfy the 75% income test may adversely affect the time at which we chose to sell or dispose of one or more of these investments, depending on the appreciation of these equity interests, if any.

We have earned and continue to earn amounts of nonqualifying income. For example, we earn fees related to the development and management of properties that are not wholly-owned by us. We believe that the amount of nonqualifying income generated from these activities has not affected and will not affect our ability to meet the gross income tests.

Any gain realized by us on the sale of any property held as inventory or other property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business will be treated as income from a prohibited transaction that is subject to a 100% penalty tax, unless such property has been held by us for four years and certain other requirements are satisfied or the gain is realized in a taxable REIT

Table of Contents

subsidiary. Under existing law, whether property is held as inventory or primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business is a question of fact that depends on all the facts and circumstances of a particular transaction. We generally intend to hold our properties for investment with a view to long-term appreciation, to engage in the business of acquiring, developing, owning and operating properties, and to make occasional sales of properties as are consistent with our investment objectives. We cannot provide any assurance, however, that the Internal Revenue Service might not contend that one or more of these sales are subject to the 100% penalty tax. We intend to hold assets developed or held for sale in taxable REIT subsidiaries. Although a taxable REIT subsidiary is not subject to the 100% penalty tax, it does pay tax on its taxable income and gains at regular corporate rates.

If we fail to satisfy one or both of the 75% or 95% gross income tests for any taxable year, we may nevertheless qualify as a REIT for that year if we are entitled to relief under the Internal Revenue Code. These relief provisions generally will be available if our failure to meet the tests is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect and, following our identification of such failure for any taxable year, we file a schedule describing each item of our gross income described in the gross income tests in accordance with the applicable Treasury Regulations. It is not possible, however, to state whether in all circumstances we would be entitled to the benefit of these relief provisions. For example, if we fail to satisfy the gross income tests because nonqualifying income that we intentionally incur exceeds the limits on nonqualifying income, the Internal Revenue Service could conclude that the failure to satisfy the tests was not due to reasonable cause. If these relief provisions are inapplicable to a particular set of circumstances involving us, we will fail to qualify as a REIT. As discussed under "Taxation of AvalonBay as a REIT" even if these relief provisions apply, a tax would be imposed based on the amount of nonqualifying income.

Asset Tests Applicable to REITs. At the close of each quarter of our taxable year, we must satisfy four tests relating to the nature of our assets:

- (1) at least 75% of the value of our total assets must be represented by real estate assets, cash, cash items and government securities. Our real estate assets include, for this purpose, stock or debt instruments held for less than one year purchased with the proceeds of an offering of our shares or long-term debt;
- (2) not more than 25% of our total assets may be represented by securities other than those in the 75% asset class;
- (3) except for investments in qualified REIT subsidiaries, taxable REIT subsidiaries, equity interests in REITs or other securities that qualify as "real estate assets" for purposes of the test described in clause (1): the value of any one issuer's securities owned by us may not exceed 5% of the value of our total assets; we may not own more than 10% of any one issuer's outstanding voting securities; and we may not own more than 10% of the value of the outstanding securities of any one issuer; and
- (4) not more than 20% of our total assets may be represented by securities of one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries.

Securities for purposes of the asset tests may include debt securities. However, certain debt of an issuer will not count as a security for purposes of the 10% value test, including debt securities that are "straight debt" as defined in Section 1361 of the Internal Revenue Code, as modified by Section 856(m), where (1) the issuer is an individual or (2) the only securities of the issuer that the REIT holds are straight debt or such securities have an aggregate value of not more than the value of one percent of the issuer's outstanding securities.

Table of Contents

We believe that the aggregate value of our taxable REIT subsidiaries does not exceed 20% of the aggregate value of our gross assets. With respect to each issuer in which we currently own an interest that does not qualify as a REIT, a qualified REIT subsidiary or a taxable REIT subsidiary, we believe that our pro rata share of the value of the securities, including debt, of any such issuer does not exceed 5% of the total value of our assets and that we comply with the 10% voting securities limitation and 10% value limitation with respect to each such issuer. In this regard, however, we cannot provide any assurance that the Internal Revenue Service might not disagree with our determinations.

After initially meeting the asset tests at the close of any quarter, we will not lose our status as a REIT if we fail to satisfy the 25%, 20% and 5% asset tests and the 10% value limitation at the end of a later quarter solely by reason of changes in the relative values of our assets. If the failure to satisfy the 25%, 20% or 5% asset tests or the 10% value limitation results from an acquisition of securities or other property during a quarter, the failure can be cured by disposition of sufficient non-qualifying assets within 30 days after the close of that quarter. We intend to maintain adequate records of the value of our assets to ensure compliance with the asset tests and to take any available actions within 30 days after the close of any quarter as may be required to cure any noncompliance with the 25%, 20% or 5% asset tests or 10% value limitation.

Moreover, if we fail to satisfy any of the asset tests at the end of a calendar quarter during a taxable year and such failure is not cured within 30 days as described above, we will not lose our REIT status if one of the following additional exceptions applies: (A) the failure is due to a violation of the 5% or 10% asset tests and is "de minimis" (for this purpose, a "de minimis" failure is one that arises from our ownership of assets the total value of which does not exceed the lesser of 1% of the total value of our assets at the end of the quarter in which the failure occurred and \$10 million) and we either dispose of the assets that caused the failure or otherwise satisfy any of the asset tests within 6 months after the last day of the quarter in which our identification of the failure occurred; or (B) the failure is due to a violation of any of the asset tests (other than a "de minimis" violations of the 5% or 10% asset tests) and all of the following requirements are satisfied: (i) the failure is due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect, (ii) we file a schedule in accordance with Treasury Regulations providing a description of each asset that caused the failure, (iii) we either dispose of the assets that caused the failure or otherwise satisfy the asset tests within 6 months after the last day of the quarter in which our identification of the failure occurred, and (iv) we pay an excise tax equal to the greater of (x) \$50,000 and (y) an amount determined by multiplying the net income generated during a specified period by the assets that caused the failure by the highest federal income tax applicable to corporations.

Annual Distribution Requirements Applicable to REITs. To qualify as a REIT, we are required to distribute dividends, other than capital gain dividends, to our stockholders each year in an amount at least equal to (1) the sum of (a) 90% of our REIT taxable income, computed without regard to the dividends paid deduction and our net capital gain, and (b) 90% of the net income, after tax, from foreclosure property, minus (2) the sum of certain specified items of noncash income. In addition, if we recognize any built-in gain, we will be required, under Treasury regulations, to distribute at least 90% of the built-in gain, after tax, recognized on the disposition of the applicable asset. See "Taxation of AvalonBay as a REIT" for a discussion of the possible recognition of built-in gain. These distributions must be paid either in the taxable year to which they relate, or in the following taxable year if declared before we timely file our tax return for the prior year and if paid with or before the first regular dividend payment date after the declaration is made.

We believe that we have made and intend to continue to make timely distributions sufficient to satisfy the annual distribution requirements.

We anticipate having sufficient cash or liquid assets to enable us to satisfy the 90% distribution requirement. It is possible, however, that we, from time to time, may not have sufficient cash or other liquid assets to meet this distribution requirement or to distribute such greater amount as may be

Table of Contents

necessary to avoid income and excise taxation, due to timing differences between (a) the actual receipt of income and the actual payment of deductible expenses and (b) the inclusion of such income and the deduction of such expenses in arriving at our taxable income, or as a result of nondeductible expenses such as principal amortization or capital expenditures in excess of noncash deductions. In the event that such timing differences occur, we may find it necessary to arrange for borrowings or, if possible, pay taxable stock dividends in order to meet the dividend requirement.

Under some circumstances, we may be able to rectify a failure to meet the distribution requirement for a year by paying dividends to stockholders in a later year, which may be included in our deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year. We will refer to such dividends as "deficiency dividends." Thus, we may be able to avoid being taxed on amounts distributed as deficiency dividends. We will, however, be required to pay interest based upon the amount of any deduction taken for deficiency dividends.

To the extent that we do not distribute all of our net capital gain or distribute at least 90%, but less than 100%, of our REIT taxable income, as adjusted, we are subject to tax on these amounts at regular corporate tax rates.

We will be subject to a 4% excise tax on the excess of the required distribution over the sum of amounts actually distributed and amounts retained for which federal income tax was paid, if we fail to distribute during each calendar year at least the sum of:

- (1) 85% of our REIT ordinary income for the year;
- (2) 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for the year; and
- (3) any undistributed taxable income from prior taxable years.

A REIT may elect to retain rather than distribute all or a portion of its net capital gains and pay the tax on the gains. In that case, a REIT may elect to have its stockholders include their proportionate share of the undistributed net capital gains in income as long-term capital gains and receive a credit for their share of the tax paid by the REIT. For purposes of the 4% excise tax described above, any retained amounts would be treated as having been distributed.

Record-Keeping Requirements. We are required to comply with applicable record-keeping requirements. Failure to comply could result in monetary fines.

Failure of AvalonBay to Qualify as a REIT. If we fail to satisfy any REIT requirements (other than the income test or asset test requirements, to which specific cure provisions apply), we generally will be eligible for relief from REIT disqualification if the failure is due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect and we pay a penalty of \$50,000 with respect to such failure. It is not possible to state whether in all circumstances we would be entitled to such statutory relief. For example, if we fail to satisfy the gross income tests because nonqualifying income that we intentionally incur exceeds the limit on such income, the Internal Revenue Service could conclude that our failure to satisfy the tests was not due to reasonable cause.

If we fail to qualify for taxation as a REIT in any taxable year and the relief provisions do not apply, we will be subject to tax on our taxable income at regular corporate rates, including any applicable alternative minimum tax. Distributions to stockholders in any year in which we fail to qualify will not be deductible by us nor will they be required to be made. In such event, to the extent of current or accumulated earnings and profits, all distributions to stockholders will be taxable as dividend income. Subject to limitations of the Internal Revenue Code, corporate stockholders may be eligible for the dividends-received deduction and non-corporate stockholders may be eligible to treat the dividends received from us as qualified dividend income taxable as net capital gains under the provisions of Section 1(h)(11) of the Internal Revenue Code, for taxable years beginning before January 1, 2011. Unless we are entitled to relief under specific statutory provisions, we also will be disqualified from

Table of Contents

electing to be taxed as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which qualification was lost.

Taxation of U.S. stockholders

When we refer to a United States stockholder, we mean a beneficial owner of a share of our common stock that is, for United States federal income tax purposes:

- (1) a citizen or resident, as defined in Section 7701(b) of the Internal Revenue Code, of the United States;
- (2) a corporation or partnership, or other entity treated as a corporation or partnership for federal income tax purposes, created or organized under the laws of the United States, any state or the District of Columbia;
- (3) an estate the income of which is subject to federal income taxation regardless of its source; or
- (4) in general, a trust subject to the primary supervision of a United States court and the control of one or more United States persons.

Generally, in the case of a partnership that holds our common stock, any partner that would be a U.S. stockholder if it held the common stock directly is also a U.S. stockholder. A "non-U.S. stockholder" is a holder, including any partner in a partnership that holds our common stock, that is not a U.S. stockholder.

Distributions by AvalonBay. So long as we qualify as a REIT, distributions to U.S. stockholders out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits that are not designated as capital gain dividends will be taxable as dividend income and will not be eligible for the dividends received deduction generally available for corporations and generally will not be eligible for treatment as qualified dividend income by non-corporate stockholders. Distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits will not be taxable to a U.S. stockholder to the extent that the distributions do not exceed the adjusted tax basis of the stockholder's shares. Rather, such distributions will reduce the adjusted basis of such shares. Distributions in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits that exceed the U.S. stockholder's adjusted basis in its shares will be treated as gain from the sale or exchange of such shares taxable as capital gains in the amount of such excess if the shares are held as a capital asset. If we declare a dividend in October, November or December of any year with a record date in one of these months and pay the dividend on or before January 31 of the following year, we will be treated as having paid the dividend, and the stockholder will be treated as having received the dividend, on December 31 of the year in which the dividend was declared. The above applies regardless of whether the distributions by us are reinvested pursuant to the Dividend Reinvestment and Stock Purchase Plan.

We may elect to designate distributions of our net capital gain as "capital gain dividends." Capital gain dividends are taxed to stockholders as gain from the sale or exchange of a capital asset held for more than one year, without regard to how long the U.S. stockholder has held its shares. Designations made by us only will be effective to the extent that they comply with the principles of Revenue Ruling 89-81, which require that distributions made to different classes of shares be composed proportionately of dividends of a particular type. If we designate any portion of a dividend as a capital gain dividend, a U.S. stockholder will receive an Internal Revenue Service Form 1099-DIV indicating the amount that will be taxable to the stockholder as capital gain. Corporate stockholders, however, may be required to treat up to 20% of capital gain dividends as ordinary income.

Instead of paying capital gain dividends, we may choose to retain all or part of our net capital gain and designate such amount as "undistributed capital gain." We will be subject to tax at regular corporate rates on any undistributed capital gain.

Table of Contents

A U.S. stockholder:

- (1) will include in its income as long-term capital gains its proportionate share of such undistributed capital gains; and
- (2) will be deemed to have paid its proportionate share of the tax paid by us on such undistributed capital gains and receive a credit or a refund to the extent that the tax paid by us exceeds the U.S. stockholder's tax liability on the undistributed capital gain.

A U.S. stockholder will increase the basis in its common stock by the difference between the amount of capital gain included in its income and the amount of tax it is deemed to have paid. Our earnings and profits will be adjusted appropriately.

We will classify portions of any designated capital gain dividend or undistributed capital gain as either:

- (1) a 15% rate gain distribution, which would be taxable to non-corporate U.S. stockholders at a maximum rate of 15%; or
- (2) an "unrecaptured Section 1250 gain" distribution, which would be taxable to non-corporate U.S. stockholders at a maximum rate of 25%.

We must determine the maximum amounts that we may designate as 15% and 25% rate capital gain dividends by performing the computation required by the Internal Revenue Code as if the REIT were an individual whose ordinary income were subject to a marginal tax rate in excess of 25%.

Distributions made by our company and gain arising from the sale or exchange by a U.S. stockholder of shares will not be treated as passive activity income, and as a result, U.S. stockholders generally will not be able to apply any "passive losses" against this income or gain. In addition, taxable distributions from our company generally will be treated as investment income for purposes of the investment interest limitations. A U.S. stockholder may elect to treat capital gain dividends and capital gains from the disposition of shares as investment income for purposes of the investment interest limitation, in which case the applicable capital gains will be taxed at ordinary income rates. We will notify stockholders regarding the portions of distributions for each year that constitute ordinary income, return of capital and capital gain. U.S. stockholders may not include in their individual income tax returns any net operating losses or capital losses of our company. Our operating or capital losses would be carried over for potential offset against our future income, subject to applicable limitations.

Sales of Shares. Upon any taxable sale or other disposition of shares, a U.S. stockholder will recognize gain or loss for federal income tax purposes in an amount equal to the difference between:

- (1) the amount of cash and the fair market value of any property received on the sale or other disposition; and
- (2) the holder's adjusted basis in the shares for tax purposes.

This gain or loss will be a capital gain or loss if the shares have been held by the U.S. stockholder as a capital asset. The applicable tax rate will depend on the stockholder's holding period in the asset (generally, if an asset has been held for more than one year it will produce long-term capital gain) and the stockholder's tax bracket. The Internal Revenue Service has the authority to prescribe, but has not yet prescribed, regulations that would apply a capital gain tax rate of 25% (which is generally higher than the long-term capital gain tax rates for noncorporate stockholders) to a portion of capital gain realized by a noncorporate stockholder on the sale of REIT shares that would correspond to the REIT's "unrecaptured Section 1250 gain." Stockholders are urged to consult with their own tax advisors with respect to their capital gain tax liability. A corporate U.S. stockholder will be subject to tax at a maximum rate of 35% on capital gain from the sale of our company's shares. In general, any loss recognized by a U.S. stockholder upon the sale or other disposition of shares that have been held

Table of Contents

for six months or less, after applying the holding period rules, will be treated as a long-term capital loss, to the extent of distributions received by the U.S. stockholder from us that were required to be treated as long-term capital gains. All or a portion of any loss realized upon a taxable disposition of shares may be disallowed if other shares are purchased within 30 days before or after the date of disposition.

Taxation of tax-exempt stockholders

Provided that a tax-exempt stockholder has not held its common stock as "debt financed property" within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code, the dividend income from our company will not be unrelated business taxable income, referred to as UBTI, to a tax-exempt stockholder. Similarly, gain from the sale of shares will not constitute UBTI unless the tax-exempt stockholder has held its shares as debt financed property within the meaning of the Internal Revenue Code or is a dealer in the shares.

However, for tax-exempt stockholders that are social clubs, voluntary employee benefit associations, supplemental unemployment benefit trusts and qualified group legal services plans exempt from federal income taxation under Sections 501(c)(7), (c)(9), (c)(17) and (c)(20) of the Internal Revenue Code, respectively, income from an investment in our company will constitute UBTI unless the organization properly sets aside or reserves such amounts for purposes specified in the Internal Revenue Code. These tax-exempt stockholders should consult their own tax advisors concerning these "set aside" and reserve requirements.

Notwithstanding the above, however, a portion of the dividends paid by a "pension held REIT" are treated as UBTI if received by any trust which is described in Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, is tax-exempt under Section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code and holds more than 10%, by value, of the interests in the REIT.

Tax-exempt pension funds that are described in Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code are referred to below as "pension trusts."

A REIT is a pension held REIT if it meets the following two tests:

- (1) it qualified as a REIT only by reason of Section 856(h)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, which provides that stock owned by pension trusts will be treated, for purposes of determining if the REIT is closely held, as owned by the beneficiaries of the trust rather than by the trust itself; and
- (2) either (a) at least one pension trust holds more than 25% of the value of the REIT's stock, or (b) a group of pension trusts each individually holding more than 10% of the value of the REIT's shares, collectively owns more than 50% of the value of the REIT's shares.

The percentage of any REIT dividend treated as UBTI is equal to the ratio of the UBTI earned by the REIT, treating the REIT as if it were a pension trust and therefore subject to tax on UBTI, to the total gross income of the REIT. An exception applies where the percentage is less than 5% for any taxable year.

Taxation of holders of debt securities and potential tax consequences of their investment in the debt securities

Stated interest and market discount. Holders of debt securities will be required to include stated interest on the debt securities in gross income for federal income tax purposes in accordance with their methods of accounting for tax purposes. This discussion assumes that the debt securities were not issued with original issue discount.

Purchasers of debt securities should be aware that the holding and disposition of debt securities may be affected by the market discount provisions of the Internal Revenue Code. These rules generally

Table of Contents

provide that if a holder of a debt instrument purchases it at a market discount and subsequently recognizes gain on a disposition of the debt instrument, including a gift or payment on maturity, the lesser of such gain or appreciation, in the case of a gift, and the portion of the market discount that accrued while the debt instrument was held by such holder will be treated as ordinary interest income at the time of the disposition. For this purpose, a purchase at a market discount includes a purchase after original issuance at a price below the debt instrument's stated principal amount. The market discount rules also provide that a holder who acquires a debt instrument at a market discount and who does not elect to include such market discount in income on a current basis may be required to defer a portion of any interest expense that may otherwise be deductible on any indebtedness incurred or maintained to purchase or carry such debt instrument until the holder disposes of the debt instrument in a taxable transaction.

A holder of a debt instrument acquired at a market discount may elect to include the market discount in income as the discount thereon accrues, either on a straight line basis or, if elected, on a constant interest rate basis. The current inclusion election, once made, applies to all market discount obligations acquired by such holder on or after the first day of the first taxable year to which the election applies and may not be revoked without the consent of the Internal Revenue Service. If a holder of a debt security elects to include market discount in income in accordance with the preceding sentence, the foregoing rules with respect to the recognition of ordinary income on a sale or particular other dispositions of such debt security and the deferral of interest deductions on indebtedness related to such debt security would not apply.

Amortizable bond premium. Generally, if the tax basis of an obligation held as a capital asset exceeds the amount payable at maturity of the obligation, such excess may constitute amortizable bond premium that the holder may elect to amortize under the constant interest rate method and deduct the amortized premium over the period from the holder's acquisition date to the obligation's maturity date. A holder who elects to amortize bond premium must reduce the tax basis in the related obligation by the amount of the aggregate deductions allowable for amortizable bond premium.

The amortizable bond premium deduction is treated as an offset to interest income on the related security for federal income tax purposes. Each prospective purchaser is urged to consult his tax advisor as to the consequences of the treatment of such premium as an offset to interest income for federal income tax purposes.

Disposition. In general, a holder of a debt security will recognize gain or loss upon the sale, exchange, redemption, payment upon maturity or other taxable disposition of the debt security. The gain or loss is measured by the difference between (a) the amount of cash and the fair market value of property received and (b) the holder's tax basis in the debt security as increased by any market discount previously included in income by the holder and decreased by any amortizable bond premium deducted over the term of the debt security. However, the amount of cash and the fair market value received excludes cash or other property attributable to the payment of accrued interest not previously included in income, which amount will be taxable as ordinary income. Subject to the market discount and amortizable bond premium rules above, any such gain or loss will generally be long-term capital gain or loss, provided the debt security was a capital asset in the hands of the holder and had been held for more than one year.

U.S. taxation of non-U.S. stockholders

Distributions by AvalonBay. Distributions by us to a non-U.S. stockholder that are neither attributable to gain from sales or exchanges by us of "U.S. real property interests" nor designated by us as capital gains dividends will be treated as dividends of ordinary income to the extent that they are made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits. These distributions ordinarily will be subject to withholding of U.S. federal income tax on a gross basis at a rate of 30%, or a lower rate as

Table of Contents

permitted under an applicable income tax treaty, unless the dividends are treated as effectively connected with the conduct by the non-U.S. stockholder of a U.S. trade or business. Under some treaties, however, lower withholding rates generally applicable to dividends do not apply to dividends from REITs. Dividends that are effectively connected with a trade or business will be subject to tax on a net basis, that is, after allowance for deductions, at graduated rates, in the same manner as U.S. stockholders are taxed with respect to these dividends, and are generally not subject to withholding. Applicable certification and disclosure requirements must be satisfied to be exempt from withholding under the effectively connected income exemption. Any dividends received by a corporate non-U.S. stockholder that is engaged in a U.S. trade or business also may be subject to an additional branch profits tax at a 30% rate, or lower applicable treaty rate.

Distributions in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits that exceed the non-U.S. stockholder's basis in its common stock will be taxable to a non-U.S. stockholder as gain from the sale of common stock, which is discussed below. Distributions in excess of our current or accumulated earnings and profits that do not exceed the adjusted basis of the non-U.S. stockholder in its common stock will reduce the non-U.S. stockholder's adjusted basis in its common stock and will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax, but will be subject to U.S. withholding tax as described below.

We expect to withhold U.S. income tax at the rate of 30% on any dividend distributions (including distributions that later may be determined to have been in excess of current and accumulated earnings and profits) made to a non-U.S. stockholder unless:

- (1) a lower treaty rate applies and the non-U.S. stockholder files an Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN evidencing eligibility for that reduced treaty rate with us; or
- (2) the non-U.S. stockholder files an Internal Revenue Service Form W-8ECI with us claiming that the distribution is income effectively connected with non-U.S. stockholder's trade or business within the U.S.

We may be required to withhold at least 10% of any distribution in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, even if a lower treaty rate applies and the non-U.S. stockholder is not liable for tax on the receipt of that distribution. However, a non-U.S. stockholder may seek a refund of these amounts from the Internal Revenue Service if the non-U.S. stockholder's U.S. tax liability with respect to the distribution is less than the amount withheld.

Distributions to a non-U.S. stockholder that are designated by us at the time of the distribution as capital gain dividends, other than those arising from the disposition of a U.S. real property interest, generally should not be subject to U.S. federal income taxation unless:

- (1) the investment in the common stock is effectively connected with the non-U.S. stockholder's U.S. trade or business, in which case the non-U.S. stockholder will be subject to the same treatment as U.S. stockholders with respect to any gain, except that a stockholder that is a foreign corporation also may be subject to the 30% branch profits tax, as discussed above, or
- (2) the non-U.S. stockholder is a nonresident alien individual who is present in the U.S. for 183 days or more during the taxable year and has a "tax home" in the U.S., in which case the nonresident alien individual will be subject to a 30% tax on the individual's capital gains.

Under the Foreign Investment in Real Property Tax Act, which is referred to as "FIRPTA," subject to the exception discussed below for 5% or smaller holders of regularly traded classes of stock, distributions to a non-U.S. stockholder that are attributable to gain from sales or exchanges by us of U.S. real property interests, whether or not designated as a capital gain dividend, will cause the non-U.S. stockholder to be treated as recognizing gain that is income effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business. Non-U.S. stockholders will be taxed on this gain at the same rates applicable to U.S.

Table of Contents

stockholders, subject to a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals. Also, this gain may be subject to a 30% branch profits tax in the hands of a non-U.S. stockholder that is a corporation.

We will be required to withhold and remit to the Internal Revenue Service 35% of any distributions to non-U.S. stockholders that are designated as capital gain dividends, or, if greater, 35% of a distribution that could have been designated as a capital gain dividend. Distributions can be designated as capital gains to the extent of our net capital gain for the taxable year of the distribution. The amount withheld is creditable against the non-U.S. stockholder's United States federal income tax liability. A non-U.S. stockholder whose U.S. federal income tax liability under FIRPTA exceeds amounts withheld by us will be required to file a U.S. federal income tax return for the taxable year.

A non-U.S. stockholder that owns no more than 5% of our common stock at all times during the one-year period ending on the date of the distribution will not be subject to 35% FIRPTA withholding with respect to distributions that are attributable to gain from our sale or exchange of U.S. real property interests, provided that our common stock is regularly traded on an established securities market. Instead, any distributions made to such non-U.S. stockholder will be subject to the general withholding rules discussed above which generally impose a withholding tax equal to 30% of the gross amount of each distribution (unless reduced by treaty).

Although the law is not clear on the matter, it appears that amounts designated by us as undistributed capital gains in respect of the common stock held by U.S. stockholders generally should be treated with respect to non-U.S. stockholders in the same manner as actual distributions by us of capital gain dividends. Under that approach, the non-U.S. stockholders would be able to offset as a credit against their United States federal income tax liability resulting therefrom an amount equal to their proportionate share of the tax paid by us on the undistributed capital gains, and to receive from the Internal Revenue Service a refund to the extent their proportionate share of this tax paid by our company exceeds their actual United States federal income tax liability.

Sale of Common Stock. Gain recognized by a non-U.S. stockholder upon the sale or exchange of our common stock generally would not be subject to United States taxation unless:

- (1) the investment in our company's common stock is effectively connected with the non-U.S. stockholder's U.S. trade or business, in which case the non-U.S. stockholder will be subject to the same treatment as domestic stockholders with respect to any gain;
- (2) the non-U.S. stockholder is a nonresident alien individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year and has a tax home in the United States, in which case the nonresident alien individual will be subject to a 30% tax on the individual's net capital gains for the taxable year; or
- (3) our common stock constitutes a U.S. real property interest within the meaning of FIRPTA, as described below.

Our common stock will not constitute a U.S. real property interest if we are a domestically controlled qualified investment entity. We will be a domestically controlled qualified investment entity if, at all times during a specified testing period, less than 50% in value of our stock is held directly or indirectly by non-U.S. stockholders.

Because our company's common stock is publicly traded, we cannot guarantee that we are or will continue to be a domestically controlled qualified investment entity.

Even if we are a domestically controlled qualified investment entity, upon disposition of the our stock, a non-U.S. stockholder may be treated as having gain from the sale or exchange of a U.S. real property interest if the non-U.S. stockholder (1) disposes of an interest in our stock during the 30-day period preceding the ex-dividend date of a distribution, any portion of which, but for the disposition,

Table of Contents

would have been treated as gain from sale or exchange of a U.S. real property interest and (2) acquires, enters into a contract or option to acquire, or is deemed to acquire, other shares of the Company's stock within 30 days after such ex-dividend date. This rule does not apply if the exception for distributions to 5% or smaller holders of regularly traded classes of stock is satisfied.

Even if we do not qualify as a domestically controlled qualified investment entity at the time a non-U.S. stockholder sells its common stock, our stock sold by such stockholder would not be considered a U.S. real property interest if:

- (1) the class or series of stock sold is considered regularly traded under applicable Treasury regulations on an established securities market, such as the NYSE; and
- (2) the selling non-U.S. stockholder owned, actually or constructively, 5% or less in value of the outstanding class or series of stock being sold throughout the five-year period ending on the date of the sale or exchange.

If gain on the sale or exchange of our common stock were subject to taxation under FIRPTA, the non-U.S. stockholder would be subject to regular U.S. income tax with respect to any gain in the same manner as a taxable U.S. stockholder, subject to any applicable alternative minimum tax and special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals.

Information reporting and backup withholding tax applicable to stockholders

U.S. Stockholders. In general, information reporting requirements will apply to payments of distributions on our common stock and payments of the proceeds of the sale of our common stock to some stockholders, unless an exception applies. Further, the payer will be required to withhold backup withholding tax at the rate of 28% if:

- (1) the payee fails to furnish a taxpayer identification number, or TIN, to the payer or to establish an exemption from backup withholding;
- (2) the Internal Revenue Service notifies the payer that the TIN furnished by the payee is incorrect;
- (3) the payee fails to certify under the penalty of perjury that the payee is not subject to backup withholding under the Internal Revenue Code.

Some stockholders, including corporations, will be exempt from backup withholding. Any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules from a payment to a stockholder will be allowed as a credit against the stockholder's United States federal income tax and may entitle the stockholder to a refund, provided that the required information is furnished to the Internal Revenue Service.

Non-U.S. Stockholders. Generally, information reporting will apply to payments of distributions on our common stock, and backup withholding at a rate of 28% may apply, unless the payee certifies that it is not a U.S. person or otherwise establishes an exemption.

The payment of the proceeds from the disposition of AvalonBay common stock to or through the U.S. office of a U.S. or foreign broker will be subject to information reporting and, possibly, backup withholding unless the non-U.S. stockholder certifies as to its non-U.S. status or otherwise establishes an exemption, provided that the broker does not have actual knowledge that the stockholder is a U.S. person or that the conditions of any other exemption are not, in fact, satisfied. The proceeds of the disposition by a non-U.S. stockholder of our common stock to or through a foreign office of a broker generally will not be subject to information reporting or backup withholding. However, if the broker is a U.S. person, a controlled foreign corporation for U.S. tax purposes or a foreign person 50% or more of whose gross income from all sources for specified periods is from activities that are effectively connected with a U.S. trade or business, information reporting generally will apply unless the broker has documentary evidence as to the non-U.S. stockholder's foreign status and has no actual knowledge to the contrary.

Table of Contents

Applicable Treasury regulations provide presumptions regarding the status of stockholders when payments to the stockholders cannot be reliably associated with appropriate documentation provided to the payer. Because the application of these Treasury regulations varies depending on the stockholder's particular circumstances, you are urged to consult your tax advisor regarding the information reporting requirements applicable to you.

Other tax consequences for AvalonBay and its stockholders

Our company and its stockholders may be subject to state and local taxation in various state or local jurisdictions, including those in which it or they transact business or reside. The state and local tax treatment of our company and its stockholders may not conform to the federal income tax consequences discussed above. Consequently, prospective investors should consult their own tax advisors regarding the effect of state and local tax laws on an investment in our securities.

To the extent that we and the taxable REIT subsidiaries are required to pay federal, state or local taxes, we will have less cash available for distribution to stockholders.

How We Plan to Sell the Securities

We may sell the securities in any one or more of the following ways:

directly to investors;

to investors through agents;

to dealers;

through underwriting syndicates led by one or more managing underwriters; and

through one or more underwriters acting alone.

Any underwritten offering may be on a best efforts or a firm commitment basis. We may also make direct sales through subscription rights distributed to our stockholders on a pro rata basis, which may or may not be transferable. In any distribution of subscription rights to stockholders, if all of the underlying securities are not subscribed for, we may then sell the unsubscribed securities directly to third parties or may engage the services of one or more underwriters, dealers or agents, including standby underwriters, to sell the unsubscribed securities to third parties.

The distribution of the securities may be effected from time to time in one or more transactions:

at a fixed price or prices, which may be changed;

at market prices prevailing at the time of sale;

at prices related to such prevailing market prices; or

at negotiated prices.

Any of the prices may represent a discount from the then prevailing market prices.

Edgar Filing: AVALONBAY COMMUNITIES INC - Form 424B2

In the sale of the securities, underwriters or agents may receive compensation from us or from purchasers of the securities, for whom they may act as agents, in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions. Underwriters may sell the securities to or through dealers, and such dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriters and/or commissions from the purchasers for whom they may act as agents. Underwriters, dealers and agents that participate in the distribution of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters under the Securities Act of 1933, and any discounts or commissions they receive from us and any profit on the

Table of Contents

resale of securities they realize may be deemed to be underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act. The applicable prospectus supplement will, where applicable:

identify any such underwriter or agent;

describe any compensation in the form of discounts, concessions, commissions or otherwise received from us by each such underwriter or agent and in the aggregate to all underwriters and agents;

identify the amounts underwritten; and

identify the nature of the underwriter's obligation to take the securities.

Unless otherwise specified in the related prospectus supplement, each series of securities will be a new issue with no established trading market, other than the common stock and the Series H Preferred Stock, which are listed on the NYSE. Any common stock sold pursuant to a prospectus supplement will be listed on the NYSE, subject to official notice of issuance. We may elect to list any series of debt securities or preferred stock, respectively, on an exchange, but we are not obligated to do so. It is possible that one or more underwriters may make a market in a series of securities, but such underwriters will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. Therefore, no assurance can be given as to the liquidity of, or the trading market for, any series of debt securities or preferred stock.

Until the distribution of the securities is completed, rules of the SEC may limit the ability of any underwriters and selling group members to bid for and purchase the securities. As an exception to these rules, underwriters are permitted to engage in some transactions that stabilize the price of the securities. Such transactions consist of bids or purchases for the purpose of pegging, fixing or maintaining the price of the securities.

If any underwriters create a short position in the securities in an offering in which they sell more securities than are set forth on the cover page of the applicable prospectus supplement, the underwriters may reduce that short position by purchasing the securities in the open market.

The lead underwriters may also impose a penalty bid on other underwriters and selling group members participating in an offering. This means that if the lead underwriters purchase securities in the open market to reduce the underwriters' short position or to stabilize the price of the securities, they may reclaim the amount of any selling concession from the underwriters and selling group members who sold those securities as part of the offering.

In general, purchases of a security for the purpose of stabilization or to reduce a short position could cause the price of the security to be higher than it might be in the absence of such purchases. The imposition of a penalty bid might also have an effect on the price of a security to the extent that it were to discourage resales of the security before the distribution is completed.

We do not make any representation or prediction as to the direction or magnitude of any effect that the transactions described above might have on the price of the securities. In addition, we do not make any representation that underwriters will engage in such transactions or that such transactions, once commenced, will not be discontinued without notice.

Under agreements into which we may enter, underwriters, dealers and agents who participate in the distribution of the securities may be entitled to indemnification by us against some liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act.

Underwriters, dealers and agents may engage in transactions with us, perform services for us or be our tenants in the ordinary course of business.

Table of Contents

If indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will authorize underwriters or other persons acting as our agents to solicit offers by particular institutions to purchase securities from us at the public offering price set forth in such prospectus supplement pursuant to delayed delivery contracts providing for payment and delivery on the date or dates stated in such prospectus supplement. Each delayed delivery contract will be for an amount no less than, and the aggregate principal amounts of securities sold under delayed delivery contracts shall be not less nor more than, the respective amounts stated in the applicable prospectus supplement. Institutions with which such contracts, when authorized, may be made include commercial and savings banks, insurance companies, pension funds, investment companies, educational and charitable institutions and others, but will in all cases be subject to our approval. The obligations of any purchaser under any such contract will be subject to the conditions that (a) the purchase of the securities shall not at the time of delivery be prohibited under the laws of any jurisdiction in the United States to which the purchaser is subject, and (b) if the securities are being sold to underwriters, we shall have sold to the underwriters the total principal amount of the securities less the principal amount thereof covered by the contracts. The underwriters and such other agents will not have any responsibility in respect of the validity or performance of such contracts.

To comply with applicable state securities laws, the securities offered by this prospectus will be sold, if necessary, in such jurisdictions only through registered or licensed brokers or dealers. In addition, securities may not be sold in some states unless they have been registered or qualified for sale in the applicable state or an exemption from the registration or qualification requirement is available and is complied with.

Experts

The consolidated financial statements of AvalonBay Communities, Inc. appearing in AvalonBay Communities, Inc.'s Annual Report (Form 10-K) for the year ended December 31, 2005 including the schedule appearing therein, and AvalonBay Communities, Inc.'s management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of December 31, 2005 included therein, have been audited by Ernst & Young LLP, independent registered public accounting firm, as set forth in their reports thereon, included therein, and incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements and management's assessment are incorporated herein by reference in reliance upon such reports given on the authority of such firm as experts in accounting and auditing.

Legal Matters

The validity of the securities we are offering will be passed upon for us by Goodwin Procter LLP, Boston, Massachusetts.