13
6-24-17

Jackie Henderson

From: Bzucky <bzucky@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 18, 2017 11:27 AM
To: Jackie Henderson
Subject: OTNSAP plans for Madison and Montgomery Sts.

Ms. Jackie Henderson
City Clerk and Clerk of Council of Alexandria, Virginia

Dear Ms. Henderson,

My wife and I are residents of Alexandria House, and I had the opportunity to hear, last Friday, Mr. Yon Lambert and, I believe, Mr. Jeffrey Farner, address us regarding the Alexandria City plan for the Madison and Montgomery St. corridors. We have been residents of North Old Town since 2003, and I feel we know something about the traffic patterns.

I would like the Mayor and the City Council to know that we are strongly opposed to making either Montgomery St.or Madison St. into two way thoroughfares. My reasons involve the current patterns which already involve blockages associated with commercial needs (i.e., traffic associated with Harris Teeter, both customer and loading issues). Making Madison St. two ways, would certainly exacerbate these issues, and adding a bike lane there would make things even worse. I was in the area when Trader Joe came in, and while it has been a net plus, in my opinion for the neighborhood, one only has to try traveling during rush hours on Wythe St. to see the congestion created. Making Madsion St. two-way would likely do the same. Further, making Montgomery St. two-way would only increase pressure to make Madison St. two-way.

I am interested in finding bike lanes to promote bike travel and safety, but it seems that such could take place on less auto traveled streets. The only clear argument that I heard from Mr. Lambert that favored the making of these streets two-way way the possible benefit that might accrue to new businesses that are likely to locate on Montgomery St., as having a two-way street would slow up traffic and make those as yet undeveloped businesses more approachable to motor traffic.

I would ask you, then, to please transmit this letter and these perspectives, our strong opposition to the two-way street plan to the Mayor and City Council for their consideration.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

William Zuckerman and Jean Sidley
400 Madison St, #1502
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-548-6654

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6-24-17

To: City Council, City of Alexandria
From: Ellen Mosher, 324 N. Saint Asaph Street
Date: June 19, 2017
Re: Proposed Old Town North Small Area Plan

Summary of key points in the Old Town North SAP - (see attachment A)

- Potential redevelopment sites increase building sf 100% or 2,154,944 new sf–total sf 4,288,253.
- Land use increases residents 147% or 4,602 new residents totaling 7,720 residents.
- Land use increases employees 28% or 2,741 new employees totaling 12,486 employees.
- Green space increases 28% or 8.97 acres totaling 40.21 green space acres.
- Property zoning increases mixed use zoning to almost every block and more office sf on top of 5,180,463+ sf approved for office and retail in Potomac Yards Landbays F, G and H with the + for 2,910,700 sf for the office/residential portion not allocated yet. **(see attachment B)**
- Building heights increase from 45 feet to 50-77+ feet and up to 140+ feet with the + portion related to "bonus density" perks embedded in the SAP allowing heights to exceed stated limits.

This SAP proposes mixed use everywhere in a predominately residential neighborhood, 28% increase in green space despite a 147% increase in residents, and buildings that nearly double, triple and more the current heights results in changing Old Town North into the look and feel of Carlyle, East Eisenhower Avenue, Landmark, Crystal City, Rosslyn and newly approved North Potomac Yard instead of extending Old Town's uniqueness that doesn't exist in Virginia within 40 miles of Old Town. What a wonderful opportunity to expand what works very well for Old Town and what draws people here by adding more charming residential buildings into the Old Town neighborhood.

Old Town is made up of blocks with building heights around 45 feet and street width at 40 feet. This building height and street width proportion or Height to Width Proportion (HWP) gives that nice feeling about the streets in Old Town and adds to the charm and uniqueness that draws people here.

- building height of 45 feet to a street width of 40 feet is approximately a 1:1 ratio that gives a nice sense of spatial definition and may be the strongest ratio for good place making and what exists in Old Town. **(see attachment C).**
- building height of 77+ feet to street width of 40 feet is a 2:1 ratio that's suited for urban downtown and larger downtown areas.
- building height of 140+ feet to a street width of 40 feet is a 3.5:1 ratio that's suited for a larger downtown area.

Please consider continuing the successful Old Town ratio of 1:1 building height to street width instead of repeating the 2:1 ratio and 3:1 ratio concepts that exist in Carlyle and East Eisenhower Avenue, and in the newly approved North Potomac Yard SAP. The 1:1 ratio would make Old Town, and in particular Old Town East of Washington Street, more cohesive, attractive to residents and tourists, desirable, inviting and consequently thriving.

Please consider concentrating commercial use to a core area like Old Town Greens Town Square instead of repeating mixed use everywhere like Carlyle and East Eisenhower. The core street area has been identified as part of Saint Asaph and Montgomery Streets so commercial uses should be contained there. Old Town Greens Town Square is a great example of a successful new commercial core street that doesn't spill into the adjacent neighborhoods. This could work here too. **(see attachment D).**

Please consider limiting the ratio of building heights to street width to the 1:1 ratio and limiting commercial use to the identified core street area on part of Saint Asaph and Montgomery Streets.

[illegible]

Old Town North Small Area Plan Pages

Potential redevelopment Sites - Pages 35 – 38

The pages identified potential redeveloped sites. SF for these sites will increase from 2,133,309 SF to 4,288,253SF or 2,154,944 new SF increasing the SF 100%.

Land Use - Page 113

Current residents total 3,118 and proposed new residents total 7,720 or 4,602 new residents or a 147% increase in residents.

Current employees total 9,745 and proposed new employees total 12,486 or 2,741 new employees or a 28% increase in employees.

No mention of the estimated new customers and visitors to the neighborhood.

Property Zoning - Pages 39 – 40

The pages show existing zoning and recommended zoning makes almost every block CRMU/X. Please note the current use is predominately residential use.

Building Heights - Pages 42 – 43

The pages are allowed existing building height IF an SUP is requested for extra height and recommended building height. This SAP does not provide existing building heights. The area plans to have building heights of 50-77 feet and then "signature buildings" up to 140 feet. Plus, these could increase based on "bonus density" perks embedded in here that would exceed the listed maximum.

Green Space - Pages 62 – 63

Existing green space of 31.24 acres and potential additional green space of 8.97 for a total of 40.21 acres or an increase of 28% of green space.

North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Pages - (Attachment B)

Potomac Yard North SAP - pages A12 and 60

The pages outline already approved office and retail sf of 5,180,463 + in Potomac Yard. The + is for 2,910,700 sf office/residential space that has not been allocated yet.

Articles Attached

Building Height to Street Width Ratio article - (Attachment C):

Chamber, Walter. "Changing the Conversation from Building Heights to Place Making." *Great Streets San Diego*. (July, 2011)

Mixed Use article - (Attachment D):

Cumbelich, John. "The Inconvenient Truth About Mixed Use." (January 25, 2016)

Attachment B

Building heights range between 45 and 132 feet. To date, four multi-family residential buildings have been constructed within Landbay G including a mixed-use residential building and grocery store and the Potomac Yard Fire Station with residential units above. Under construction is the National Institute for the Blind (NIB). Also approved, but yet to be constructed, is the Institute for Defense Analysis (IDA).

In addition, west of Route 1, the Oakville Triangle Plan area contains 24 acres with 2.7 million sq. ft. of anticipated mixed uses to include office, hotel, residential, and a combination of retail, neighborhood serving and "maker space" uses.

To the north across Four Mile Run, the development of Potomac Yard Arlington is well under way, with a planned total gross square footage of 4,409,835, an FAR of 2.03, and building heights of approximately 120 to 160 feet.

Status of Other Potomac Yard Landbays

- Landbay A (Potomac Greens): Construction completed for 244 townhouses and approximately 20 acres of open space.
- Landbay C (Potomac Plaza): Construction completed of approximately 15,000 square feet of retail.
- Landbay D (Rail Park): Requires subsequent approval for design and programming of the park.
- Landbay E (Four Mile Run): Improvements to Landbay E such as the Four Mile Run Promenade and Urban Deck are tied to redevelopment of Landbay F.
- Landbay G (Town Center): DSUP approved for up to 972,346 sq. ft. of office space, 108,817 sq. ft. of retail uses, 666 multi-family units (which include 42 bonus density units), and 170 hotel rooms and 1.6 acres of open space. A portion of Landbay G is developed with "The Station," a City-owned, collocated fire station and 64 affordable housing units. Construction is underway for Block A (NIB). 5 Development sites remain on 4 blocks within Landbay G.
- Landbay H: Approved for 1,100,000 million sq. ft. of office space and 25,000 sq. ft. of retail. The Landbay

1,081,163

1,125,000

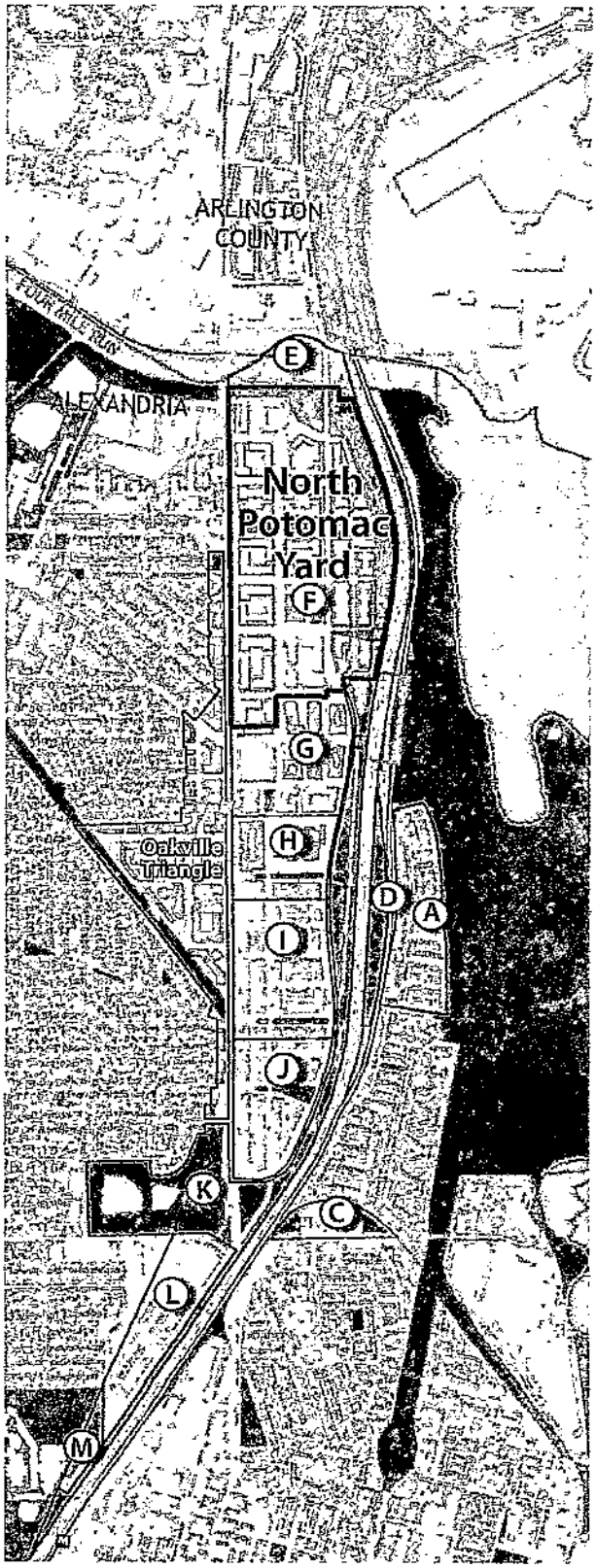

Figure A.4-2: North Potomac Yard Landbays

Office + Retail SS

Landbay F	2,974,300
Landbay G	1,081,163
Landbay H	1,125,000

5,180,463 SF Retail + Office plus SF in Residential/office combo buildings

Landbay F (North Potomac Yard)

Table 4.3. Development Summary

BLOCK #	PRINCIPAL LAND USE	OFFICE (SF)	RESIDENTIAL (SF)	OFFICE OR RESIDENTIAL (SF)	RETAIL (SF)[5]	HOTEL (SF)	TOTAL[3,4]
1	OPEN SPACE (CRESCENT PARK)						
2	RESIDENTIAL	0	500,000	0	0	0	500,000
3	HOTEL	0	0	0	0	82,900	82,900
4[1]	COMMUNITY FACILITY/ PUBLIC BUILDING	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	RESIDENTIAL	0	600,000	0	0	0	600,000
6	OFFICE/ RESIDENTIAL	110,000	0	250,000	35,000	0	395,000
CRESCENT GATEWAY NEIGHBORHOOD TOTAL		**110,000**	**1,100,000**	**250,000**	**35,000**	**82,900**	**1,577,900**
7	RESIDENTIAL	0	0	240,400	31,600	0	272,000
8	OFFICE/ RESIDENTIAL	0	0	643,300	154,800	0	798,100
9	OFFICE/ RESIDENTIAL	55,000	0	260,000	40,000	0	365,000
10	RESIDENTIAL	0	0	328,600	36,000	0	364,600
11	OFFICE/ RESIDENTIAL	0	0	643,400	171,900	0	815,300
12	OFFICE / RESIDENTIAL	55,000	0	295,000	50,000	0	400,000
13	OPEN SPACE (MARKET GREEN)						
14	RETAIL	0	0	0	62,900	0	62,900
MARKET DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD TOTAL		**110,000**	**0**	**2,410,700**	**547,200**	**0**	**3,067,900**
FLEXIBLE DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD ZONE (BLOCKS - 15, 16, 18 - 21)[2]	OFFICE	1,100,000	0	484,300	212,800	87,100	1,884,200
17	OFFICE/RESIDENTIAL	60,000	0	250,000	50,000	0	360,000
22	OFFICE/RESIDENTIAL	0	0	0	65,000	0	435,000
23	OFFICE	180,000	0	0	20,000	0	200,000
METRO SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD TOTAL		**1,340,000**	**0**	**1,104,300**	**347,800**	**87,100**	**2,879,200**
24	OPEN SPACE (POTOMAC YARD PARK EXTENSION)[6,7]			= 2,974,300			
						TOTAL (SF)	**7,525,000**

Notes:

1. *Community facilities, public buildings and accessory uses may be provided on any block and are not deducted from the maximum permitted development; however the uses will be subject to the height requirements, design guidelines and other applicable elements as part of the development review process. Block 4 is reserved as a possible school site. Collocation of uses within Block 4 (including residential) is encouraged where feasible and shall not count toward the maximum development square footage.*
2. *Approximately 0.7-acres within block 16 or 21 will be provided as open space for Market Square Park within the Flexible Metrorail Zone.*
3. *The maximum amount of development shall be 7,525,000 sq. ft.; however, the amount of permitted development within each block is conceptual. The final amount of development may be permitted to be transferred from block to block and will be determined as part of the rezoning for the subject property and development special use permit.*
4. *In addition to the maximum amount of development, a minimum amount of density is required for each block pursuant to the minimum heights and other applicable requirements.*
5. *Additional ground floor retail locations may be approved, if they are consistent with the intent of the Small Area Plan and is approved as part of the development review process. The retail amount will be deducted from the maximum amount of development permitted within each block.*
6. *The maximum building height for the Metrorail Station shall not exceed 50 feet in the general location as depicted within the Plan.*
7. *The maximum height of the pump station or any park structures must comply with the intent of the Plan and require review as part of the development review process.*

page 4 of 9

Attachment C

GREAT!!
STREETS!!
!San!Diego!
!sdgreatstreets.org!

Changing!the!Conversation:! from!Building!Heights!to!Place!Making:!

- Walter Chambers

!

Discussions about building height limits often turn into a discussion about "human scale". As the discussion goes, tall buildings are impersonal. Short buildings are more "human".

To be clear, this discussion is about the buildings that line our streets, and the experience one has when walking down the street. Although people may not know it, the discussion about building heights is really about the way one FEELS when experiencing the street. Everyone wants to feel good on the street -- safe, protected, happy, and engaged. When streets feel good, people like to be on them, and having people on the street makes places feel lively, interesting and safe – and that attracts even more people.

Unfortunately, short buildings are no guarantee that a street will feel good. Neither are tall buildings.

So how do you make a street FEEL good? By creating a good Sense of Place. Streets feel good when there is a strong Sense of Place.

Streets are like rooms. They have a floor, walls, and ceiling. And like a room, they can feel good or bad, depending on their proportions and detail. Have you ever walked into a banquet hall or room with low, tile ceiling? Feels awful doesn't it?

Or how about being the first one to a wedding reception held in a large hotel ball room. The room looks lovely, but you still feel exposed and awkward until the other guests arrive and start filling the space.

A Street requires the same good proportions as any room to make it feel good. It is the "walls" of the street that are key to creating good proportions and a sense of place. The buildings on either side of the street form the walls of the street "room", and as such are called the "Street Wall".

So what makes a good street wall? Several factors go into making a good street wall*, but for this conversation about building heights, the focus will be on Height to Width Proportion, or HWP.

HWP is the ratio of the Height of the street wall, to Width of the street. For example, if the buildings that form the street wall are 30 feet tall, and the street is 60 feet wide, then the HWP is 1:2. 30:60 = 1:2. If the buildings (street wall) are 180 feet tall and your street is 60 feet wide, then the HWP is 3:1. 180:60 = 3:1.

Why does HWP matter? Different HWP ratios invoke different feelings and a different sense of Place. A 3:1 ratio (think major urban downtown) feels different than a 1:4 ratio (think suburban retail strip).

Typically, if an HWP is too low, the street will not have a good sense of place. People will not want to be on that street.. And in urban settings it is people we want to attract. People are the ones who create lively, exciting streets, who fill the sidewalk cafes and stores, and that help trigger economic growth. To quote famous urbanist William H. Whyte, "What attracts people most, it would appear, is other people."

That's why low building heights might work on some streets, but not on all streets. If a community is demanding limits on all building heights in its district, then some streets are being set up for failure. And if limits are excessively low (or too high) then the entire district may be set up for failure.

When the conversation changes from building heights to place making, the chance of creating good urban spaces is greatly enhanced. Good place making also triggers economic growth. Talking solely about building heights is to ignore the environment that surrounds the buildings. It is irresponsible. The following real life case demonstrates how focusing on place making is different (and more important) than focusing on building height limits.

Case Study: 301 University – University Avenue @ 3rd Avenue.
The street at University Avenue and 3rd is approximately 40-45 feet wide (two lanes wide, with parallel parking on either side). A proposed new 12 story condominium tower met fierce community opposition, and perhaps with good reason. At a HWP ratio of 3:1, this building begins to create a sense of place that feels very much like a downtown high-rise urban area. That is not in keeping of the character of the neighborhood. Perhaps a better HWP for this area would be 3:2 (mid-rise urban) or 1:1. A 4-5 story building would create an inviting sense of place, and would be a better height in this location.

However, a just few blocks further east, University Avenue widens significantly. At Richmond Street, University Avenue is approximately 90-100 feet wide (four lanes, center median, and parking either side). Would a 4-5 story building create a good sense of place here? Probably not. At this location, the wide street can easily handle an 8-9 story building without the street looking or feeling overwhelmingly urban. In this location, a 3:2 or 1:1 HWP would also create a good sense of place, and would feel most comfortable to the people on the street.

For University Avenue, a single building height limit is not appropriate. What works at 3rd Avenue, does not work a few blocks away at Richmond Street. That is the reason building height must be based on Place Making, and not on some arbitrarily assigned number applied over an entire district.

In order to achieve good place making, one must start with good walls that are the right height for the "Room". Below is a sampling of Height to Width Ratios and the sense of place they tend to

create. Many thanks and great appreciation to the St Louis Great Streets Initiative from which the below descriptions have come. I urge you to visit their website and read more: http://www.greatstreets-stl.org/content/view/417/400/

HWP Raito and Place making
3:1 or higher: Height to Width Ratio
Sense of spatial definition: strong; may feel like a "concrete canyon" in some settings.
Often seen in larger downtown, urban cores.

3:2 Height to Width Ratio
Sense of spatial definition: strong; clear sense of enclosure.
A good HWP for Medium sized urban downtown, or urban core residential

1:1 Height to Width Ratio
Sense of spatial definition: Excellent. Strong place making potential. May be strongest ratio for good place making. Encouraged minimum for all urban areas, including residential.

1:2 height to Width Ratio
Sense of spatial definition: Good; Sufficient for place making. Considered a minimum for good urban street place making.

1:3 or lower
Sense of spatial definition: Weak; Place making potential is low.
This ratio if often seen in suburban areas where wide streets are lined with 1-2 story retail stores or strip malls. No sense of place to the street.

*Of course, as mentioned earlier in this article, other factors are essential in creating a good Street wall, and those must be taken into consideration. Elements of a good street wall include:

- HWP
- Architectural Diversity (old & new, short & tall, frequency of façade changes)
- Building should be built to the sidewalk for consistent wall face.
- Buildings and the architecture must be engaging and interesting to people at street level and second floor (Including human scale building elements, active engagement such as storefronts or sidewalk cafes, and experience of other people).
- Landscaping

Attachment D

THE INCONVENIENT TRUTH ABOUT MIXED USE

January 25, 2016 | By John Cumbelich

As far as trends in retail real estate development go, none during my 30-years in the industry has been more counter-productive or government-driven than residential over retail mixed-use development (RRMU).

Pick just about any Bay Area city and you will easily identify any number of RRMU projects that have been proposed, entitled and/or developed over the past ten years. And with rare exception, these projects suffer the same ills...relatively high vacancy rates, substantially below market rents, poor credit tenancies and a high turnover rate of the brokerage firms that try, with little success, to lease what is un-leasable.

Don't get me wrong – as a design concept RRMU works beautifully...in Paris. And in Manhattan. And therein lies a big part of the problem. City planners and city councils across Northern California have revealed an inferiority complex to major urban markets around the world and tried to force feed this utterly urban product type into sprawling suburbs from Concord to Novato to San Jose. Only guess what, the most important ingredient is missing – concentrated, massive, pedestrian populations.

Retail developments thrive and enjoy competitive demand for their vacancies only when merchants and restaurants can succeed. The ingredients for the retailer's success are universally known and proven: easy access, convenient parking, strong co-tenants and proximity to a desirable trade area. In the Bay Area's primarily suburban sub markets, well over 90% of shoppers get to their shopping and dining destinations by car. Only one of the Bay Area's nine counties, San Francisco, can make a legitimate claim to having the kind of fundamentals that support RRMU, and even then only in select neighborhoods

But the retail landscape in every other Bay Area county is overwhelmingly suburban in nature and comprised of shopping centers, power centers and regional malls with abundant parking, or traditional downtowns that cater to auto-oriented shoppers via street parking and proximate parking structures. Against successful and entrenched assets like these, with their ease of parking, strong anchor tenants and broad offerings, RRMU projects seek vainly to attract tenants who soberly see futures with no parking, no reliable anchor tenants nor the traffic they generate, and above all, no customers.

The Bay Area's numerous submarkets fail to meet the fundamental criteria for RRMU for more reasons than lack of residential density. Remember that the European and east coast markets where RRMU has historically evolved are typically centuries old and have a far more restricted infrastructure of freeways, parking and roadways, which were all necessary factors in the natural growth of RRMU in those markets. RRMU worked in these markets because at the time that they developed, there was no alternative. Infrastructure in Northern California however is based on a 20th century standard, which gave rise to suburbs and the retail projects that serve them, thus eliminating the critical cause & effect chemistry needed for successful RRMU. Government elites have ignored these realities while advancing their Euro model for our communities.

Rapt by the dogma of New Urbanism, our municipal planners have uniformly ignored the fact that retail by its very nature likes to congregate. In retail lease planning, this reality is expressed through anchor tenants, larger formats and critical mass. Yet New Urbanism's RRMU designs plug its' ears and closes its' eyes to this essential truth.

Tragically, today's sophisticated residential developers have learned the game. The hot residential market allows them to build out projects where they can plug in zero income for the retail space they are forced by the municipality to build, knowing it will struggle at best. But strong returns on the residential pro forma compensate for the retail write offs, thus giving birth to another RRMU project whose ground floor is destined to lay vacant, or perhaps be leased by a start-up nail salon or martial arts operation with no credit or resume, if the landlord is lucky.

Of course there are a handful of exceptions. Santana Row and Bay Street among them (although projects

like these have more regional mall DNA than RRMU). Also, an admirable niche is being developed by select firms like BHV Centerstreet Properties, that are delivering mixed use projects that seek to blend functional, first class retail with high quality residential. But for every smashing success, there are perhaps thirty train wrecks. City staffs who have no responsibility to finance, lease or manage the projects they conceive and require, are increasingly a class of folk with their hands on the gears of approval, yet with no boots on the ground understanding how retail leasing works or of the utterly flawed nature of their dreams.

Our city planners all seem to attend the same conferences and seminars – those hosted by an alphabet soup of trade organizations such as ULI, ICSC and BOMA. They bring back the trendy design concept du jour (e.g. Residential over retail mixed use, transit villages, adaptive re-use, etc.) back to Northern California's overwhelmingly suburban retail markets, and proceed to jam developers with un-leasable designs, if those developers hope to seek approval in that city.

So who exactly is campaigning for the RRMU design concept? Not the risk-savvy developers that have learned how this product type rarely succeeds. Clearly not the high quality retailers and first class dining establishments that consistently choose to avoid these projects, leaving them half vacant. Yet RRMU projects continue apace in a bizarro real estate world where the laws of supply and demand have been suspended by ivory tower planners who suffer none of the consequences of these failures, unlike the developers jammed with building them, the banks that might loan on them, or the brokerage firms charged with leasing them.

De-coupled from the financial realities of designing and building retail projects that will attract quality tenants and manage to stay leased in markets both good and bad, our bureaucrats appear more interested in how a project looks or if it comports with the latest fashion in the urban Meccas.

Brokerage firms like ours increasingly experience visits from exasperated multi-family developers who have realized that they have a mounting problem on their hands. With growing concern, they see how the vacancy problem in their commercial portfolios is getting bigger and has no apparent cure. Makeshift leasing solutions have become commonplace as sophisticated institutional developers populate their "retail" spaces with complimentary fitness and meeting rooms in order to shrink, if only slightly, their inventories of dead space.

While Adam Smith's "invisible hand" would give the consumer, the merchant, the builder and the community at large what they want, namely, parking, convenience, anchor tenants, and projects that succeed, our bureaucrats have charted their own path. One that looks like Paris, but with empty buildings. JCA

About John Cumbelich & Associates
John Cumbelich & Associates is a San Francisco Bay Area based firm that provides commercial real estate services to Fortune 500 retailers and select owners and developers of retail commercial properties. The firm's expertise is in developing store networks for retailers seeking to penetrate the Northern California marketplace and the representation of premier Power Center and Lifestyle developments.

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6-24-17

Alexandria Transportation Commission
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

www.alexandriava.gov

Phone: 703.746.4025

Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

May 25, 2017

Re: Transportation Elements of the Old Town North Small Area Plan Update

Dear Mayor Silberberg and Members of City Council:

At its May 17, 2017 meeting, the Alexandria Transportation Commission reviewed the draft Old Town North Small Area Plan, including the Plan's transportation recommendations. The Commission moved to affirm that the transportation recommendations in the draft Old Town North Small Area Plan are consistent with the goals outlined in the City's Transportation Master Plan, adopted in 2008, as shown in the attachment.

The Transportation Commission was created by Council to advocate and promote the development of balanced transportation systems in the City through oversight of the Transportation Master Plan. Our action on May 17th was conducted to fulfill that oversight obligation.

The Commission appreciates your consideration of its input on this project.

Sincerely,

Jerry King
Chair, Alexandria Transportation Commission

Attachment: Old Town North Small Area Plan – Comparison to Transportation Master Plan

cc: Alexandria Transportation Commission
Alexandria Planning Commission
Mark B. Jinks, City Manager
Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager
Yon Lambert, Director, Department of T&ES
Carrie Sanders, Deputy Director, Transportation/Transit, Department of T&ES
Jeff Farner, Deputy Director, Department of Planning & Zoning
Christopher Ziemann, Division Chief/Transportation Planning, Department of T&ES
Steve Sindiong, Capital Programs Manager/Transit, Department of T&ES
Heba ElGawish, Urban Planner, Department of Planning & Zoning

Old Town North Small Area Plan - Comparison to Transportation Master Plan

Transportation and Environmental Services, May 17, 2017

TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN GOALS:	WITHOUT THE PLAN (STATUS QUO)	WITH THE PLAN
Transit		
Ensure that people can travel into, within and out of the City of Alexandria by providing a mass transit system that combines different modes of travel into a seamless, comprehensive and coordinated effort.	Without the plan, is is assumed that the Old Town Circulator will be implemented, as well as increased headways on existing transit routes. These are both recommended in the DASH Comprehensive Operations Analysis. Without the plan, there will be lower land use densities, land uses with less compatibility with transit (ie, the Power Plant), and a lack of pedestrian connectivity that result in poor use of existing or planned transit improvements.	The Small Area Plan includes a mixture of land uses with higher densities and improvements to facilitate improved connectivity beween modes, including new street connections to improve walking or biking to transit. The Plan recommends a new north-south transit route that will connect Old Town North, and the Power Plant site, to the future Potomac Yard Metrorail station, and areas to the south. The plan also encourages higher densities within Old Town North and the Power Plant site which will encourage greater use of transit.
Pedestrian		
Engineering: The City will provide a continuous, connected and accessible network that enables pedestrians - particularly children and those with mobility impairments - to move safely and comfortably between places and destinations.	The City's current Transportation Master Plan identifies specific pedestrian improvements within the plan area such as new constructing sidewalks where missing (portion of Union Street, and Wythe Street), as well as citywide pedestrian policy and engineering strategies to improve connectivity and safety. The City has a Vision Zero policy and is working toward identifying specific recommendations to eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries by 2028. In general, Old Town North has a good network of pedestrian facilities, however, some sidewalks are narrow or could be improved for accessibility. There are limited connections to the Power Plant site, and pedestrian access and safety on Slaters Lane across Washington Street needs improvement.	The Small Area Plan recommends an improved street grid that will facilitate better pedestrian connectivity, especially north-south connectivity, connectivity to, and within the Power Plant site, improved sidewalks along Slaters Lane, and separating pedestrians from bicycles within the Linear Park along the Norfolk Southern rail spur, as well as along the waterfront. The Plan recommends enhanced sidewalks, and Green Streets that will improve the pedestrian experience and safety. New pedestrian facilities would be designed in a manner that is ADA accessible, provides separation from autos, and have attractive streetscapes. These facilities will provide better and safer accessibility for all users.
Encouragement: The City will encourage mobility for all pedestrians, regardless of age or ability, by promoting walking as a means of improving health and increasing transit usage.	Most streets within Old Town North have sidewalks, although a number of sidewalks are narrow or are in need of accessiblity improvements. Without the plan, some improvements would be made where sidewalks are missing, or in need of access improvements, and current projects such as the Royal Street greenway, Second Street green street would include traffic calming improvements. However, other recommendations such as additional Green Streets or enhanced sidewalks are unlikely to be constructed, thereby promoting more vehicular trips, and discouraging healthy activities.	The improved street grid and associated pedestrian facilities, enhanced sidewalks and green streets, and separated pedestrian and bicycle facilities will help to encourage walking between uses and to transit stops or Metrorail facilities. The new pedestrian facilities will be constructed to be ADA accessible, attractive, and convenient, and therefore encourage users of all ages and abilities to access uses. This in turn will help to promote transit use as well as encourage healthy activities.

Old Town North Small Area Plan - Comparison to Transportation Master Plan

Transportation and Environmental Services, May 17, 2017

TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN GOALS:	WITHOUT THE PLAN (STATUS QUO)	WITH THE PLAN
Education: The City will develop a Safe Routes to School Program and awareness initiatives that address pedestrian safety, rights and responsibilities.	Today, the City works with Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) toward a Safe Routes to School Program, and is in the process of conducting walk audits for all of the ACPS schools to identify what improvements within proximity to schools can be made to improve safety for pedestrians. Without the plan, some improvements could be continued to be implemented to improve pedestrian safety for improved access to schools.	The Small Area Plan includes improved pedestrian facilities that are ADA accessible, separated from autos and have an improved streetscape. These recommended improvements are more compatible with a Safe Routes to School program than the existing conditions.
Safety: The City will create a safe pedestrian environment through effective law enforcement and implementation of pedestrian safety countermeasures.	Without the plan, some existing sidewalk gaps, such as along Union Street, and Wythe Street would still be constructed. The City has a Vision Zero policy and is working toward identifying specific recommendations to eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries by 2028. Other plan recommendations, such as Green Streets and enhanced sidewalks, or the Slaters Lane improvement are unlikely to be constructed in the near future. An auto focused environment results in a higher likelihood of conflicts between pedestrians and autos, and therefore impacts pedestrian safety.	The Plan recommends a compact layout with a mixture of land uses, improved road grid, that will result in direct, visible pedestrian zones with additional crosswalks. It recommends widened sidewalks and trails that are ADA accessible, and buffered from vehicles. The plan also includes improved pedestrian crossings at arterials, such as on Slaters Lane across Washington Street. These improvements will encourage pedestrian activity, improve pedestrian visibility, and help to reduce auto speeds, thereby improving overall pedestrian safety.
Bicycle		
Engineering: The City will complete a connected system of primary and secondary bikeways with ample bicycle parking to serve bicyclists needs.	Today, there are limited bicycle facilities within the plan area or surrounding area. The Pedestrian and Bicycle chapter of the Transportation Master Plan includes a number of project recommendations to improve north-south and east-west bicycle mobility in Old Town North, including the Royal Street greenway, the Madison Street bike corridor, and shared lanes on Bashford Street, and on Oronoco Streett. These projects would likely move forward through the City's Complete Streets program. The Transportation Master Plan also includes various citywide engineering related strategies that are applicable in Old Town North. In addition, there is a current CIP funded project for a bicycle facility on the east side of E. Abingdon Drive between Slaters Lane and the trail adjacent the Norfolk Southern rail spur.	The Small Area Plan recommends maintaining the bicycle recommendations in the the Transportation Master Plan. In addition to these projects, the Plan builds upon the Transportation Master Plan by providing separated bicycle / pedestrian trails within a new linear park on the Norfolk Southern rail spur right-of-way, and along the waterfront within the Power Plant site. In addition, new streets within the Power Plant site would be designed to accommodate bicycles and improve connectivity, as well as a new facility along Slaters Lane to connect the northern end of the Power Plant site to the Northeast Alexandria neighborhood. The Plan also recommends bicycle parking at major activity centers, including Bike Share stations located at major activity centers within Old Town North, and the redeveloped Power Plant site.

Old Town North Small Area Plan - Comparison to Transportation Master Plan

Transportation and Environmental Services, May 17, 2017

TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN GOALS:	WITHOUT THE PLAN (STATUS QUO)	WITH THE PLAN
Encouragement: The City will seek to increase bicycle usage and bicycle-transit connections through targeted outreach and encouragement.	The City's Transportation Master Plan includes objectives such as integration of bicycles with transit, providing bicycle accommodations through development review, Bike to Work Day, promoting health, and partnering with local businesses.	The objectives identified in the City's Transportation Master Plan to meet this goal would continue to be implemented. In addition, the specific bicycle improvements recommended in the Plan, such as the improved connectivity to all uses and transit, and policies related to parking and bikeshare, and Transportation Management Plan strategies will help to increase bicycle usage and connections to transit.
Education: The City will develop and implement targeted Safe Routes to School programs as well as additional programs for adult cyclists, and motorists.	The City's Transportation Master Plan includes objectives such as education, bicycle registration and outreach. However, the general lack of a comprehensive, connected bicycle system within the plan area, and connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods, discourages students from riding bicycles to school.	The Small Area Plan recommends improved bicycle facilities throughout the Plan area, in addition to the projects already included in the Transportation Master Plan. These recommended improvements are compatible with a Safe Routes to School program. Other recommended programs in the City's Transportation Master Plan, such as education, providing bicycle maps, and outreach would continue to be implemented.
Safety: The City will create a safe bicycle environment and reduce user conflict on shared-use paths through effective law enforcement, detailed crash analysis and implementation of bicycle safety countermeasures.	The Transportation Master Plan includes objectives to meet this goal, including educational programs, traffic enforcement of both cars and bicycles, adequately reporting crash incidents, and targeting key intersections and conflict points for adequate improvements.The City has a Complete Streets policy that requires all new roads be designed to consider all users of the road. In 2016, the City adopted a Vision Zero policy and is working toward identifying specific recommendations to eliminate roadway fatalities and serious injuries by 2028.	The objectives identified in the City's Transportation Master Plan to meet this goal, as well as the Complete Streets policy, and Vision Zero policy would continue to be implemented. However, it is anticipated that the improved street grid within the Power Plant site, additional bike facilities, bikeshare stations and bike parking recommended in the Plan will result in greater awareness of bicycles by motorists, and overall improved safety for bicyclists.
Streets and Neighborhood Protection (Traffic Calming)		
Provide protection to residential neighborhoods from traffic operating at excessive speeds and excessive volumes of traffic.	Most of the existing developed area in Old Town North is developed in a street grid layout, with traffic control at intersections, which helps to slow traffic. However, there are limited traffic calming improvements such as curb extensions and enhanced streetscaping. Some current projects in the City's budget include the Second Street green street, and the Royal Street greenway, that will include designs to slow traffic in residential areas. The City's Transportation Master Plan includes other recommended projects, goals and measures related to traffic calming. Without the Plan, most of the street configuration and pedestrian facilities may remain as they are today, but there are opportunities for residents to request additional traffic calming measures.	The Small Area Plan recommends a continuation of the street grid in the Power Plant site that will include traffic control at intersections. The grid and streets will be designed in a manner to reduce vehicular speeds, especially on residential streets, and will be consistent with the Complete Streets design guidelines. Features include narrowed lanes, wide sidewalks and non-motorized paths, pedestrian crosswalks, bulbouts, on-street parking, and varying pavement materials. These features will provide greater emphasis toward pedestrians, thereby reducing conflicts with autos and improving overall pedestrian safety. In addition, the conversion of Montgomery Street to two-ways will also help to slow traffic on that street.

Old Town North Small Area Plan - Comparison to Transportation Master Plan

Transportation and Environmental Services, May 17, 2017

TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN GOALS:	WITHOUT THE PLAN (STATUS QUO)	WITH THE PLAN
Keep neighborhood street use, to the greatest extent possible, within the classification defined in the transportation chapter of the Master Plan.	The Transportation Master Plan currently identifes Washington Street as an arterial; and Bashford Street, Fairfax Street, Montgomery Street, Madison Street, Wythe Street and Oronoco Street as primary collectors, and all other streets as local streets. Without the Small Area no other streets are anticipated to be added to the classification system.	The Small Area Plan recommends some changes to the roadway classification. The improved grid within the Power Plant site results in an addition of local streets where traffic would travel at a slower speed, and Slaters Lane east of Washington Street could become a new collector roadway. Arterials and collectors would be redesigned in a manner to improve connectivity and safety for all modes, such as improved sidewalks and bicycle facilities along Slaters Lane, and enhanced streetscape improvements on Washington Street.
Increase access, safety, comfort and convenience for pedestrians and bicyclists by changing the culture of neighborhood street use from "cars first" to "people first".	The City's current Transportation Master Plan recommends limited improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists within the plan area. These include the Royal Street greenway, the Madison Street enhanced biycle corridor, a shared bike facility on Oronoco Street, and additional bikeshare stations. While these improvements will help to encourage use of other modes, the amount of change to a "people first" culture is les sthan would be achieved with the Small Area Plan.	The Small Area Plan recommends a compact layout with a mixture of land uses, and improved street grid, and safe, accessible, attractive and safe pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including the conversion of Montgomery Street to a two-way operation, improved trails that separate pedestrians and bicyclists, additional pedestrian and bicycle improvements such as on Slaters Lane, additional capital bikeshare stations, enhanced sidewalks and streetscape improvements, and additional transit improvements. These features will encourage more walking and biking between uses, and to transit, improve pedestrian visibility, and help to reduce auto speeds, thereby creating a culture of "people first".
Base the expenditure of public resources on need.	Without the Plan, the current planned major transportation projects include the E. Abingdon bike facility, the Royal Street greenway, the Second Street green street, and the Madison Street enhanced bike facility. While individual frontage improvements or mitigation improvements could be required for individual developments, the piecemeal development would result in a lack of a coordinated infrastructure plan.	The Small Area Plan anticipates the redevelopment of the Power Plant site, and redevelopment in other areas of Old Town North. The expense attributed toward the development of the streets / blocks within the Power Plant site would be bourne by the developer, and potential developer contributions from other developments could also be used toward transportation infrastructure or services, such as bikeshare stations.
Foster a collaborative working relationship between the City staff and neighborhood residents in the development of traffic calming measures.	The Complete Streets program includes funding for traffic calming projects. As part of the program, staff identifies projects based on citizen requests and if the street warrants traffic calming measures. Staff conducts outreach with area residents for input prior to project implementation. Without the plan, the design of the Royal Street greenway project, and the Second Street green street project would still include designs to calm traffic. In addition, other projects could still be requested by residents, but would need to be evaluated for implementation based on thresholds such as volume and accident history.	The Small Area Plan recommends a road system designed in a manner to reduce vehicular speeds, including the conversion of Montgomery Street to a two-way street, the development of green streets and streets with enhanced sidewalks, and new streets within the Power Plant site. Features include narrowed lanes, pedestrian crosswalks, on-street parking, bulbouts, and enhanced bicycle facilities. These initially constructed traffic calming features will reduce the need to implement future traffic calming elements.

Old Town North Small Area Plan - Comparison to Transportation Master Plan

Transportation and Environmental Services, May 17, 2017

TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN GOALS:	WITHOUT THE PLAN (STATUS QUO)	WITH THE PLAN
Parking		
A comprehensive parking management strategy that is fully integrated with the City's plans for transit, streets, bicycles and pedestrians and functions in coordination with these plans - furthering the City's overall goals and wider transportation vision.	Today, the area is dominated by a mixture of residential, office, commercial and hotel uses, and many of the structures were built at a time when the transportation system is focused on the automobile, which provided extensive parking. The area includes onstreet parking, private parking for some residential developments, and some larger surface parking lots or garages for hotels and commercial developments. Without the plan, some issues such as spillover parking on residential streets, and an overall lack of a parking structure could continue, but may be partially or incrementally alleviated as individual properties are redeveloped.	The Small Area Plan recommends a multi-modal transportation system that will result in a greater share of persons who will walk, bike or ride transit. These characteristics thus allow for lower parking requirements (per the City's recently amended residential parking requirements), and opportunities for shared parking. The Plan recommends that parking spaces be efficiently managed to maximize turnover of spaces, and include smart parking technologies and shared parking, especially within the Power Plant site. A parking management plan will be required for developments as they occur, which could include measures such as unbundled residential / mixed-use parking. On-street spaces, especially in the commercial areas along Montgomery Street and St. Asaph Street should be considered for further parking restrictions to increase turnover, and could be considered for meters as part of a performance parking program.

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6-24-17

City Council Meeting
June 24, 2017
Agenda Item #13
Master Plan Amendment
Old Town North Small Area Plan Amendment

Mayor Silberberg, Members of Council:

I am speaking in support of the North Old Town Small Area Plan Amendment to the Master Plan.

As a member of the Advisory Group to the NOTSAP, I'd like to briefly summarize our work.

Over the 18 month period during which we met to revise the 1992 NOTSAP, the 21 members of The Advisory Group worked in good faith to put forward a new small area plan.

The structure of our project moved from small sub-groups, such as environmental Infrastructure and sustainability, street patterns, land use and transportation, to the larger group for further discussion and analysis.

We began the process with charrettes (an attempt to solicit the greatest number of ideas from the Advisory Group and residents). From the charrettes, we narrowed the multiple possibilities to those feasible. Throughout our work, we were challenged by issues of flexibility vs. specificity.

The NRG site was only partially planned. We could not plan in detail a property that has not been determined by its owner. We had to consider what might be successful patterns 25 years from now. Will there be a need for more office space or less office space, more automobiles or less, or will mass transit be the best option? What will the culture be like 25 years hence?

Because of these unknowables, the project carried a certain amount of trepidation for us in

making decisions. Yet, that sense of trepidation also showed the seriousness of our responsibility in this task.

At the conclusion of our work we Advisory Group members thought that we had done our best over the 18 month work period, respected each other's perspectives and had come together to create this new North Old Town Small Area Plan.

Elizabeth Chimento
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