

## City of Alexandria, Virginia

### MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 26, 2017

TO: CHAIRWOMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE  
PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: KARL MORITZ, DIRECTOR,  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

SUBJECT: DOCKET ITEM #4  
SUB #2017-0003, 2619 and 2621 Randolph Avenue

This memorandum contains supplemental information for SUB #2017-0003, a case that Planning Commission deferred until the November 9<sup>th</sup> hearing at the request of the applicant. The Planning Commission will reconsider the subdivision proposal in the context of Section 11-1700, particularly Section 11-1710(B) for lot compatibility with similarly situated lots, Section 11-1710(D) for lot requirements of the zone, and Section 11-1713 for variation criteria.

Since the October hearing, the applicant suggested an easement on the façade to preserve the front ten feet of the existing house or an open space easement which would reduce the FAR permissible for the development of a new house at 2621 Randolph Avenue. Although it is the applicant's prerogative to enter into these arrangements as a private matter, staff has determined that these options cannot be considered as part of the subdivision review. The staff maintains its position, therefore, that the applicant has not established that this project meets the variation criteria of 11-1713. Specifically, he has not shown that adherence to the requirements would result in a substantial injustice.

Two technical detail changes are included in the revised report. Further research indicates that the site had two original lots with frontages of 25 feet at 2619 Randolph Avenue and 34 feet at 2621 Randolph Avenue that were never consolidated after the single family home was built on the property line between the two lots. At the time of residential development in the Abingdon subdivision area, two-family, semi-detached homes were constructed on lots with standard 25 foot frontages and single family homes were constructed on combined lots with frontages of 50 feet or more. When the existing single family home at 2619 Randolph Avenue was constructed, the combined frontage of the lots measured 59 feet. Secondly, the average front setback of the blockface was recalculated and corrected as 21.4 feet. This reduces the proposed lot width to 33.7 feet for 2621 Randolph Avenue.

In response to correspondence sent to the Planning Commission regarding a perceived connection between a subdivision denial and the demolition of the historic house, staff would like to clarify that approval or denial of this subdivision case does not guarantee protection of the existing bungalow at 2619 Randolph Avenue. Other mechanisms exist that are unrelated to a subdivision review, which could ensure preservation of the unique architecture and aesthetics of this building.

In conclusion, staff maintains that the criteria for variations are not met in this case. For this reason, the subdivision would not meet the requirements of Section 11-1700 and staff cannot recommend approval. Staff continues to recommend denial of SUB #2017-0003 subject to these revisions.