

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 10, 2025

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR GASKINS AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: PAUL STODDARD, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

SUBJECT: DSUP #2025-10028 /BRADDOCK WEST EXTENSION

ISSUE:

The proposed extension of the DSUP at the Braddock West site (727 N. West Street) was approved until October 18, 2025 by City Council at the June 14, 2025 Public Hearing. At the request of City Council, the request will return to the October 2025 Public Hearings with additional information pertaining to (1) Stormwater Management and (2) Building Height and Setbacks. The additional information requested by City Council follows.

1. Stormwater Management:

At the June 14, 2025 City Council Public Hearing, concerns were voiced regarding the DSUP extension, referencing several instances of flooding at the intersection of Braddock Road, West Street, and Wythe Street, which is adjacent to the subject site. In response to these concerns, City Council asked staff to elaborate on what mitigation measures the development provided at the site, as well as what measures the City is undertaking to improve the flooding at the intersection.

Staff has confirmed that the proposed Braddock West development decreases peak stormwater runoff rates by 30 percent above what is required for the site. Furthermore, the project improves the flooding issue at the site by lowering runoff contributions to the adjacent right-of-way and does not exacerbate the issue at the intersection of Braddock Road and West Street.

While the flooding at the intersection of Braddock Road, West Street, and Wythe Street, occurs from 65-acres of offsite runoff and is unrelated to the requirements of this project, staff has performed multiple studies of the flooding in the intersection and is considering the feasibility of a near-term capital spot project in the area to mitigate flooding issues. This near-term solution would focus on first ensuring the existing storm sewer network is in a state of good repair. If found to be in good shape and not in need of repairs, additional inlets would be installed and existing inlets may be upsized. Staff is working to identify Spot Improvement Program funding and will secure a design consultant to begin planning on the near-term project. Based on the findings of the study, which included two potential options with rough order of magnitude cost estimates around \$35 million, staff will suggest inclusion of a long-term Braddock and West flood mitigation large capacity project in the out years of the FY 2027 – FY 2036 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) in the Stormwater Utility 10-Year Plan.

Another concern related to stormwater management is the building’s retail corner and residential entrance area’s potential vulnerability to extreme 100-year storm events. The applicant provided a 100-year flooding exhibit demonstrating a modeled ponding water surface elevation (WSE) of 29.19 feet, compared to proposed finished floor elevations of 29.25 feet for the retail space and 29.50 feet for the residential units. While this analysis addresses specific stormwater ponding elevations that are caused by off-site conditions, it is important to note that the property is not located within the FEMA-mapped 100-year regulatory floodplain. Instead, the exhibit approved as part of the site plan illustrates that the proposed building is designed with resilience for extreme rain event scenarios that exceed the requirements of typical development approvals.

2. Height and Setbacks:

Additional concerns regarding the proposed building height and setbacks, particularly at the section facing the lower-scale dwellings on Wythe Street, were raised. The site is identified as a redevelopment site in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan (BMNP) and within the Braddock East Master Plan overlay area (BEMP). As depicted in Figure 1 in the Appendix, the BEMP calls for a maximum building height of 50 to 70 feet at the center and 30 to 40 feet closer to the property boundary to provide building “shoulders” which provide an appropriate transition to the lower-scale buildings on the south side of Wythe Street as well as a comfortable pedestrian scale for the new building.

At the south elevation along Wythe Street, the building is set back between approximately 5 and 16.5 feet above the third story to be sensitive to the lower scale buildings on Wythe Street. The setback above the third story is about 5.5 feet at the north elevation along Madison Street and between 6 and 17 feet at the west elevation. (See Figure 2 in Appendix).

The development received 25 feet of bonus height for the provision of affordable housing pursuant to Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance. With the added bonus height, the total maximum height of the proposed building is 95 feet including the 10-foot high trellis on the roof as depicted in Figure 3 and with a lower height of 29 feet at the third story on the three street-facing elevations. The building does not exceed 85 feet at the roof line. As stated in the staff report from the original approval dated May 15, 2021, staff is supportive of the proposed height building as it is consistent with City Policies and the Recommended Height Map of the BEMP.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the three-year extension of DSUP2025-10028 (formerly DSUP2025-10004 and DSUP2020-10027) for the development project to carry forward with the building height, setbacks, and other site improvements as currently proposed.

STAFF:

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APPENDIX:

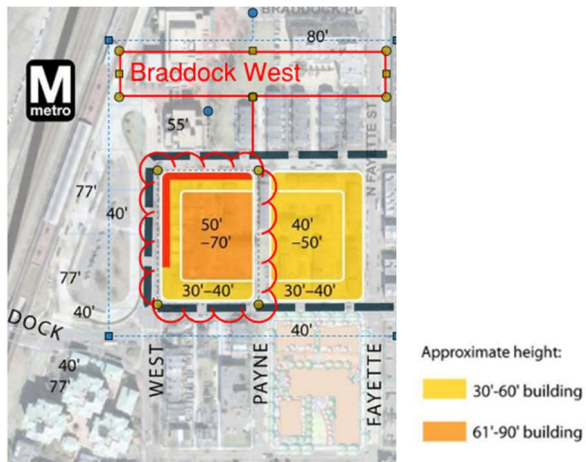


Figure 1 – Development Framework Map in BEMP showing recommended heights



Figure 2 – Braddock West Building Height Breakdown



Figure 3 – Perspective View of Building Showing Trellis and Stepback area to the south

ATTACHMENTS:

1. September 5, 2025 Letter from the Applicant
2. DSUP #2025-10004 Extension June 2025 Staff Report & DSUP #2020-10027 Original Site Plan and Staff Report