

Docket Item # 9
Planning Commission Public Hearing
September 5, 2024

Consideration of approval of the Planning Commission minutes of the Public Hearing meeting of
June 4, 2024

*** * * M I N U T E S * * ***

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION

June 4, 2024 7:00 P.M.

Council Chamber

301 King Street, City Hall Alexandria, Virginia

Members Present:

Melissa McMahon, Vice Chair

David Brown

Mindy Lyle

Jody Manor

Vivian Ramirez

Stephen Koenig

Members Absent:

None; Chair Macek participated remotely

Staff Present:

Karl Moritz

Nancy Williams

Christina Zechman Brown

Tony LaColla

Ann Horowitz

Sam Shelby

Catherine McDonald

Mavis Stanfield

Patrick Silva

Rob Kerns

Maya Contreras

Margaret Cooper

Brian Dofflemyer

Lanning Blaser

Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning

Office of the City Attorney

Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning

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Department of Planning & Zoning

Transportation & Environmental Services

Department of Planning & Zoning

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair Melissa McMahon called the Planning Commission Public Hearing of June 4, 2024, to order at 7:06 p.m. She stated that Chair Macek is participating remotely from Cleveland, Ohio due to work. She indicated that the Chair has provided permission for her to preside over tonight's meeting.

She further stated if you wish to speak on a Docket Item and have not already signed up to do so, please fill out a Speaker Form online by following the "Sign Up to Speak" hyperlink present on the cover page of this evening's Public Hearing Docket or in person by filling out a hardcopy speaker form, which can be found on either materials tables (located immediately outside the Chambers or at the back of the Chambers), and providing it to Ms. Williams, who has her hand raised.

Please note, comments from the public are limited to 3 minutes per speaker, with the exception of applicants and their representation. To make your public comment through the Zoom application, please click on the "Raise Hand" button located on the Zoom taskbar once you hear your name called upon to make your statement, in order to let staff know it is you who needs to be unmuted in order to make your public comment.

To make your public comment if you are dialing into tonight's meeting via phone, please press *9 to execute the "Raise Hand" function once you hear your name called upon to make your statement, followed by *6 to toggle the unmute function. To make your public comment in person, please come up to either podium located at the front of the Chambers when you hear your name called upon to make your statement. Before starting your public comment, please first identify yourself by first and last name.

The City encourages and welcomes public comment from all residents on Planning Commission matters. In keeping with that principle, and with the principle of inclusiveness, this is a reminder of the shared expectation that the content and tenor of public comments always be civil and respectful. Thank you for honoring those principles. A reminder to all, including Commissioners, staff, and speakers in the Chambers to please speak clearly into the microphone to ensure all are able to hear in a clear manner."

Vice-Chair McMahon inquired as to whether there were any changes to tonight's Docket. Staff responded that there is a change in the Docket, indicating that the City, as the applicant for the Master Plan Amendment under Item #10, is requesting deferral of the Master Plan Amendment.

Request for Deferral by the City of the Master Plan Amendment for Item #10

Master Plan Amendment #2024-00002

Zoning Text Amendment #2024-00007

Coordinated Development District Conceptual Design Plan #2022-00001

315 Stovall Street; 312 Taylor Drive; 2380 and 2425 Mill Road; 206 Hoffman Street; 2310, 2356 and 2400 Eisenhower Avenue; 2200, 2250, and 2300 Dock Lane.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to defer Master Plan Amendment #2024-00002. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Per an inquiry from the Vice-Chair as to whether the Planning Commission would like to hear any Item on the Consent Calendar, Commissioners pulled Docket Items #2 and #3 from the Consent Calendar.

2. ZTA #2024-00006

(A) Initiation of a Text Amendment and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of a minor update to the Zoning Ordinance to Section 2-188.1 to add dog play area to the recreation and entertainment use definition; and to Sections 4-100 (CL/Commercial low), 4-200 (CC/Commercial community), 4-300 (CSL/Commercial service low), and 6-600 (Mount Vernon urban overlay) zone to add recreation and entertainment, indoor as a permitted use and recreation and entertainment, outdoor as a special use.

Applicant: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

Discussion

Commissioner Lyle expressed that the Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) needed more work, citing as an example that the child play area, one of the recreation and entertainment uses listed in the Zoning Ordinance, should be defined. She suggested Special Use Permit (SUP) applications include questions related to types of recreation and entertainment uses so the public would clearly understand what is proposed at a site.

Director Karl Moritz clarified the recreation and entertainment use is not newly proposed as the definition has applied for several years in most commercial zones. As presently written, staff has had no difficulty interpreting the definition and amending the sample uses for added specificity was not necessary. He continued that the allowance of the recreation and entertainment use to include all commercial-oriented zones would expand business opportunities and access for residents. In addition, he mentioned the importance of adding uses in the Zoning Ordinance, such as dog play areas in this case, to respond to new business concepts as they arise.

Chair Macek noted his support for the ZTA, reiterating the existence of the use in several zones, the location of the added zones adjacent to other commercial zones, and the expanded business opportunities. He pointed to the three letters of support from the Del Ray community for the ZTA, all mentioning the changes would support vitality and neighborhood amenities along the Mount Vernon Avenue corridor.

Vice-Chair McMahon stated her support for applying the recreation and entertainment allowances and processes in more commercial zones. She believes in the importance of increasing areas for social space for residents and their families.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Manor, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to initiate ZTA #2024-00006. The motion carried on a vote of 6-1.

On a motion by Commissioner Manor, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of ZTA #2024-00006. The motion carried on a vote of 6-1.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis.

3. ZONING ORDINANCE SUBDIVISION CASES ARE HEARD BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION, PLACED ON THE CITY COUNCIL DOCKET FOR INFORMATION, AND HEARD BY CITY COUNCIL ONLY UPON APPEAL.

Subdivision #2024-00004

1608 North Frost Street

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Subdivision to re-subdivide two existing lots; zoned R-20

Applicant: Ryan D. Katz & Amy J Katz

Discussion

Commissioner Brown indicated he did not need a presentation from staff. Commissioner Brown explained that typically with Subdivisions, lots become more equal in size, whereas, in this case, the smaller lot is being made smaller and the larger lot is getting larger. He inquired to the applicant’s representation why this is the case and what the reasoning is for adjusting the lot line. He also inquired if any specific thought was given to the significant trees on the property when the applicants were choosing the proposed new lot line.

Speaker

The applicant’s representative, Steven Mikulic, attorney, explained that the dwelling at 1608 North Frost Street and its pool house were built fairly close to the side property line shared with 1600 North Frost Street. Further, Mr. Mikulic clarified that the applicants are planning to reconfigure the pool house which would require a lot line adjustment to do so, and therefore, they decided to pursue the Subdivision to establish a larger side setback. Additionally, Mr. Mikulic explained that the applicants chose the new lot line in order to bring specific, significant trees onto the 1608 North Frost Street property in order to maintain them.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to approve Subdivision #2024-00004. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

ITEMS PREVIOUSLY DEFERRED

4. Rezoning #2024-00001

709 & 711 Pendleton Street

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for an amendment to the official Zoning Map to rezone the subject properties from CL/Commercial Low with proffer to CL/Commercial Low

Applicant: Sevda Tahirli, Shi Hailing, and Jiangling Wang

Staff: Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning staff made a presentation and answered questions.

Discussion

Commissioner Manor clarified with the applicant and staff how trash would be managed and collected. The applicant explained that they did not expect the coffeeshop to generate high volumes of trash. Staff noted that a dumpster is stored in the adjacent alley. The applicant also answered Commissioner Manor’s question about the size of the tenant space, explaining that about 700 square feet would be used for coffeeshop customers. Commissioner Manor also suggested that the City work with the applicant to establish a loading zone on Pendleton Street in front of the subject property.

Commissioner Lyle expressed support for the request and found the subject property to be suitable for uses consistent with the CL zone. She encouraged the applicant to meet with neighbors as the project moves forward.

Commissioner Brown clarified with staff that the proffer was not put in place due to the subject property’s characteristics but instead established to make use of the property more consistent with the pre-1992 zoning and Master Plan. Commissioner Brown was supportive of the rezoning request. Vice Chair McMahon found the request consistent with the Master Plan. She acknowledged that parking availability is an issue City-wide and that the City must balance protection of residential areas with encouragement of desirable mixed-use neighborhoods.

Vice-Chair McMahon also observed that the office market is weak and that offices generally do best as a land use when they are located with other nonresidential uses. She also acknowledged that any use, including offices, creates parking demands.

Chair Macek echoed other Commissioners’ support for the request. He noted that the subject property is located within a walkable area with easy access to bus routes. Chair Macek stated that low-intensity commercial uses located at the subject property would likely serve the immediate neighborhood and would not generate significant parking demands.

Speakers

Dale Tasharski, 532 North Columbus Street, spoke in opposition to the request and cited concerns about traffic, rodents, parking, and noise. He also expressed concern about precedent for other rezoning requests.

Curtis Byron, 609 North Columbus Street, representing several adjacent neighbors, spoke in opposition to the request and raised concerns about parking, rodents, trash, and odors generated by a restaurant use.

Elizabeth Fay, 534 North Columbus Street, spoke in opposition to the request. She expressed concerns about pedestrian safety, traffic, deliveries, rodents, and trash.

Pamela Graham, 530 North Columbus Street, spoke in opposition to the request and was primarily concerned about parking issues.

Warren Kenneth Linnerooth II, 537 North Columbus Street, spoke in opposition to the request; citing concerns about neighborhood character, parking, and the alley’s narrowness.

Victoria Reppert, 518 North Columbus, spoke in opposition to the request. She was also concerned about pedestrian safety, traffic, parking, trash, neighborhood character, and concerns about precedent for other rezoning requests.

Afet Suleymanova, representing the applicant, summarized the details of the proposed business operation. Ms. Suleymanova explained that the coffeeshop would operate more as a retail operation with minimal on-site food preparation and limited seating due to the size of the tenant space.

Jiangling Wang, applicant, explained that the proffer represents a challenge considering that the demand for office space is low. She stated that it has caused difficulty in finding tenants for their unit (709 Pendleton Street). Ms. Wang also explained that she visits the subject property weekly to clear the alley of litter.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Ramirez, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Rezoning #2024-00001. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis.

5. Special Use Permit 2023-000044

80 S. Early Street

Public Hearing and consideration of a Special Use Permit for three temporary trailers, zoned I/Industrial

Applicant: David Donnelly

Staff: Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning staff made a presentation and answered questions.

Discussion

Commissioner Manor inquired if staff would support the applicant's request for three trailers if they were all 160 square foot trailers. Staff responded that its recommendation reflected only the current proposal and further evaluation would be required if the request changed.

Commissioner Brown asked staff whether the applicant is the only commercial tenant located at the building. Staff confirmed that there are multiple commercial tenants located on-site.

Commissioner Brown followed up to ask if Special Use Permit (SUP) conditions of approval would extend to all tenants if this request were to be approved. Staff confirmed any SUP conditions of approval would apply solely to the applicant.

Commissioner Lyle stated she would prefer to defer or deny the request as she did not feel operations at the overall site supported the addition of temporary trailers. Added time would allow for potential Code issues to be sorted out. She expressed that she generally did not favor trailers in front of a building and believed they were not supported by the Strawberry Hill/Seminary Hill Small Area Plan as evidenced by the one-year term granted for a DHL trailer.

Commissioner Lyle inquired if City staff or the applicant had met with neighbors regarding the request. Staff responded that staff had spoken individually with several residents who expressed concerns relating to site cleanliness, noise, and the SUP request but was not aware of any formal meeting between the applicant and neighbors.

Chair Macek stated the applicant's location within the industrial zone created a different context for considering the request, did not support a deferral, and supported the staff recommendation for the two smaller trailers. He also asked City staff to actively follow up on the Code issues to remediate noise and site maintenance issues expressed by neighbors.

Vice-Chair McMahon voiced her support for the comments made by Chair Macek, supporting the staff recommendation. Staff confirmed that the impacts generated at the overall parcel, which were the subject of neighbors' complaints, were largely attributed to the other commercial tenants. She added that Code enforcement at industrial sites abutting residential area is important and hoped the building owner and applicant would work with the neighbors. Commissioner Koenig echoed Chair Macek's comments, expressing support for the staff recommendation for two trailers.

Speakers

Joshua Yeun, 3904 Vermont Avenue, mentioned noise during early morning hours and site cleanliness, relating to operations by commercial tenants other than the applicant of the SUP. Gerri Galagaza, 3810 Woodlawn Court, expressed concern relating to the site’s current state of cleanliness, opposed the 320 square foot trailer remaining on-site, and mentioned that construction possibly occurred without building permits. Esteban Enriquez, 3908 Vermont Avenue, noted his concerns about noise impacts, particularly from operations of the construction business located in the rear of the site. He also highlighted issues relating to trash and debris.

The applicant, Daniel Donnelly, spoke in support of his request, mentioning that comments from neighbors are not related to his SUP request and instead are being caused by other commercial tenants at the site. He confirmed his intention to remove the 320 square foot trailer, maintain the cleanliness of his tenant space area, act as a good neighbor, and abide by all City regulations.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Manor, seconded by Commissioner Ramirez, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2023-00044. The motion carried on a vote of 6-1.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis.

6. Special Use Permit #2024-00026

Hops N Shine – 3410 Mount Vernon Avenue (Parcel Address – 3408 Mount Vernon Avenue) Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit to allow outdoor cooking and outdoor live entertainment (amending SUP #2023-00025); zoned: CG/ Commercial General. Applicant: Abe Hadjiesmaeiloo
Staff: Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning staff made a presentation and answered questions.

Discussion

The Planning Commission reviewed proposed condition amendments from Commissioner Lyle and Chair Macek that were distributed through a June 4 Planning Commission memorandum. Commissioner Lyle said her amendments took into account neighbor concerns while providing some leeway to the applicant.

Chair Macek noted that his proposed changes amended the staff conditions that he believed were too prescriptive and that the noise ordinance would govern the concerns staff was attempting to address. Chair Macek mentioned that he recently visited the property, and it was relatively quiet, so he is comfortable increasing the level of activity in compliance with the Noise Ordinance. After some discussion to reach a consensus on condition changes, the commission voted to defer its review until later in the evening, asking staff to summarize its discussion in the form of revised conditions.

Chair Macek added that he would like to also see the language in Condition #14c, that describes live entertainment types, removed.

Speakers

Stephen Harris, 120 Sanborn Place, President of the Mount Vernon Court Community Association, spoke in opposition to the application. He noted that he attended the May 20th demonstration and that he could barely hear the music on the Sanborn Place side of the fence and could not hear the games. However, he cannot attest to what sound levels would be like with a full crowd of people. He asked that the Planning Commission to limit the live music to four hours and to limit it to 10 p.m. on the weekends and 9 p.m. on weekdays. He expressed that he hopes the applicant can maintain these same levels of noise as demonstrated.

Leslie Klein, 120 Sanborn Place, spoke in opposition to the application stating that the City got it right last year and it should maintain the current Special Use Permit (SUP) and reject the proposed amendments. She highlighted the three events that were held, or were proposed, over the past year and how the applicant failed to comply with each of their Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) permits in various ways.

Paymon Hadjiesmailoo spoke on behalf of the applicant. He said that they have abided by the current SUP requirements for the past year, and in doing that, it cost them a great deal of revenue. He said they communicate with the neighbors to try to find solutions. At the May 20th demonstration, there were many residents and City staff with noise meters in attendance, which assisted him in finding a way to operate with minimal noise disturbance.

After addressing the changes proposed during the Planning Commission's Discussion, staff returned with an updated compendium of possible commission considerations:

- Condition #10: hours of operation for outdoor dining; Maintain existing hours.
- Condition #11b: outdoor cooking: Allow outdoor cooking in accordance with Fire Code.
- Condition #11d: outdoor games: Allow games ancillary to the principal use of a restaurant.
- Condition #14b: outdoor dining background music (not live entertainment): Maintain existing hours.
- Condition #14c: live entertainment: Maximum of six hours within the time frames of 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. on Fridays; 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Saturdays; and 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Sundays and holidays. The applicant shall email notice to the residents of Sanborn Place notifications of the date and times of live entertainment events no less than one week in advance. The applicant shall also post live entertainment events on the business website. Live entertainment shall include, but is not limited to, live music of any type, DJ's, hosted game/trivia nights, movie nights, and any such similar events. Live entertainment volume shall be the same decibel level as the background music and controlled only through the house system.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to defer this item until later in this Public Hearing to give staff time to update conditions. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2024-00026 based on the June 4, 2024 Staff Memorandum with amendments. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the recommendations provided in the compendium and with the amendment that Chair Macek requested.

7. Special Use Permit #2024-00030
1050 North Fayette Street
Public Hearing and consideration of a Special Use Permit for a non-complying light automobile repair use (amending SUP #2014-00032);
zoned: CRMU-H/Commercial residential mixed use (high).
Applicant: Jeffrey Yates
Staff: Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning staff made a presentation and answered questions.

Discussion

Commissioner Brown asked staff when the construction of the sidewalk would be completed and staff replied that the conditions of the long-term lease are not yet set. City Council will review the lease and its conditions in September, and as an independent and separate review, the lease status has no bearing on the staff recommendation for Special Use Permit (SUP) continuation past 2024. Staff confirmed for Vice-Chair McMahon that the applicant's use of the public right-of-way, referenced in three SUP conditions, applies only to the applicant's ability to have access or not have access to the narrow strip of right-of-way in front of his property. The Vice-Chair asked the applicant's attorney, Duncan Blair, if the applicant would be able to agree on terms for the sidewalk construction since it was her understanding that an agreement couldn't be reached with a developer in the past.

Mr. Blair stated that negotiations were almost complete with the developer and, today, Mr. Yates would like the sidewalk segment to be built and is eager to work with City staff on lease terms. Vice-Chair McMahon suggested that the applicant find a way, perhaps through online appointments or other technology, to schedule the number of cars it can service at the car wash at any one time. This would contribute to a reduction of the traffic congestion on N. Fayette Street.

Chair Macek supported the business continuation and suggested that the new sidewalk include materials to prevent slippery conditions, resulting from the applicant's use of solvents. Staff noted that could be considered as part of the lease. Commissioner Manor also supported the staff recommendation.

Speakers

Brian Wolfe, 1200 N. Fayette Street, spoke on the need for continuation of the sidewalk in front of 1050 North Fayette Street, citing pedestrian safety concerns.

Duncan Blair, applicant’s attorney, stated support for the continuation of the SUP past June 2024, noting the applicant’s commitment to environmentally safe practices and the popularity of his business to the community. He added the applicant is not ready for redevelopment and may want to continue past June 2029, when the SUP expires.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing.

The motion carried on a vote of 7-0. On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2024-00030. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason: Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis.

8. Subdivision #2024-00003

635 Upland Place

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Subdivision with variations to re-subdivide an existing lot into two lots; zoned R-5/Residential. Applicant: Windmill Hill LLC represented by M. Catharine Puskar, attorney

Staff: Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning staff made a presentation and addressed Planning Commission questions.

Discussion

Commissioner Manor asked the applicant how invasive species would be removed. The applicant clarified that they would be removed following an invasive species plan as part of the grading plan submission.

Commissioner Koenig asked staff to outline all redevelopment options available on the subject property and whether approval of a Subdivision with variations creates complying lots. Staff explained that Zoning Ordinance section 12-900, relating to developed substandard lots, applies to the existing property and any changes to, or redevelopment of, the property would have to follow these provisions. Staff confirmed that approval of a Subdivision with variations results in complying, not substandard lots, and that redevelopment would be subject to the R-5 zone’s use permissions and bulk regulations. Commissioner Koenig also asked staff to clarify the R-5 zone’s frontage requirement. Staff confirmed that the R-5 zone frontage requirement is 40 feet not 50 feet as was written in the staff report. Commissioner Koenig did not find that applicant had demonstrated a substantial injustice as there are other redevelopment options available if the Subdivision were denied.

Commissioner Lyle expressed support for the request because it would result in dwellings that would be compatible in terms of size with the neighboring dwellings. She also found that the

subdivision, if approved, would have less impact than other redevelopment options of the lot than those available without subdivision approval. Commissioner Lyle also explained that the wetland could be placed in an easement and suggested that a group like the Nature Conservancy may have interest in such an arrangement.

Chair Macek spoke in support of the request. He generally found the required criteria to be met. He reiterated that Subdivision reviews are limited to lot configuration and not eventual development. He found that the elimination of the on-street parking to be appropriate given that the primary purpose of streets is to provide access to properties.

Vice-Chair McMahon also acknowledged the limitations of the Planning Commission's review of subdivision requests. She explained that stormwater and other concerns would be addressed as development activity occurred and goes through the required City permitting process. Vice-Chair McMahon found that the Subdivision would result in development that would be more consistent with the neighborhood than redevelopment of the existing lot. She observed that the substantial injustice argument encompasses more than financial considerations. She explained that any other lot in the R-5 zone would not be required to be nearly as large as the existing lot to be eligible for a two-lot Subdivision. Vice Chair McMahon found that strict application would create as substantial injustice by indirectly establishing the existing lot size as a minimum lot size for the subject property. She found that applying this minimum lot size to the subject property would be unfair as it is much larger than the minimum lot size required by the zone and the lot sizes of adjacent lots.

Commissioner Brown found that the Subdivision Ordinance could be clarified to better define substantial injustice and rugged topography. He felt that the existing terms could use clarification. Commissioner Brown also explained that Subdivision reviews are limited to lot shape, size, and orientation and should not be based on conceptual or hypothetical development. Commissioner Brown found that the applicant demonstrated the required criteria for approval.

Speakers

Christine Beinhacker, 715 Upland Place, spoke in opposition to the request. She found the proposal would not be in keeping with the neighborhood. Ms. Beinhacker expressed concerns about frontage and fire department access, loss of on-street parking spaces, and stormwater. She stated that any development of the subject property would exacerbate stormwater issues. Ms. Beinhacker also stated that the proposal would increase the existing lot's noncompliance and asked the Planning Commission to consider the existing driveway as frontage.

Eve Anderson, 707 Upland Place, found that the special circumstance relating to "extremely rugged topography" not to be met. She submitted a report provided for the applicant's engineer which stated the property had "gentle to moderate" topography.

Marcia Argust, 612 South View Terrace, spoke in opposition to the request. She claimed that the applicant misrepresented the views of the neighbors and that the process lacked "good faith problem solving." Ms. Argust explained that the neighbors do not want additional housing located on the subject property; citing a petition submitted and signed by nearly all adjacent property owners. Ms. Argust did not feel that the wetland nor the applicant's return on investment should be used as justification for a substantial injustice. She asked the Planning Commission to consider requiring the applicant to reduce the size and footprint of the conceptual dwellings.

Elizabeth McGill, Taylor Run Citizens' Association Vice President, spoke in opposition to the request and raised concerns about flooding, safety, loss of on-street parking, wetland protection, the subject property's historical significance, and loss of green space.

William Kalish, 610 South View Terrace, spoke in opposition and did not agree with staff's assessment that the proposal would be consistent with existing development. He stated that the proposal would not be consistent with the immediate neighborhood, nearby properties located at the end of cul-de-sacs, or other lots with insufficient frontage in the City. Mr. Kalish also mentioned stormwater concerns.

Kevin Parks, 719 Upland Place, spoke in opposition; finding that the proposal would not be in the best interest of adjacent neighbors. Mr. Parks said that the subdivision would create negative impacts and would exacerbate stormwater issues.

Jared Backous, 619 Upland Place, spoke in opposition to the request. He was very concerned about the loss of on-street parking spaces.

Colleen Broderick, 623 Upland Place, spoke in opposition. She found that the proposed lot would be irregularly shaped, oriented, and would be out of character with the neighborhood. Ms. Broderick was concerned about the loss of on-street parking, emergency vehicle access, and additional traffic on Upland Place. She was also concerned about the safety of visitors to the adjacent City park.

Thomas Knight, 623 Upland Place, spoke in opposition to the request, finding that conceptual dwellings to be too large and that the configuration of the lots would be out of character with the neighborhood.

Marge McNaughton, 720 Upland Place, expressed concerns about ecological and environmental impacts. She said that the subject property had been undisturbed for years, creating a habitat for diverse wildlife. Ms. McNaughton stated that development of the subject property would displace and disrupt wildlife.

Dave Beinhacker, 715 Upland Place, found that the special circumstance, relating to irregular shape of the parcel, did not apply to the subject property.

Ruth McCormack, 723 Upland Place, did not feel that the applicant had met the required criteria. She felt that all City properties have unique circumstances and that the subject property's did not amount to a substantial injustice. Ms. McCormack cited what she felt as a mischaracterization in the staff report related to stormwater runoff. She explained that a significant amount of stormwater flows directly to her property. In general, Ms. McCormack was very concerned about stormwater based on years of flooding damage to her property.

M. Catharine Puskar, attorney representing the applicant, outlined her rationale for how the proposal met the required approval criteria. She explained that the property has been taxed at a higher rate than adjacent properties which indicates that it's a developable lot suitable for subdivision. Ms. Puskar stated that the proposed lots would be consistent with the original Subdivision in terms of configuration and shape. She also explained how the subject property met the special circumstance relating to insufficient frontage on a substandard street. Ms. Puskar

also found that the special circumstance relating to rugged topography existed on the subject property. Ms. Puskar also noted an error in the staff report which stated the R-5 zone's minimum lot frontage requirement to be 50 feet. The R-5 zone's minimum lot frontage requirement is 40 feet. Ms. Puskar compared the size of the conceptual dwellings to the existing dwellings within the original subdivision. She found that the conceptual dwellings would be similarly sized to these dwellings. Ms. Puskar also stated that the size of the buildable area of the subject property would be similar to the surrounding lot sizes.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to approve Subdivision #2024-00003. The motion carried on a vote of 6-1.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis.

9. Master Plan Amendment #2024-00001

Rezoning #2024-00002

Development Special Use Permit #2024-10001

6101 and 6125 Stevenson Avenue

Public Hearing and consideration of requests for (A) an amendment to the Landmark/Van Dorn Small Area Plan chapter of the Master Plan to amend the Master Plan Designation from OCM(50) to Residential High; (B) an amendment to the official zoning map to change the zone of 6101 and 6125 Stevenson Avenue from Office Commercial Medium (50) (OCM(50)) to Commercial Residential Mixed Use (High) (CRMU-H); and (C) for a Development Special Use Permit and Site Plan for up to 2.5 floor area ratio to construct a residential building with Special Use Permits to (1) allow for an increase in height to 85 feet and an increase in density to 3.18 floor area ratio pursuant to Section 7-700, (2) allow for greater than three mechanical penthouses, and (3) reduce the off-street parking requirement; zoned OCM(50).

Applicants: SP Stevenson, LLC, represented by Catharine Puskar, Attorney.

Staff: Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning made a presentation and address Planning Commission questions.

Discussion

Commissioner Brown stated that the west side of property has a parking lot below the grade of the existing building and asked staff to clarify if the proposed building would end where the existing surface parking lot is currently located. He also asked if the west part of the property would be regraded. Staff confirmed that the proposed building would end at roughly the location of the parking lot and minimal regrading would be done at that part of the site.

Commissioner Lyle said the project went before the Eisenhower West Landmark Van Dorn Implementation Advisory Group and the group and neighbors were supportive of the project as it complies with the Small Area Plan and will be a great addition to neighborhood.

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – JUNE 4, 2024

Chair Macek said this is a great proposal to add housing. He said he is supportive as the proposal buries the parking, removes a surface lot and is pleased to see the affordable housing counts and additional care with unit mix that allowed for four units at greater affordability.

Vice-Chair McMahon said she supports the project as it uses the site well, takes advantage of the topography with underground parking, removes a curb cut, provides affordable housing, is compatible with neighbors, and is a major improvement to the site.

Speaker

Cathy Puskar, attorney for the applicant, spoke in support of the project.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Master Plan Amendment #2024-00001. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Rezoning #2024-00002. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Development Special Use Permit #2024-00002. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis.

10. Master Plan Amendment #2024-00002

Zoning Text Amendment #2024-00007

Coordinated Development District Conceptual Design Plan #2022-00001

315 Stovall Street; 312 Taylor Drive;

2380 and 2425 Mill Road; 206 Hoffman Street; 2310, 2356 and 2400 Eisenhower Avenue; 2200, 2250, and 2300 Dock Lane.

Public Hearing and consideration of requests for: (A) an amendment to the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan chapter of the Master Plan to add design guidelines for a portion of the plan area; (B) a text amendment to Section 5-602(A) of the Zoning Ordinance to eliminate minimum parking requirements for the CDD#2 zone; and (C) Coordinated Development District (CDD) Conceptual Design Plan approval to allow for future development on 11 development blocks; zoned CDD#2 / Coordinated Development District #2.

Applicants: Hoffman Companies, represented by Kenneth Wire, attorney, and Mill Road Block 20 LLC and Block 20 A LLC, represented by Mary Catherine Gibbs, attorney (CDD2022-00001) and City of Alexandria Department of Planning & Zoning (MPA2024-00002 and Text Amendment #2024

Staff: Department of Planning & Zoning

Staff made a presentation and answered questions.

Discussion

Commissioner Brown asked staff whether adequate open space is provided in the Coordinated Development District (CDD) area generally, including the area under the Metrorail tracks (Block 10B), and whether enough is provided specifically on the land expected to be dedicated to the City for a public school on Block 2.

Chair Macek observed that parks/open spaces under rail tracks can be successful, such as the area under the Wilson Bridge.

Commissioner Koenig asked questions regarding the provision of land on Block 2 for a future school, including why that site is preferred and whether the location and amount of land has been coordinated with Alexandria City Public Schools. He also expressed support for the CDD Conceptual Design Plan incorporating the minimum and maximum building heights recommended in the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan, which he noted are among the tallest building heights recommended in the City.

Vice-Chair McMahon expressed support for the proposal, stressing the importance of CDDs as a framework for future development. She also agreed with the text amendment to eliminate minimum parking requirements in the CDD#2 zone.

Speakers

Ken Wire, attorney for the applicant, spoke in support of the request.

Mary Catherine Gibbs, attorney for the applicant, spoke in support of the request

OTHER BUSINESS

11. Commissioners' Reports, Comments and Questions

Commissioner Koenig inquired about a date for the FY 2025 Planning Commission Retreat and staff informed the Planning Commission that it will likely be Friday, September 20 and one of the items will be a discussion on Potomac Yard.

Staff also informed the Planning Commission that their June 27 final Public Hearing of this Docket Season is moved to Monday, June 24 to ensure the Department of Planning & Zoning gets its items to the City Clerk in time to post for the City Council's July 2 Public Hearing.

12. Minutes

On a Motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of May 7, 2024. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

13. Adjournment

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 12:46 a.m.