

Docket Item #12  
Planning Commission Meeting  
May 5, 2015

Consideration of approval of the Planning Commission minutes of the public hearing meeting of April 7, 2015.

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**\*\*\* MINUTES \*\*\***

**ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION**

April 7, 2015

7:00 P.M., Council Chambers

301 King Street, City Hall

Alexandria, Virginia

Members Present:

Mary Lyman, Chair  
Stewart Dunn, Vice Chair  
Maria Wasowski  
Nathan Macek  
David Brown  
Stephen Koenig  
Mindy Lyle

Staff Present:

Karl Moritz	Department of Planning & Zoning
Robert Kerns	Department of Planning & Zoning
Dirk Geratz	Department of Planning & Zoning
Susan Eddy	Department of Planning & Zoning
Carrie Beach	Department of Planning & Zoning
Kendra Jacobs	Department of Planning & Zoning
Nathan Randall	Department of Planning & Zoning
Brandi Collins	Department of Planning & Zoning
Katy North	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Sandra Marks	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Chris Bever	Office of Management and Budget
Joanna Anderson	City Attorney

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 7, 2015

1. Call To Order

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:05pm. All members were present.

2. Advisory recommendations to the City Manager, under Section 6.14 of the City Charter, regarding the Capital Improvement Program.

Deputy Director Susan Eddy and Assistant Budget Director Chris Bever gave a presentation and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

On a motion by Vice Chairman Dunn, seconded by Commissioner Macek, the Planning Commission determined that the Capital Improvement Program is consistent with the City's Master Plan and that the priority and timing of Capital Improvement Projects are consistent with the priority and timing of the City's Master Plan. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

**CONSENT CALENDAR:**

3. Special Use Permit #2015-0007

3021 Colvin Street - Kera Autocare

Public hearing and consideration of a request to operate an automobile sales business and general automobile repair at an existing light automobile repair business; zoned I/Industrial. Applicant: Tamrat Gobena dba Kera Autocare represented by Harry P. Hart, attorney. This item was removed from the consent calendar.

Planner Nathan Randall gave a presentation and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** By unanimous consent, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2015-0007 subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances, and staff recommendations, as well as the staff memo amending Condition #2.

**Reason:** The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

2. **CONDITION AMENDED BY PLANNING COMMISSION:** The hours of operation of the ~~light automobile repair~~ business shall be limited to between 7:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday - Saturday. (P&Z) (PC)

**NEW BUSINESS:**

4. Text Amendment #2015-0002

A) Initiation of a text amendment; B) public hearing and consideration of a text amendment to various sections of the Zoning Ordinance to implement new parking regulations for multifamily residential uses as recommended by the Parking Standards for New Development Projects Study.

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 7, 2015

Division Chief Carrie Beach, Planner Brandi Collin and Division Chief Robert Kerns gave a presentation and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Jerry McAndrews, 12 Wolfe Street, acknowledged that the data collected and provided by staff was thorough but concerned that the draft parking standards are not applied on a neighborhood scale. Stated that Old Town has an inadequate supply of parking.

Bert Ely, 200 S. Pitt Street, requested that new residential development projects provide parking for its residents and visitors on-site and not be permitted to obtain residential parking permits that would allow them to park on public streets. He stated that many residents in Old Town collect cars and have more cars than people in other areas and the draft standards parking standard should not include a parking maximum.

Hal Hardaway, 311 S. Union Street, stated that the waterfront has an inadequate supply of parking.

Tim Morgan, 319 S. Union Street, discussed concerns with the pending Robinson Terminal South development project and stated that the draft parking standards should not be applied in Old Town.

Susan Askew, 34 Wolfe Street, discussed concerns with the pending Robinson Terminal South development project and stated that the draft parking standards should not be applied in Old Town.

Van Van Fleet, 26 Wolfe Street, stated that Old Town has inadequate parking and needs new parking lots.

Yvonne Callahan, 735 S. Lee Street, stated that the draft parking standards should not be applied in Old Town, residents of new residential developments should not be permitted to obtain residential parking permits that would allow them to park on public streets, and the Zoning Ordinance should be updated to define “bedroom” to address overcrowding.

Richard Metzger, 728 S. Lee Street, stated that the definition of “parking space” is needed to address parking policies for handicap parking, commercial loading parking spaces, and metered on-street parking spaces.

Chairwoman Lyman closed the public hearing.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Macek, seconded by Commissioner Wasowski, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Text Amendment #2015-0002. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 1 with Vice Chairman Dunn voting against.

On a motion by Commissioner Macek, seconded by Commissioner Wasowski, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Text Amendment #2015-0002 with a revision to the Text Amendment to reflect adding a new definition for “bedroom” in the Zoning Ordinance; and subject to compliance with all applicable codes,

ordinances, and staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 1 with Vice Chairman Dunn voting against.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis and supported staff's recommendation to implement, as a text amendment, new parking standards for multi-family development projects as the new parking standards are data-driven, context-sensitive, and addresses the current challenges associated with the out-of-date parking standards found in the City's Zoning Ordinance. Those challenges include frequent requests from developers for Parking Reduction Special Use Permits and community expectations as it relates to the City's parking standards and policy. Commissioner Mr. Dunn dissented stating that while he strongly and fully supported the basic principles of this proposal to amend the Zoning Code in order to significantly reduce parking requirements for multi-family buildings, he had concerns with certain unnecessary portions of this proposal that were not fully developed or well thought through. By his dissent he wanted to bring these to the attention of the City Council. First, and most particularly, Mr. Dunn believes any additional reductions in parking based on 'walkability' were unnecessary, too complex, and there was not sufficient experience with this concept to justify adopting this portion of the proposal at this time. Second, he questioned the wisdom of additional parking reductions for buildings with certain percentage of studio units. Third, he has reservations in requiring builders to seek an SUP to provide more parking than would be allowed under the draft recommendation.

5. Special Use Permit #2015-0008  
617 E-G South Pickett Street (Parcel Address: 504 South Van Dorn Street)  
Midas Auto Service and Tire Center  
Public hearing and consideration of a request to operate a light automobile repair business; zoned CG/Commercial General. Applicant: Trump Inc. dba Midas Auto Service and Tire Center represented by Duncan Blair, attorney

Planner Nathan Randall gave a presentation and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Duncan Blair, attorney for the applicant, spoke in support of the request. He noted the applicant's history as a long-time business owner in Alexandria and noted recent coordination to discourage wrong-way travel on the rear access road. He represented to the Planning Commission that the applicant and property owner would work with staff and the community to install additional signage at the site to discourage wrong-way travel on the rear access road.

Chairwoman Lyman closed the public hearing.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chairman Dunn, seconded by Commissioner Macek, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2015-0008 subject to compliance with all applicable

codes, ordinances, and other staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis and with the representation from the applicant and the property owner that they would work with staff and the community to install additional directional signage to discourage shopping center customers from traveling on the one-way rear access road in the wrong direction. Prior to the applicant's representation, Commissioner Lyle had expressed traffic safety concerns related to customers potentially using the one-way access road in the wrong direction. She also asked staff to look into whether this circumstance would be exacerbated by vehicles from other businesses (potentially in violation of approved SUPs) parking close to the intersection of the access road and South Pickett Street.

6. Special Use Permit #2015-0009

2802 Russell Road

Public hearing and consideration of a request to construct a new single family dwelling on a developed substandard lot; zoned R 8/Residential Single Family.

Applicant: Elias Voces

Planner Nathan Randall gave a presentation and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Elias Voces, applicant, spoke in favor of the request. He asked the Commission to allow the proposed dwelling to be located approximately 25.2 feet from the front property line, or approximately seven feet closer to the street than the zoning-required 32.2-foot front yard setback. He asked for the setback change to allow for a larger back yard and also noted that very early discussions with staff and his surveyor suggested that a different front yard setback requirement would be used. He ultimately informed the Commission that, given a choice between a recommendation of approval in April with the larger setback or the opportunity to ask for a modified front yard setback as part of an revised SUP request in May, he would rather the SUP request be recommended for approval in April with the larger, 32.2-foot setback.

Chairwoman Lyman closed the public hearing.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Macek, seconded by Vice Chairman Dunn, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2015-0009 subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances, and other staff recommendations.

The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis. At the hearing the applicant asked about the possibility of a modification to shorten the front yard from the required 32.2 feet and enlarge the back yard. The Commission, however, understood that it could not grant a front yard modification during this hearing because no modification request was advertised. The Commission discussed deferring the request to May to allow the applicant to revise and re-advertise the application to include the modification. The

applicant, however, elected to proceed with the existing application, and the Commission ultimately recommended approval of the SUP request with the required 32.2-foot setback at this hearing.

7. Development Special Use Permit #2014-0036  
1200 First Street (Parcel Address: 950 North Fayette Street) & 1201 Braddock Place  
Braddock Meridian  
Public hearing and consideration of a request for an amendment to the previously approved Development Special Use Permit #99-0004 for an amenity space and parking reduction; zoned OCH/Office Commercial High. Applicant: Potomac Club Residence Limited Partnership represented by, Mary Catherine Gibbs, attorney.

Division Chief Robert Kerns and Planner Katye North gave a presentation and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Mary Catherine Gibbs, attorney representing the applicant, spoke in support of the application and answered questions about the request. She noted that Paradigm owns several buildings near metro stations and they have found they have hundreds of vacant parking spaces in their garages. They are confident the loss of the surface parking lot will not create parking impacts for the neighborhood and the addition of open space is a good improvement for their residents that is supported by the neighbors in Braddock.

Chairwoman Lyman closed the public hearing.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Development Special Use Permit #2014-0036. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis that the parking demand for this development could accommodate the loss of the surface parking lot. The Commissioners asked for clarification about public access to the new open space and staff explained that aside from the walkway to the metro, the new open space would be for the residents only. The Commissioners also asked for clarifications on the modification to the condition related to charging for parking and the retention of the condition prohibiting residents from receiving district parking permits. Finally, the Commissioners noted that this particular development exceeds the requirement of the new parking standards and discussed the process that would be required for requests that exceed the standards if adopted.

**ORAL REPORTS BY MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION:**

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Commissioner Macek gave an update on the Transportation Commission.

Commissioner Wasowski gave an update on the Oakville Triangle/Route 1

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 7, 2015

Advisory Group.

Commissioner Koenig discussed the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Group and shared his thoughts regarding the Alexandria Memory Care project that was considered in February.

Planning and Zoning Director Karl Moritz and the Planning Commission members discussed potential topics and scheduling for a Planning Commission retreat.

**MINUTES:**

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8. Consideration of the minutes of the March 3, 2015 hearing.

On a motion by Commissioner Macek, seconded by Vice Chairman Dunn, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

9. Adjournment

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 11:00pm.