

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 5, 2024

TO: CHAIR MACEK AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

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

SUBJECT: DOCKET ITEM #9 – SUBDIVISION #2023-00007 – 1233 N. PICKETT ST.

This memorandum provides a response to a letter received from the Pickett's Ridge Homeowner's Association (HOA).

Notification of subdivision request:

As stated in the letter, Pickett's Ridge contains four lots at the end of North Pickett Street. Two of the lots, 1103 and 1104 Finley Lane, abut the subject property. As a standard practice, staff notifies civic associations of subdivision requests. Staff maintains a list of incorporated civic and homeowners' associations throughout the City. In this case, staff records indicated only the Seminary Hill Association. Staff notified the Seminary Hill Association of the application on January 22 and February 15, 2024. Staff also provided the staff report to the association on February 26, 2024. Staff has also confirmed that the abutting property owners were provided written notice in compliance with legal noticing requirements. Staff will add the Pickett's Ridge HOA to our records to be sure that its members receive notice of requests in the area in the future.

Lot size comparison:

The HOA observed that staff did not include the properties within the Pickett's Ridge development in our analysis of the request. Zoning Ordinance Section 11-1710(B) states that a proposed subdivision must be found to be "...of substantially the same character as to suitability for residential uses and structures, lot areas, orientation, street frontage, alignment to streets... as other land within the subdivision, particularly with respect to similarly situated lots within the original subdivision..."

These provisions require proposed lots to match the prevailing character of surrounding lots; particularly those with similar features. A proposed lot size within the range of nearby lot sizes would generally meet these criteria.

Because this provision emphasizes compatibility with similarly situated lots, staff compared the proposal to lots with similar features. These common features included: rectangular shapes, street frontage, and lots without frontage on two streets. While the subject property's boundary lines were not adjusted with the Varsity Park subdivision, it was shown as a residual parcel on the final

subdivision plat. Because the subject property was shown with on this subdivision plat, the Varsity Park subdivision lots establish the most appropriate comparison. The lots within Pickett's Ridge were not included in this analysis because they were part of a separate subdivision approval. Further, they are irregularly shaped and do not have street frontage. The lots across the street from the subject property at 4801 and 4812 Maury Lane were also excluded because they are corner lots with frontage on two streets.

Drainage, grading, tree removal, and architectural review

Staff did not recommend conditions related to stormwater, grading, or tree removal with the subdivision request as these matters will be addressed through the grading plan process. Subdivision reviews are limited to "...orderly division of land for development..." as stated in the Zoning Ordinance. Consideration of the design of the proposed homes is outside the purview of a subdivision review.