

Docket Item #9
Planning Commission Public Hearing
November 6, 2025

Consideration of approval of the Planning Commission minutes of the Public Hearing meeting of October 9, 2025.

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

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION

October 9, 2025 7:00 P.M.

Council Chamber

301 King Street, City Hall Alexandria, Virginia

Members Present:

Melissa McMahon, Chair
Stephen Koenig, Vice Chair
David Brown
Vivian Ramirez
Robert Dubé
Holly Lennihan
Jody Manor

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Paul Stoddard	Department of Planning & Zoning
Kendra Jacobs	Department of Planning & Zoning
Christina Zechman Brown	Office of the City Attorney
Tony La Colla	Department of Planning & Zoning
Sam Shelby	Department of Planning & Zoning
Ann Horowitz	Department of Planning & Zoning
Daniel Welles	Department of Planning & Zoning
Catherine Miliaras	Department of Planning & Zoning
Maya Contreras	Department of Planning & Zoning
Margaret Cooper	Department of Planning & Zoning
Rob Kerns	Department of Planning & Zoning

#1. CALL TO ORDER

The Planning Commission Public Hearing was called to order at 7:07 p.m. All members were present.

Chair McMahon read the following instructions:

“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. Jacobs, 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 comments 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.”

Chair McMahon asked if there were any changes to the Docket. Ms. Jacobs announced that there were no changes to the docket.

Items #2 was removed from the Consent Calendar.

CONSENT CALENDAR

- #2** Development Special Use Permit #2025-10028
727 North West Street (Parcel Address: 1319 Wythe Street) - Braddock West Extension
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for an extension of a previously approved Development Special Use Permit and Site Plan with modifications to construct a multi-unit residential dwelling with ground floor commercial space and a private or fraternal club use with Special Use Permits for: (A) increased Floor Area Ratio to 3.0 in the OCH/Office commercial high zone, (B) bonus density and height for the provision of affordable housing per Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance, (C) a parking reduction for residential and commercial uses, (D) retail shopping or personal service establishments on a lot which does not include office buildings, and (E) a fraternal or private club use; zoned OCH/Office Commercial High.
Applicant: West Street Acquisitions LLC, represented by Casey Nolan

SPEAKERS

Dino Drudi, representing West Old Town Civic Association, remains opposed due to concerns about the overall building height and setbacks and nearby off-site flooding that occurs.

DISCUSSION

Chair McMahon acknowledged the significance of the improvements such as the upgrades to the sanitary sewer connections and the post-development reduction in stormwater runoff.

Commissioner Dubè expressed appreciation for the additional information provided by staff regarding stormwater management.

Vice Chair Koenig concurred with Chair McMahon and noted that the staff's memo was helpful in explaining how stormwater management will be addressed. Vice Chair Koenig praised the overall proposal and stated that the project is well-planned and appropriate for the neighborhood.

The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis and the additional information provided with regard to stormwater management and building height and setbacks. Chair McMahon noted the memo addressed how the City plans to improve flooding adjacent to the site and that the proposed building height and scale are appropriate for this location in proximity to the Braddock Road Metro.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Vice Chair Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Development Special Use Permit #2025-10028. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0-1. Commissioner Brown abstained.

- #3** Special Use Permit #2025-00044
107 N Fairfax Street
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit for Floor Area Ratio up to 2.5 to allow for the proposed addition to an existing nonresidential building; zoned CD/Commercial Downtown.
Applicant: Patrick Camus

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Vice Chair Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted unanimously to approve Special Use Permit #2025-00044 on the Consent Calendar.

New Business

- #4 Planning Commission Discussion Item: Discussion on proposed Zoning Text Amendments related to the regulatory processes for certain commercial and non-residential uses, residential zoning including commercial to residential conversions, Special Use Permits for redevelopment of substandard lots, and the Subdivision process.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

The Planning Commission received a presentation on proposed Zoning Text Amendments related to office to residential conversions and commercial uses regulations.

- #5 Development Special Use Permit #2025-10020
6025 Duke Street - WestEnd Block D
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Development Special Use Permit and Site Plan with modifications for construction of a multi-unit residential dwelling and a Special Use Permit request for a parking reduction; zoned CDD #29/Coordinated Development District #29.
Applicant: Landmark Land Holdings LLC represented by Kenneth Wire, Wire Gill, Attorney

SPEAKERS

There were no speakers for this item.

DISCUSSION

Vice Chair Koenig discussed the proposed change to Condition 14, which allows flexibility in materials subject to Director approval, and asked staff to confirm that the quality of materials would be maintained. He also noted that while ground floor commercial uses are not proposed or required by the CDD at this location, there is a reservation of “retail ready” space at the northeast corner of the ground level, if this use makes sense in the future.

Chair McMahon suggested Condition 91 be amended to state who would receive annual rent records. Staff agreed that “the City” could be substituted by “Office of Housing” so that the condition will read:

“The Developer shall retain records of the rental rates on a rolling three-year window and provide records to the City’s **Office of Housing** annually for its review.”

Vice Chair Koenig and Commissioner Manor moved to close the public hearing.

Chair McMahon stated her support for the building’s architecture and site design. She noted that staff verified that the amount of parking provided is “right-sized” and stated she is satisfied that the transit-oriented design as proposed for the site is sufficient, given the Bus Rapid Transit center and employment opportunities, including the hospital, in the immediate neighborhood. She also noted the benefits of having a residential building at a middle-level rental point.

Vice Chair Koenig asked the project attorney, Ken Wire, about the possibility of a hotel on Block H. Mr. Wire stated they are continuing to market the site, that hotels prefer to commit to a site closer to site delivery and that a hotel is still a goal. Vice Chair Koenig expressed appreciation for the

project's affordability benefits, the architecture, and stated that there is value to right-sizing the parking.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Vice Chair Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0-1. Commissioner Ramirez recused herself.

On a motion by Vice Chair Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Development Special Use Permit #2025-10020, with the amendments to conditions 14a, 88, 89, and 90 per Staff's memo dated October 2, 2025, and condition 91 as discussed. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0-1. Commissioner Ramirez recused herself.

#6 Rezoning #2025-00005
Special Use Permit #2025-00049
Encroachment #2025-00006
601 Wythe Street

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for (A) a Rezoning from CD-X/Commercial-Downtown (Old Town North) zone to CRMU-X/Commercial Residential Mixed-use (Old Town North) zone; (B) a Special Use Permit for a multi-unit residential dwelling; and (C) an Encroachment into the public right-of-way for upper floor balconies to facilitate the conversion of an existing office building to residences; zoned CD-X/ Commercial Downtown. Applicant: 601 Wythe Street LLC represented by Kenneth Wire, Wire Gill LLP, Attorney

SPEAKERS

Melissa Kuennen, Vice President of North Old Town Independent Citizens' Association, spoke in support of the conversion and the proposed architectural changes.

Ken Wire, attorney, acknowledged the complexity of the approval process for the project but thanked staff for working out a solution.

DISCUSSION

Commissioner Ramirez stated that she is excited for the conversion of 601 Wythe St. from office to residential and that the project will bring vitality to the neighborhood.

Vice Chair Koenig asked staff to clarify if the building would still be considered noncomplying. Principal Planner Sam Shelby stated that this site would continue to be noncomplying.

Chair McMahon spoke in support of the request and acknowledged the difficulty the applicant endured during the review process. Chair McMahon also expressed appreciation for the thoughtful feedback from community members on the project's compatibility with the Small Area Plan.

Commissioner Brown also expressed support for the proposed residential building.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

On a motion by Vice Chair Koenig, 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 Vice Chair Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Rezoning #2025-00005. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Vice Chair Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2025-00049. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Vice Chair Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Lennihan, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Encroachment #2025-00006. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

MINUTES

#7 Consideration of the minutes from the June 23 and September 4, 2025 Planning Commission meetings, and the August 22, 2025 Planning Commission Retreat.

On a motion by Commissioner Manor, seconded by Commissioner Ramirez, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2025 Planning Commission Retreat as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0-1. Vice Chair Koenig abstained.

On a motion by Commissioner Manor, seconded by Commissioner Dubè, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2025 Public Hearing as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Planning & Zoning Director's Report

Director Paul Stoddard presented the Director's Report and summarized the One Stop Quarterly Report, the 3-month Docket Look Ahead, and the AEDP Market Report.

Commissioners' Reports, Comments & Questions

Commissioner Manor provided updates on the Waterfront Commission. He discussed a proposal to relocate the proposed pumphouse to 1 Prince Street instead of Waterfront Park and to add a civic building. Commissioner Manor supported the idea and noted that Council approved funding to initiate a study of the 1 Prince Street site.

Commissioner Brown noted that he and Vice Chair Koenig will continue to have discussions with City and community leadership and other interested stakeholders on the potential for a museum at the south end of North Potomac Yard.

Commissioner Dubè discussed the Robinson Terminal North park opening in October. He also stated that he participated in a walkthrough of the power station which was well attended by members of the public.

Commissioner Lennihan recommended moving discussion items to the end of the meeting to reduce the wait time for public participants present for other docket items. Chair McMahon noted that staff regularly consider anticipated public interest and

speakers into account when creating the docket order.

Commissioner Ramirez discussed presentations to the Eisenhower West/Landmark Van Dorn Advisory Group on the progress of road improvements along Duke Street and Landmark Block D.

Chair McMahon stated that the Green Building Policy will be considered as a chapter of the Master Plan and require formal action by the Planning Commission in December. Commissioner Lennihan asked procedural questions about communicating questions to staff in the Office of Climate Action and how to exchange information with and hear opinions from other Commissioners. Chair McMahon suggested sending a letter through staff with questions or comments that will be distributed to other Commissioners and relevant staff.

Commissioner Lennihan also asked how the policy document will be translated into a chapter of the Master Plan, recognizing that there are specific elements of the draft policy that may need to be restructured as a city-wide chapter of the Master Plan. Commissioner Lennihan also asked about the timing and process for amending a chapter of a Master Plan, considering that the Green Building chapter may require more frequent updates than typical Master Plan chapters. Director Stoddard and Chair McMahon provided information about the Master Plan process and opportunities for considering amendments.

Vice Chair Koenig also discussed the issues that will likely be raised by adopting the Green Building policy as a chapter of the City's Master Plan. He specifically discussed the complexity of operationalizing the Clean Energy Fund calculations in the policy and potential challenge for operationalizing those calculations in a Master Plan chapter. Vice Chair Koenig expressed concern about having enough time to evaluate the proposed Green Building Master Plan chapter before taking a formal action in December. Commissioners discussed the possibility of having a presentation or additional time for briefings before the December hearing. Chair McMahon encouraged Commissioners to document concerns and questions in a letter to staff. Director Stoddard stated that staff would explore opportunities for Commissioners to receive information and ask questions in preparation for the December hearing.

#8 ADJOURNMENT

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 10:09 pm.