

Docket Item #6  
Planning Commission Public Hearing  
January 7, 2025

Consideration of approval of the Planning Commission minutes of the Public Hearing meeting of  
December 3, 2024

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

**ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION**

December 3, 2024 7:00 P.M.

**Council Chamber**

301 King Street, City Hall Alexandria, Virginia

Members Present:

Nathan Macek, Chair

Melissa McMahon, Vice Chair

David Brown

Mindy Lyle

Jody Manor

Vivian Ramirez

Stephen Koenig

Staff Present:

Karl Moritz

Nancy Williams

Christina Zechman Brown

Tony LaColla

Ann Horowitz

Mavis Stanfield

Sam Shelby

Catherine McDonald

Robert Kerns

Maya Contreras

Jared Alves

Nathan Randall

Alexa Powell

Julian Swierczak

Kenneth Turscak

Lanning Blaser

Helen McIlvaine

Alfred Coleman

Dustin Smith

Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning

Office of the City Attorney

Department of Planning & Zoning

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Office of Housing

Department of General Services

Office of Climate Action

## **#1 CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Nathan Macek called the Planning Commission Public Hearing of December 3, 2024 to order at 7:00 p.m. Planning Commissioner Lyle arrived at 7:07 p.m. All other Planning Commission Members were present at the Call to Order.

Chair Macek informed those present that 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.

Chair Macek inquired as to whether there were any changes to tonight’s Docket. Staff responded that staff is requesting deferral of Item #12, the November 7, 2024 minutes. Chair Macek also indicated there were no speakers for the Consent Items but inquired as to whether there were any Consent Items that the Planning Commission would like to pull.

Planning Commissioner Brown requested to pull Consent Items #2, SUP 2024-0061: 915 Beverley Drive; and #5 2024-00013, 1210 Janneys Lane.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

**#2** Special Use Permit 2024-00061  
915 Beverley Drive  
Public Hearing and consideration of a Special Use Permit to construct a new single-unit dwelling on a developed substandard lot; Zoned R-8/Residential  
Applicant: Owen L Griffing, represented by M. Catharine Puskar, attorney

### **Discussion**

Commissioner Brown confirmed with the applicant that one of the larger trees in the rear yard of the property would be saved. The applicant confirmed that tree #15 would be preserved. Commissioner Brown commented that North Ridge residents appreciate when trees can be preserved through the redevelopment of a given site. He spoke in support of the request, noting that while it was “close to the margins” in terms of meeting the standards for approval, he was swayed by support of the proposal from adjacent neighbors.

### **Speaker**

M. Catharine Puskar, attorney representing the applicant, answered the question related to tree preservation from Commissioner Brown.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of SUP#2024-00061. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

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

**#3** Special Use Permit #2024-00065  
3120 Colvin Street  
Public Hearing and consideration of a Special Use Permit to extend the use of a temporary trailer; Zoned I/Industrial  
Applicant: Behrooz (Bruce) Raiszadeh

### **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of SUP#2024-00065. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, on the Consent Calendar.

**#4 Zoning Ordinance Subdivision cases are heard by the Planning Commission, placed on the City Council docket for information, and heard by the City Council only upon appeal.**

Subdivision #2024-00012

405 East Nelson Avenue

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Subdivision to re-subdivide an existing lot into two lots; Zoned RB/Residential

Applicant: SW Development Company

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to approve SUB#2024-00012. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0 on the Consent Calendar.

**#5 Zoning Ordinance Subdivision cases are heard by the Planning Commission, placed on the City Council docket for information, and heard by the City Council only upon appeal.**

Subdivision #2024-00013

1210 Janneys Lane

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Subdivision with variations to re-subdivide an existing lot into two lots; Zoned R-20/Residential

Applicant: SW Development Company represented by Duncan W. Blair, attorney

**Discussion**

Commissioner Brown expressed hesitations with Subdivisions that create lots that do not meet all lot requirements. He was concerned about the applicant or future owners seeking side yard Variance approvals and justifying these requests based on the lot's narrowness. Commissioner Brown felt that it would be appropriate to include a condition precluding the applicant or future owners of the property from seeking such a Variance.

**Speaker**

Duncan Blair, attorney representing the applicant, answered questions from Commissioner Brown. He also referenced the staff report associated with Zoning Text Amendment #2009-0004, approved by City Council on January 23, 2010. Mr. Blair found that the staff report provided useful background information on the Subdivision variation procedure

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

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 Vice Chair McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to approve SUB#2024-00013. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

**#6** Special Use Permit #2024-00066  
2300 Burke Avenue  
Public Hearing and consideration of a Special Use Permit for a parking reduction for a church;  
Zoned R 2-5/Residential  
Applicant: First Agape Baptist Community of Faith Church, represented by Andrei Banks, R.A,  
MWB Architects, PC

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of SUP#2024-00066. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

**PREVIOUSLY DEFERRED ITEMS**

**#7** Rezoning #2024-00003  
Development Special Use Permit #2024-10015  
Silverado Alexandria Memory Care  
Street Addresses: 2807 King Street (Parcel Address: 2811 King Street)  
Public Hearing and consideration of an amendment to the official zoning map to revise an existing proffer and to amend approved Development Special Use Permit #2012-00005, to allow for an increase in the number of beds and minor revisions to the open space at an existing Continuum of Care facility; Zoned RB/Townhouse with proffer.  
Applicants: Silverado Alexandria PropCo., LLC, represented by M. Catharine Puskar, attorney

Staff provided a presentation and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

**Speakers**

Tom Thomas, a family member of a Silverado resident, spoke in opposition. His objections included concern for residents' safety, quality of care, staffing, and parking due to the increase in residents associated with this proposal.

Paul Cooper, a family member of a Silverado resident, spoke in opposition. His objections included behavioral issues associated with crowding, increased risk of resident agitation, the potential increase in staff burnout and impact to the quality of care associated with the proposed increase to the number of residents in this facility.

Karen Rosales, a family member of a Silverado resident, spoke in opposition. She provided personal stories about her loved one's experiences and expressed concern about the impact of the proposal to exacerbate existing behavioral challenges. She reiterated potential impacts to safety driven by the proposed proximity of residents in companion rooms.

Stephen Graham, a family member of a Silverado resident, spoke in opposition. His objections included concern for parking capacity with increased staff and visitors, dangers associated with crossing King Street between the overflow parking and the facility, and the lack of a formal agreement with the church for parking.

Scott Planting, a family member of a Silverado resident, spoke in opposition. His objections related to concerns for the overall quality of life of residents, specifically crowding of the existing common areas where residents spend most of their time, including inadequate restroom

facilities in these areas, staffing, and safety due to the increased risk of friction among residents with the addition of more residents.

Paul McFarland, a family member of a Silverado resident, spoke in opposition for reasons related to crowding, lack of parking, and safety. He also highlighted the difficulty of evacuating residents, many of whom are wheelchair-bound or have other impairments that would limit their ability to descend stairs in an emergency. He maintained that increasing capacity on the top two floors would exacerbate the already challenging endeavor of evacuation and pose an increased risk to residents.

Ruth Reeder, a family member of a former Silverado resident, spoke in opposition. She provided testimony about her loved one's final days and the need to have space to gather in peace. She shared that it was important for her family to have a private room. She also expressed concern that the addition of staff and visitors of new residents would strain the already limited parking supply.

Tom Reeder, a family member of a former Silverado resident, spoke in opposition based on concerns that the additional beds would adversely affect the quality of life and safety of residents. As a member of the Alexandria Commission on Aging, he also characterized the City's age-friendly plans as focusing on the need for quality and affordable nursing homes and assisted living facilities rather than just adding more beds. He believed that this proposal, even with the contribution of an additional affordable bed, still provides care at a significant premium to the area median income and would not add any truly affordable units. He asserted that while well-intentioned, the applicant's housing contribution did not support the City's goal of "equitably providing accommodations for residents of all abilities and socio-economic status" in comparison to other facilities in Alexandria that accept auxiliary grants from state and local governments.

David Troxel, writer and dementia care consultant, spoke in support of the proposed project. He described Silverado's reputation for this kind of care as excellent and a model for similar programs nationwide. He noted the significant cost savings of a companion room for families and that socialization was an important aspect of residents' care. He also indicated that Silverado has received the Alzheimer's Disease International accreditation for its staff training program.

Richard Shope, a family member of a Silverado resident in California, spoke in support of the proposal, citing his own family's story. He described the difficult choice for his loved one to move to a companion room, including his original trepidation about the decision, and outlined the positive results he witnessed in the behavior and outcomes for his family member.

Vivek Sinha, Alexandria resident Medical Director at Silverado, spoke in support and provided testimony about companion rooms reducing isolation and providing a more affordable option for care. In terms of safety, he shared that center leadership, which includes trained social workers, medical professionals, and gerontologists, would assess residents' eligibility for companion rooms and be involved in determining appropriate roommate arrangements.

Jeff Frome, Silverado employee, spoke in support. He noted that his father was a resident at another Silverado facility and attributed his improvement to the companion rooms. He felt the benefits of companion rooms far outweigh any potential risk. He also spoke to the significant

demand for this type of care nationwide and that this facility has been at 100% capacity with a waitlist for the last 18 months.

Lauren Shook, President and Co-Founder of Silverado, spoke in support of the application. He indicated that a significant number of rooms in Silverado facilities around the country are companion rooms and are part of their model for delivering high-quality care to residents. He also underscored that residents can stay in private rooms, and it is only in consultation with family members that the choice will be provided to move to a companion room.

Shaun Hansen, a family member of a former Silverado resident, spoke in opposition, his primary concern was about the spread of infection, given pneumonia is a leading cause of death and that distancing residents in a companion room configuration is difficult, particularly in rooms not designed for two people. He also indicated he often found it challenging to find parking.

Cathy Puskar, attorney representing the applicant, acknowledged family members of residents and caregivers who care deeply about the Silverado community and the importance of maintaining the excellent service provided by the facility. She provided additional details about the proposed staffing, specifics of the building as they relate to other facilities that Silverado operates with companion rooms, and the contribution of \$20,000 to the City for the installation of a new crosswalk to improve access to overflow parking for the facility. She also shared that while the church is reluctant to formalize the parking arrangement, Silverado has had access for the past six years and anticipated this shared parking arrangement to continue moving forward. Finally, she reiterated that companion rooms would be an option for family members rather than being required.

### **Discussion**

Chair Macek asked staff about the new condition to accept the \$20,000 contribution offered by the applicant to the City to facilitate a new pedestrian crossing on King Street. Staff indicated support for the condition language as written. Chair Macek mentioned his recent site visit and expressed his respect for the Silverado families who shared their feedback during the Public Hearing. He reflected on the original approval and commented that the facility has become an asset for the community as was envisioned when the project was initially proposed. He discussed the Planning Commission's limited purview, stating that the information they could consider in their review of the proposal is focused on land-use issues. He also expressed appreciation for the applicant's offer to provide a contribution for a pedestrian crossing and generally viewed shared parking arrangements to be preferable to requiring additional parking, especially in situations like this where the applicant was meeting their parking requirement.

Planning Commissioner Lyle expressed concerns about this proposal based on her own research and given the testimony by residents' families. Specific concerns included crowding inside the facility and parking. Although she was pleased by the applicant's offer to facilitate a new crosswalk, she continued to be concerned about pedestrians crossing King Street. On personal grounds, she chose to abstain from voting on this item.

Planning Commissioner Manor described his own experience at a rehabilitation facility and the benefit of companions to help both residents and their families. He appreciates the work Silverado does and their willingness to facilitate a new crossing on King Street and is in support of this request. Vice Chair McMahan agreed with Chair Macek's comments, particularly about

the Planning Commission's purview being limited to land-use issues. She acknowledged that while there were differences of opinion, she didn't see any potential land-use impacts of the project. She also remarked that several items heard during the public testimony, such as fire safety and crowding, would be reviewed by separate entities with the necessary expertise rather than the Planning Commission. She was very happy to learn of the crosswalk improvement offered by the applicant, which will improve pedestrian safety and provide traffic-calming effects along this busy corridor. She also briefly remarked on affordability, stating that an additional affordable bed helps with affordability, as does the companion room providing a range of housing options. She agreed with the applicant's statement that the increase in 24 beds at the facility would likely happen incrementally. Taking all of this into consideration, she was comfortable supporting the proposed project.

Planning Commissioner Brown agreed with Chair Macek and Vice Chair McMahon about the Planning Commission's purview. He shared his own experiences as well as a conversation with a private provider of assisted living services in Montgomery County. He discussed the high demand for such care facilities and understood the potential financial incentive for such companion rooms for both the applicant and residents' families. He was comforted by the explanation the applicant provided about the care taken in selecting companions to be in shared rooms and supported the proposal.

Planning Commissioner Koenig expressed support for the proposal, concurring with Chair Macek about the applicable land-use considerations involved in this decision. He opined on the original Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) and commented on the valuable service Silverado provides to the community now that it's been built. He remarked on his own father's experience with companion rooms at a similar facility while recognizing that such experience was subjective.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

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

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of REZ#2024-00003 subject to all conditions, code requirements, and ordinances. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0-1, with Commissioner Lyle abstaining.

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of DSUP#2024-10015 with the additional condition proposed by the applicant (Condition #84) requiring them to provide a \$20,000 contribution to the City to facilitate a new pedestrian crossing on King Street and subject to all conditions, code requirements, and ordinances. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0-1, with Commissioner Lyle abstaining.

**Reason:** The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis while noting their purview is generally limited to land-use matters.

## NEW BUSINESS

**#8 The following item will be heard by the Planning Commission only and referred to the City Council for information only:**

City Charter Section 9.06 Case #2024-00005

2 King Street

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for Planning Commission to review whether the proposed lease by the City of Alexandria of property at 2 King Street to Mai Thai for the purpose of outdoor dining is consistent with the City of Alexandria Master Plan pursuant to Section 9.06 of the City Charter.

Applicant: City of Alexandria

Staff provided a presentation and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

### **Speakers**

No speakers

### **Discussion**

Planning Commissioner Manor inquired of staff as to whether outdoor dining for the Mai Thai will be successful in this location. Staff responded that, while the City can't speak for the restaurant and while Mai Thai does have outdoor dining on the Unit block of King Street already, adding outdoor dining to the waterfront side of the building is likely thought to offer more of an advantage given it is waterside.

Planning Commissioner Lyle indicated that she believes this proposal is in alignment with the Waterfront Plan and offered her support.

Chair Macek indicated that he believes this proposal is appropriate as an interim use. He said that while there was a previous proposal to use the space as part of the redevelopment of an adjacent building, that proposal did not go forward. He added that it makes sense that this current proposal is for the interim use of the space until permanent use for it is confirmed. Meanwhile, he encourages that the overall project to implement the Waterfront Plan be referred to as the Waterfront Implementation project and not as the Flood Mitigation project. The Flood Mitigation project is just one piece of the Waterfront Plan Implementation process.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Vice Chair McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to approve SEC#2024-00005. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

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

**#9 Special Use Permit #2024-00060**

515 King Street

Public Hearing and consideration of a Special Use Permit for a personal service establishment with a 30 foot or greater frontage on King Street; Zoned KR/King Street Urban Retail

Applicant: TD Bank N.A., represented by Mark M. Viani, agent

Staff made a presentation, indicating its recommendation for denial of this case, and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

## **Speakers**

Jeremy Fretts, 5150 Maris Avenue, noted support of the staff position of denial as he believes banks are inactive uses. He frequently sees banks and wonders why there are so many banks in the downtown retail corridor.

Mark Viani, attorney, spoke on behalf of the applicant and stated his belief that it is more important to have an aesthetically pleasing frontage over 30 feet than one at 30 feet or less. He outlined the impediments that the existing space imposed on the proposed layout, stating that, if denied, the bank would still occupy the tenant space with a frontage of 30 feet.

## **Discussion**

Planning Commissioner Lyle stated that she is in favor of approving the application. She indicated the property has been vacant for at least two years, maybe longer, and if occupied, the inactive use of the bank would be better than a vacancy. She believed banks are necessary for businesses that cannot necessarily conduct transactions online. She also expressed concern for the idea of installing tables and chairs in the front of the bank, in the vicinity of the handicapped ramp. She wanted to ensure sufficient space provided for motorized wheelchairs, scooters, and individuals with crutches.

Planning Commissioner Ramirez voiced support for the application. While she understood the need for vitality, she is concerned about vacancy. She stated that it would be better to have the use as presented in this application than having something that leaves a seven-foot wide, blind corner, separated from the rest of the building.

Vice Chair McMahon stated that she did not think this application warranted an exception to the minimum 30-foot frontage requirement for personal services, which include banks. She believes that future zoning consideration should be given to restricting by-right banks and other passive uses in the area, given banking trends emphasizing customer privacy, as in the TD Bank proposal, with activity hidden as far away from the front of the building as possible. She further noted that there is no spontaneous use of banks anymore as business is often conducted by appointment and should be relegated to upper floors like an office. Banks create little vitality, and she did believe the applicant accommodated the need for vitality, even with the proposed mural art in the window. She preferred that the building owner look further to find a companion business, of a comparable activity level with Tatte. The Vice Chair continued that this type of large building that was developed during Urban Renewal does not inherently foster street vitality, as it does not have the same charm as King Street's historic buildings. The Urban Renewal development along King Street is set back farther and elevated from the sidewalk. She believes this use would not contribute to improving pedestrian interactivity that is challenging to create alongside the Urban Renewal development.

Planning Commissioner Koenig agreed with the Vice Chair's position and stated he would be supporting staff's recommendation for denial of the application.

Chair Macek stated that banks are part of a healthy business district. While he understands the goal of the 30-foot limitation, the Zoning Ordinance provides an exception through the Special Use Permit (SUP) process. This space along with the Tatte space used to be a bank and the owner of the building has already enlivened the street with Tatte next door. He suggested that staff may want to look at revising the KR Zone and the King Street Retail Strategy Plan to be more inclusive of uses on the ground floor. Lastly, he noted that if the application is denied, and the bank moves into the space with a 30-foot frontage, the building will be left with a useless seven-foot appendage at the end.

Planning Commissioner Brown asked staff to explain the rationale for the 30-foot limitation and whether or not it was more applicable to older areas of the KR Zone as opposed to buildings constructed under Urban Renewal. Staff responded that the purpose of the 30-foot limitation is to shrink the footprint of passive uses in order to promote more active uses that enliven the street during the day, evenings, and weekends, contributing to economic vitality. Staff noted that the Zoning Ordinance required this regardless of the age or size of the building in the KR Zone.

Planning Commissioner Brown asked the applicant's attorney if the lease with the building owner was subject to approval of the SUP. The attorney replied that the bank would occupy the space regardless of the outcome of the Public Hearing. If the application is denied, they would construct a demising wall to block off the space of frontage greater than 30 feet.

Planning Commissioner Brown summarized that the bank would occupy the space either way and felt that the 30-foot limitation was more appropriate for older buildings in the KR Zone.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Vice Chair McMahon, 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 Brown, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of SUP#2024-00060. The motion carried on a vote of 5-2.

### **#10 Commissioner Ramirez recused herself from Item #10**

Master Plan Amendment #2023-00004

Zoning Text Amendment #2024-00001

Rezoning #2023-00007

Coordinated Development District Conceptual Design Plan #2023-00002

Development Special Use Permit #2023-10019

Subdivision #2023-00005

5001 and 4991 Eisenhower Avenue

Public Hearing and consideration of requests for: (A) Amendments to the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan chapter of the Master Plan to amend Figure 4.1 to change the land use from office/institutional to mixed use; (B) a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to amend the provisions of Section 5-602 to establish CDD #31/Coordinated Development District #31; (C) an Amendment to the official zoning map to change the zoning designation of the property from OCM(100)/Office Commercial Medium (100) zone to CDD/Coordinated Development District #31; (D) a Coordinated Development District Conceptual Design Plan to convert an office building to residential use and allow development of townhouses and a multi-unit building on the site; (E) a Development Special Use Permit and Site Plan to convert the existing building to a multi-unit residential building, including Special Use Permits for a multi-unit residential building within 1,000 feet of the centerline of Eisenhower Avenue and a parking reduction; a modification to the minimum drive aisle width in the garage; and (F) a Subdivision to create parcels for the existing building, future development sites and streets, zoned: OCM(100)/Office Commercial Medium (100).

Applicant: City of Alexandria (Text Amendment); 5001 Eisenhower Office Owner LLC c/o Stonebridge, represented by, Kenneth W. Wire, attorney

Staff made a presentation and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

### **Speaker**

Ken Wire, Wire Gill, LLP, project attorney, spoke in support of the project. He noted that the applicant would not like to provide the requested sports court within the parallel park due to concerns about the aesthetics of fencing and the proximity to Eisenhower Avenue. If the Planning Commission would like the court, then he asked the condition specify the southeast corner of the park as the location.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Vice Chair McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

### **Discussion**

Chair Macek summarized a question from a community member about the levels of affordability associated with the tax abatement and asked staff for additional background on how the proposed affordability levels and unit mix was determined with the applicant. Staff noted that conversions do not typically include a request to increase density, which is the primary tool to require affordable housing. So, the proposed affordability levels are more than what we would be able to obtain without a tax abatement and reiterated that the City Council will consider the details of the proposed tax abatement during their future meetings. Staff also noted the complexity associated with converting this building and that this project likely would not be viable without the tax abatement.

Planning Commissioner Lyle acknowledged the longstanding challenges with redeveloping this corridor and building and supported the proposal to conserve this building for residential. She said that she supports a sports court within the Coordinated Development District (CDD), but agreed with the applicant that the court should not be in front of the conversion building. As proposed, she believes that the project meets the goals of the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan, including the new street grid and trees.

Planning Commissioner Koenig agreed with Planning Commissioner Lyle and said that the proposed conversion is thoughtful and represents good design. He concurred that the CDD needs a sports court, but that it should go in another location.

Vice Chair McMahon agreed with her fellow Planning Commissioners about the importance of retaining the existing building. She supported the proposed affordability levels and believed that even the workforce units have value. She also agreed with relocating the sports court within the CDD and found the internalization of the parking to be a creative solution to a challenging problem. While the drive aisles are narrow, she said that residents will be able to maneuver in them. She encouraged the applicant to inform prospective tenants about the parking limitations so that residents are not surprised when they try to park larger vehicles. Mr. Wire suggested moving the sports court requirement from the Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) condition for the parallel park to the CDD condition for the perpendicular park. Staff agreed with the proposed condition amendment.

Planning Commissioner Brown said that he does not have any problem with the project and amended condition. He said that the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan emphasizes retail along the corridor, excluding the conversion building. He encouraged future phases and proposals

along this corridor to provide retail so that residents will have places to walk to for groceries, restaurants, etc.

Chair Macek said that he agreed with the comments of his fellow Planning Commissioners and noted that this proposal is a signature accomplishment after so many years. Regarding the sports court, he is glad that they could find an alternate, potentially better location. He noted other examples of sports courts along the street, so it may have been appropriate for the parallel park too. He hopes that the court is installed in a timely manner since many kids who are too old for the playground will be living in this neighborhood and they will need a place too.

#### **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to initiate MPA#2023-00004. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to initiate ZTA#2024-00001. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of MPA#2023-00004. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of ZTA#2024-00001. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of REZ#2023-00007. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of CDD#2023-00002 as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of DSUP#2023-10019 as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of SUB#2023-00005. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

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

The Planning Commission amended:

**CDD#2023-00002 Condition #47 and DSUP#2023-10019 Condition #20 to change the location of the proposed sports court from the parallel to the perpendicular park.**

CDD#2023-00002 47. CONDITION AMENDED BY PLANNING COMMISSION:  
Perpendicular Park shall include these amenities to the satisfaction of the Director of P&Z:  
(P&Z)

- a. One pre-school aged playground, of a minimum size of 1,500 sf with resilient safety surface and sufficient play equipment to provide for a minimum of 30 users.
- b. One dog exercise area with surfacing, fencing and gates, plumbing and fixtures, seating, and other appurtenances per City standards. The size of the exercise area will be determined at the DSUP but shall be at least 40' x 50' in dimension, or equivalent.
- c. One shade structure with solid/fabric roofing, sufficiently sized to cover a minimum of two tables.
- d. One rectangular area of synthetic turf or engineered-base sod appropriately sized for small sports practice and/or play for ages 2-6 years old.
- e. At least one 50' x 55' multi-use court area, striped to accommodate multiple games such as racquet sports and half-court basketball.
- e. At least one 50' x 55' multi-use court area, striped to accommodate multiple games such as racquet sports and half-court basketball.**

**DSUP#2023-10019 CONDITION #20. CONDITION AMENDED BY PLANNING COMMISSION: Provide these modifications to the landscape plan and supporting drawings with the Final Site Plan: (P&Z) \*, \*\*\***

- f. Work with City staff to selectively reduce the width of the streetscape at Eisenhower Avenue to maximize the Parallel Park space area in front of the Conversion Building per Exhibit C.
- g. Work with City staff to reduce or eliminate non-functional (decorative) secondary pathways or plazas to maximum useable open space.
- h. Work with City staff to develop the program and design of the Parallel Park in front of the conversion building. The following features, amenities, and design recommendations should be included:
  - i. A multi-age fully fenced and safety-surfaced playground; (minimum 4,725 sq. ft.),
  - ii. ~~At least one 50' x 55' multi-use court area, striped to accommodate multiple games such as racquet sports and half-court basketball,~~
  - iii. Minimum of two fixed-roof shade structures over groupings of tables and chairs,
  - iv. Minimum of two additional seating area(s) with a shade grove or structure,
  - v. A yard game area with selected permanent game facilities,
  - vi. A play garden with low decorative fence as needed,
  - vii. A flexible lawn and event space generally located in the center of the site and bisected by a path from the main building entrance to the Eisenhower Ave. public sidewalk, and
  - viii. Provide landscape solutions at the west and east ends of the park space to improve user experience and delineate the space.
- i. Provide a hardscape (low wall) and/or landscape screen between the parking lot and the sidewalk on the west side of Pepperell Street.
- j. Provide lighting for publicly accessible park spaces to permit extended use for the minimum hours per City public parks policy and include timer mechanisms to reduce lighting to security and ingress/egress lighting

- k. Provide a system of terraces or patios on the north side of the building to provide typical multi-unit housing resident amenities including but not limited to gathering areas and seating, grilling or outdoor kitchens, and informal games.
- l. Continue to work with City staff to determine whether the provision of a small dog park space on the north side of the conversion building is feasible.
- m. For the private dog park, post signage with contact information to facilitate reporting of any noise, pet waste, or other issues. Show the location and design of the sign(s) prior to Final Site Plan release and install the sign(s) prior to the issuance of the first Certificate of Occupancy.

**#11** Development Special Use Permit #2024-10007

Eisenhower East Block 20 East

2200 and 2250 Dock Lane

Tax Map Numbers: 078.02-01-23 and 089.02-01-22

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for an amendment to previously approved Development Special Use Permit #2017-0005 to allow for the construction of a multi-unit residential building and related site improvements and with a modification; Zoned CDD #2 Coordinated Development District #2.

Applicant: Paradigm Development Company, LLC, represented by Mary Catherine Gibbs, attorney

Staff made a presentation and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

**Speakers**

Mary Catherine Gibbs, attorney for the applicant, spoke to the positive contributions Paradigm has made in the area with the development of Block 19, Block 20 West, and now Block 20 East. Ms. Gibbs also highlighted the benefits this project would provide, noting in particular the homeownership opportunities and emphasizing that this project is to include the first two affordable homeownership opportunities in the Eisenhower East neighborhood.

**Discussion**

Planning Commissioner Brown asked if the new project was to have public art features on the exterior at the Block 20 West Side. Ms. Gibbs confirmed it would not have such features and, instead, it would highlight the stone wall feature located on the building’s southeast façade.

Planning Commissioner Lyle indicated the other buildings the applicant has done in this area and stated she views them as “statement buildings.”

Chair Macek echoed Planning Commissioner Lyle’s comments on the design and art associated with buildings in this area. He added he is pleased to see productive use of this site.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Vice Chair McMahon, 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 Vice Chair McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of DSUP#2024-10007. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Commissioners' Reports**

Department of Planning & Zoning Director Karl Moritz informed the Planning Commission that staff will kick off the Duke Street Small Area Plan Update in April 2025 with a community meeting but, before that, staff is starting to get some input from individuals so he wants you, as the Planning Commission, to be aware of that effort in case you hear anything about it. Planning Commissioner Lyle indicating she is aware and appreciates the effort.

Planning Commissioner Koenig mentioned that he attended the third virtual Alexandria City Public School (ACPS) community meeting held on November 21 for the reconstruction of George Mason Elementary Public School. He indicated that while the design process is progressing well, he is concerned that the only community outreach has been one-hour virtual meetings during which questions by the public are submitted by chat.

Director Moritz was asked if the Planning Commission can require ACPS to hold in-person community meetings on this project. Director Moritz indicated that we can't require ACPS to do so but staff can convey the Planning Commission's request.

Chair Macek recommended that the Planning Commission prepare a letter to the City Council expressing the Planning Commission's concerns and requesting that they convey those concerns to the school board. Vice Chair McMahon agreed to assist in the drafting of a letter with Planning Commissioner Koenig. She did note that, while she will help in drafting the letter, she will not be at the next Planning Commission Public Hearing, because she will be travelling.

Chair Macek recommended that the draft letter be discussed at a future meeting and then the Planning Commission can agree to finalize it before it takes a vote to adopt the letter.

### **#12 MINUTES**

Consideration of the minutes from the November 7, 2024 Planning Commission Public Hearing.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to defer the minutes of the November 7, 2024 Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0.

**#13 ADJOURNMENT**

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION**

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to adjourn at 10:47 p.m.