

**City of Alexandria
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 20, 2015
7:00 PM
City Council Special Meeting**

Present: Mayor William D. Euille, Vice Mayor Allison Silberberg, Members of Council John Taylor Chapman, Timothy B. Lovain, Redella S. Pepper, Paul C. Smedberg and Justin M. Wilson.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Mr. Jinks, City Manager; Mr. Spera, Deputy City Attorney; Ms. Baker, Acting Deputy City Manager; Mr. Lambert, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES); Ms. Marks, Deputy Director, T&ES; Ms. Farmer, Principal Planner, T&ES; Mr. Farner, Deputy Director, Planning and Zoning (P&Z); Mr. Robinson, T&ES; Mr. Hayhurst, T&ES; Mr. Imm, P&Z; Police Captain Wemple; Mr. Condoyiannis, Information Technology Services; and Mr. Lloyd.

Recorded by: Gloria Sitton, Deputy City Clerk and Clerk of Council.

1. Calling the Roll.

Mayor Euille called the meeting to order and the Deputy City Clerk called the roll. All members of Council were present.

2. Consideration of a Resolution to Adopt a Locally Preferred Alternative for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

(A copy of the City Manager's memorandum dated May 11, 2015, is on file in the Office of the City Clerk and Clerk of Council, marked Exhibit No. 1 of Item No. 2; 05/20/15, and is incorporated as part of this record by reference.)

Director of Transportation and Environmental Services Lambert gave a brief presentation and he along with Deputy Director of Transportation and Environmental Services, Marks, and Principal Planner Farmer, Transportation and Environmental Services, responded to questions from Council about the financing structures for the metrorail station, community outreach, timeline for implementation of the project and next steps following approval of the resolution.

WHEREUPON, upon, motion by Councilman Wilson, seconded by Councilman Smedberg and carried unanimously by roll-call vote, City Council adopted a resolution for the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station to:

(1) designate Alternative B as the LPA for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station to best support the smart-growth, high-density mix of uses envisioned for Potomac Yard, to support the adjacent communities, to maximize Metrorail ridership and to realize the projected transportation, economic development, and fiscal benefits;

(2) designate Option 2 for construction access;

(3) adopt the proposed mitigation framework in regard to the National Park Service-administered George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) and authorize the City Manager to negotiate a Net Benefits Agreement with the National Park Service (NPS), subject to City Council approval;

(4) authorize the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process to proceed to the Final EIS stage;

(5) authorize an amendment to the City's agreement with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to authorize and fund the design-build contractor selection process through the next phase of this project;

(6) authorize the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with WMATA to outline roles and responsibilities throughout the design-build process, subject to City Council approval;

(7) direct the City Manager to bring concurrently with the agreement authorizing the funding for the design-build construction contract, a detailed series of costed-out alternatives for Council consideration, including a list of financial milestones, any potential changes to revenue sources, and consideration of options to address the Tier II Special Tax District. (This list should include alternatives from the City Manager's memorandum dated May 20, 2015); and

(8) direct the City Manager and staff to bring back a recommendation to City Council for either a reconstitution or new composition of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Group (PYMIG), for appropriate representation as the project moves forward.

The vote was as follows: In favor, Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Silberberg, Councilman Chapman, Councilmember Lovain, Councilwoman Pepper, Councilman Smedberg and Councilman Wilson; Opposed, none.

The resolution reads as follows:

RESOLUTION NO. 4951

WHEREAS, in 2011 the City of Alexandria, as the project sponsor and joint lead agency, and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as lead Federal agency, in cooperation with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) and the National Park Service (NPS), initiated an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed construction and operation of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station; and

WHEREAS, the Draft EIS was released for public review and comment on March 27, 2015, a document which (1) explains the need for the station and considers four build alternatives (Alternative A, Alternative B, Alternative D, and B-CSX Design Option) for the station location; (2) evaluates the potential natural, visual, social, historical, cultural, and economic, and fiscal impacts for each alternative; and (3) evaluates a “no build” alternative that relies on existing transportation infrastructure in lieu of a new station; and

WHEREAS, selection of the preferred location of the Metrorail station (1) is a significant decision for the City from a transportation, land use and economic development perspective; (2) is one of the final steps in the Draft EIS process; and (3) enables preparation of a Final EIS which will include further design and refinement of the preferred alternative to minimize community and environmental impacts followed by the Records of Decision (RODs) issued by FTA and NPS and the award of the design-build contract, final design, and construction; and

WHEREAS, building a new Metrorail station is (1) the key to transforming Potomac Yard into a smart-growth, urban, walkable community with a mix of office, residential uses, high-quality retail, entertainment, and new parks; and (2) necessary to accommodating growing transportation demand in the Route 1 corridor within the existing roadway network and providing additional benefits to the City, as described in the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Staff Recommendation for the Preferred Alternative (Attachment); and

WHEREAS, of all the alternatives considered in the Draft EIS, Alternative B best balances land use and transportation, is consistent with City plans, and places the station in the best location to serve the largest number of potential Metrorail riders; and

WHEREAS, during refinement of the preferred alternative through the Final EIS process and as design advances, subject to applicable land use laws and processes, the City will continue to pursue strategies to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse impacts to the community, natural, and cultural resources, including but not limited to the strategies outlined in the staff recommendation (Attachment); and

WHEREAS, Alternative B requires a land exchange and release of the Greens Scenic Area Easement from the National Park Service, the City will need to enter in to a Net Benefits Agreement with NPS to include the elements outlined in Table 2 and Appendix B of the staff recommendation; and

WHEREAS, the public has been engaged throughout the NEPA process through public meetings, meetings with community groups, briefings of boards and commissions, and meetings of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group (PYMIG), all of which were open to the public; and

WHEREAS, many residents have expressed support for Alternative B based on its potential to positively affect the development of Potomac Yard, its citywide economic benefits, and its transportation benefits;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA:

1. The Council selects Alternative B as the preferred alternative for the Potomac

Yard Metrorail Station to best support the high-density mix of uses envisioned for North Potomac Yard, to support the adjacent communities, and to realize the transportation, economic development, and fiscal benefits;

2. The Council selects Option 2 for construction access via Potomac Greens (no access from the George Washington Memorial Parkway) for Alternative B;

3. The Council authorizes the City Manager to negotiate a Net Benefits Agreement with the National Park Service (NPS) based on the mitigation framework for impacts to the George Washington Memorial Parkway (GWMP) for Alternative B, subject to City Council approval;

4. The Council authorizes the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process to proceed to the Final EIS stage;

5. The Council authorizes an amendment to the City's agreement with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to authorize and fund the design-build contractor selection process through contract award;

6. The Council authorizes the City Manager to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with WMATA to outline roles and responsibilities throughout the design-build process, subject to City Council approval;

7. The Council directs the City Manager to bring concurrently with the agreement authorizing the funding for the design-build construction contract, a detailed series of costed-out alternatives for Council consideration, including a list of financial milestones, any potential changes to revenue sources, and a consideration of options to address the Tier II Tax District. (This list should include alternatives from the City Manager's memorandum dated May 20, 2015);

8. The Council directs the City Manager and staff to bring back a recommendation to City Council for either a reconstitution or new composition of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Group (PYMIG), for appropriate representation as the project moves forward; and

7. This resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

THERE BEING NO FURTHER BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED, upon motion by Councilman Wilson, seconded by Councilwoman Pepper and carried unanimously, the special meeting of May 20, 2015, was adjourned at 8:58 p.m. The vote was as follows: In favor, Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Silberberg, Councilman Chapman, Councilmember Lovain, Councilwoman Pepper, Councilman Smedberg and Councilman Wilson; Opposed, none.

APPROVED BY:

WILLIAM D. EUILLE MAYOR

ATTEST:

Gloria Sitton, Deputy City Clerk