

Docket Item #  
Planning Commission Meeting  
November 1, 2018

Consideration of approval of the Planning Commission minutes of the Public Hearing meeting  
of November 1, 2018

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ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

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

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION

November 1, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers

Alexandria, Virginia

Members Present:

Mary Lyman, Chair

Nathan Macek, Vice Chairman

David Brown

Stephen Koenig

Mindy Lyle

Maria Wasowski

Melissa McMahon

Members Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Karl W. Moritz

Christina Brown

Nancy Williams

Anh Vu

Ann Horowitz

Sam Shelby

Robert Kerns

Stephanie Sample

Shaun Smith

Radhika Mohan

Heba ElGawish

Tony LaColla

Sara Brandt-Vorel

Maya Contreras

Al Cox

Catherine Miliaras

Tamara Jovovic

Department of Planning & Zoning

Office of the City Attorney

Department of Planning & Zoning

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Office of Housing

## ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

### 1. Call to Order.

The Planning Commission public hearing was called to order at 7:06 p.m. All members were present at the call to order, with Commissioner Brown arriving at 7:20 p.m.

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

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#### 2. Special Use Permit #2018-0069

1 Cameron Street (Parcel Address: 5 Cameron Street) – Chart House

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a special use permit amendment for outdoor speakers at an existing restaurant; zoned: CD/ Commercial Downtown.

Applicant: Alexandria Waterfront Associates Limited Partnership

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** Without objection, the Planning Commission voted to defer Special Use Permit #2018-0069. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 0. Commissioner Brown was not present for the vote.

#### 3. Special Use Permit #2018-0087

300 Montgomery Street - Montgomery Center

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a special use permit for additional square footage for a projecting sign on the corner of North Fairfax Street and Montgomery Street; zoned: CRMU-X/ Commercial Residential Mixed-use (Old Town North).

Applicant: Bruce Machanic

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** By unanimous consent, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2018-0087, as submitted. Commissioner Brown was not present for the vote.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

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#### 4. Special Use Permit #2018-0086

215 South Union Street - B. Doughnut

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a special use permit to operate a restaurant; zoned: W-1/ Waterfront Mixed-use.

Applicant: LaPlata Doughnuts, LLC

Ann Horowitz (P&Z), presented the case and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

## ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

### Speakers:

Vice Chairman Macek stated support for the application and suggested amending the W-1 zone to permit restaurants through an administrative Special Use Permit, consistent with other commercial zones in the city.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner McMahon, and seconded by Vice Chairman Macek, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2018-0086, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0. Commissioner Brown was not present for the vote.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis.

5. Master Plan Amendment #2018-0009  
Rezoning #2018-0004  
309 North Patrick Street  
Public Hearing and consideration of requests for: (A) an amendment to the Braddock Road Metro Station Small Area Plan to amend the land use designation from CL/ Commercial Low to RM/Residential Medium; (B) to rezone a lot from CL/ Commercial Low with a proffer to RB/ Townhouse; zoned: CL/Commercial Low with proffer.  
Applicant: Zelaya Homes, LLC, represented by Mary Catharine Gibbs, attorney

Ann Horowitz, P&Z, presented the case and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

### Speakers:

Harry P. Hart, attorney for the applicant, expressed support for the application, stating that building would revert to its original use as a residence. He added that the building may be expanded in the future, and it would comply with all zoning and Building Code requirements. The applicant would reach out to neighboring properties prior to any redevelopment of the property.

Cliff Davis expressed concerns about future expansion of the building at 309 North Patrick and its potential impact on the rear parking area of the adjacent funeral home.

Chair Lyman closed the Public Hearing

Chairwoman Lyman requested that the applicant consult with neighbors prior to constructing an addition on the property. Vice Chairman Macek recommended that the City develop a process that would streamline the conversion of commercial uses to residential uses at properties originally constructed for residential use. Commissioner Brown noted that the building was in a state of significant disrepair, outliving its

## ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

commercial use. He believed that the proposed rezoning and master plan amendment for residential use would improve the building condition.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chairman Macek, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to adopt a resolution to recommend approval of Master Plan Amendment #2018-0009. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Vice Chairman Macek, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Master Plan Amendment #2018-0009 and Rezoning #2018-0004, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis.

6. Development Special Use Permit #2017-0006  
Transportation Management Plan Special Use Permit #2018-0048  
3846 King Street - Fairlington Presbyterian Church  
Public Hearing and consideration of requests for: (A) a development special use permit and site plan with modifications to construct a multifamily residential building including a special use permit to increase the floor area ratio in exchange for affordable housing units pursuant to Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance and an extension in the period in which construction must be commenced under Section 11-418 of the Zoning Ordinance; and (B) a special use permit for a tier 1 transportation management plan; zoned: RA/Multifamily.  
Applicants: Wesley Housing Development Corporation and Fairlington Presbyterian Church Corporation, represented by Duncan Blair, attorney

Robert Kerns (P&Z), Sara Brandt-Vorel (P&Z), and Maya Contreras (P&Z) presented the case and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Duncan W. Blair, attorney, spoke on behalf of the project. He noted that the City requires the same standards for market-rate and affordable housing development projects, but that a market-rate project will have more competitive amenities (fire pits, granite countertops) while affordable projects operate under a strict set of parameters in terms of costs, unit size, unit count, finishes, etc. He further stressed the importance of ensuring that affordable projects meet the scoring criteria of the Virginia Housing Development Authority (VHDA) in order to be competitive.

Julie Wilson Black, pastor at Fairlington Presbyterian Church (project co-applicant), spoke on behalf of the project. She described the mission statement of the church and the partnership with Wesley Housing, which was chosen as a partner because of their

## ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

commitment to maintaining ownership and on-site management. She stated that the church and Wesley had worked with the community over the last 18 months to mitigate concerns.

Commissioner Brown asked about the proposed church expansion plan. Pastor Black clarified that it would be expanding entryways to make them more welcoming, and a possible elevator expansion on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. Commissioner Brown asked whether the playground would continue to be open to the community, and she responded that it would be.

Shelley Murphy, CEO of Wesley Housing (project co-applicant), spoke on behalf of the project, indicating that Wesley Housing has been operating for 45 years, with this as their fourth project in Alexandria. Wesley will develop and manage the property, as well as provide on-site services for residents. Wesley anticipates they will partner with the church for additional services.

Kat Turner, parishioner at Church of the Resurrection, spoke in support of the project and affordable housing. She noted the successful VHDA application and recent de-consecration of the Church of the Resurrection. She discussed the challenges to providing affordable housing with limited land parcels and the decline of church membership, as well as the stewardship of the church communities and their resources. Finally, she recognized the projects at St. James, the Spire and Fairlington and noted that there are other churches which may be future opportunities for additional housing sites.

Nancy Jennings, Seminary Hill Association President, spoke on behalf of the Association, and referenced the resolution that Seminary Hill passed with regards to the proposal. She indicated her belief that the project did not comply with noticing requirements and stated that if a vote is taken by the Commission, the Association would consult with an attorney. She noted that the project outreach was hostile and that the membership was not permitted to participate in the design committee. She stated that the applicants need a better plan that fits the site better as this proposal is too intense. She stated that the proposal did not consider traffic impacts and parking and miscounted parking spaces on adjacent streets. Finally, she noted that the project had not assessed the historic nature of the site or considered the impact on schools and whether emergency services can access the building.

Vice Chairman Macek asked whether the resolution was passed by the Association board or the full membership and Commissioner Lyle asked whether a full membership meeting or a board meeting was held to review the project.

Lindsay Matlock, neighbor, expressed concern about a loss of value of her home if the project is approved. She noted that the dumpster site is adjacent to her home, which

## ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

would lead to a loss of value, privacy, light and sun. She indicated that she asked to participate in the church's design group but was denied. She expressed concern about a lack of parking at the site and that there was no attempt to mitigate the building design, which is too big and does not fit the neighborhood scale. She stated that the project did not consider environmental or historic impacts and that it is moving forward too quickly, and that approval runs the risk of dividing the community further.

Linda Shellhouse, resident of Fairlington Towne, opposes the project due to height, size impacts, school impact, removal of trees, density, and floor area. She requested that the applicant consider a smaller building with a height of two stories and a park. She noted that she is not trying to be difficult or a bad neighbor and that she is not opposed to affordable housing.

Babette Smith, N. Early Street, expressed concern about improper noticing procedures, as two certified letters were sent. One went to the Fairlington Towne Association and the president never picked up the letter. A second letter was sent to the site manager. She also expressed concern about how the Bonus Density program under Section 7-700 was being applied and noted that citizen participation in the project was restricted.

Chair Lyman closed the Public Hearing.

Commissioner Brown asked whether an 81-unit affordable building and market rate building would be reviewed in the same way with regards to building materials, amenities, rental rates and subsidies, and financing. He asked whether an open space modification would be supported for a market rate project; and whether rooftop open space was considered at this project. He asked about the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program, how the costs and funding are allocated and whether the financing partners have an expectation of a certain level of building quality. Finally, he asked for confirmation that a minimum of one parking space per unit was being provided. In discussion of the project, Commissioner Brown indicated that the project is at the nexus of old and new zoning policies: Euclidian zoning based on height and setbacks, as opposed to zoning that implements social policy, specifically the promotion of affordable housing. He indicated that he agreed with Janice Conway's letter, which expressed significant concerns about traffic, school impacts, noise and the loss of green space. While he felt that the project did not pass strict muster on a determination of whether the open space modification was necessary and acceptable, and while he did feel that the relocated playground location is a drawback to the project; he believed the City's goal of fostering affordable housing should also be taken into account and he would support the project.

## ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

Commissioner Lyle asked whether the building complies with requirements for emergency services and whether the dumpster could be relocated. She noted that the biggest traffic issue in the neighborhood is cut-through traffic.

Vice Chairman Macek noted that neighbors were concerned about transportation issues, including queuing and traffic signal timing, although the traffic study suggested that the project would have a minimal effect on traffic. He asked whether staff considered other opportunities to manage traffic at this location and whether any improved or increased transit service would be provided. He noted that the project is requesting few variations, as it conforms to height, zoning, use, parking and would preserve the existing church and much of the open space. He noted that the request for modification for open space is due to a requirement of 800 sq. ft. per unit and that this standard is more appropriate for a less dense development context. He expressed appreciation for questions about rooftop open space and the associated costs. He indicated that he does not believe that the project will deteriorate home values relative to city-wide trends. He noted that the project had 13 meetings over 18 months, which is a fair to lengthy time period for a development process. Finally, he suggested that condition 116 be removed, as it is related to spray paint booths and is not applicable to the project.

Commissioner Wasowski associated herself with comments of the other commissioners. She noted the site has good bus service currently and that she hoped to see it improve in the future. With regards to the building height, she noted the building conforms to the 45-foot height limit in the zone, and that a uniform building height throughout the City is not an organic or desirable condition.

Commissioner McMahon associated herself with comments of the other commissioners. She indicated the project's consistency with zoning requirements and the community goals of affordable housing. She found that the project succeeded in rethinking reuse of the existing site without disrupting the church building, and that it is important to consider how communities and institutions change over time. She noted that, while the site is not in a traditional Metrorail corridor, it is in a location with easy access to freeway and bus transit, which made it a sensible place for redevelopment.

Chair Lyman asked for clarification regarding noticing procedures, whether the height met the zoning requirement and whether height and neighborhood character could be mitigated by the site topography. She recognized that the project demonstrated changes to the site plan over time in response to the neighborhood concerns.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chairman Macek, seconded by Commissioner Wasowski, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of DSUP #2017-0006, as amended, and TMP Special Use Permit #2018-0048,



## ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

as submitted, subject to compliance with all applicable codes, ordinances, and other staff recommendations. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis. Staff agreed with Vice Chairman Macek's suggestion to delete Condition #116 from DSUP #2017-0006.

**116. CONDITION DELETED BY PLANNING COMMISSION:** ~~No paint or coatings shall be applied outside the paint spray booth. (T&ES)~~

7. Text Amendment #2018-0010  
Consolidation of the Boards of Architectural Review  
(A) Initiation of a text amendment; and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to amend Article X and add Section 10-400 to create the Alexandria board of architectural review and dissolve the Old and Historic Alexandria District and Parker-Gray District boards of architectural review and to amend Sections 6-403, 7-802, 8-200, 8-602, 9-301, and 11-513 to change the references to the Alexandria board of architectural review.  
Staff: City of Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning

Text Amendment #2018-0010 was initiated by City Council on April 24, 2018.

Al Cox (P&Z), Catherine Miliaras (P&Z), and Stephanie Sample (P&Z) presented the case and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Purvi Irwin, Chair of the Parker-Gray Board of Architectural Review, spoke in support of the proposed text amendment and enumerated benefits of the BAR consolidation.

Chair Lyman closed the Public Hearing.

Vice Chairman Macek raised the question about how to stagger the terms of the appointed BAR members to avoid a situation where the entire BAR would cycle off at the same time. He suggested that Council appoint two members to one-year terms, two members to two-year terms and three members to three-year terms.

Commissioner Wasowski also noted that it may be beneficial to specify one position for a member who lives outside of either of the historic districts, recognizing that such a position could provide more perspective. However, instead of classifying one appointed position for someone who resides outside the historic districts, it was discussed and decided to remove the word "strong" in the sentence related to preference given for property owners in the historic districts. The commissioners found that this amendment would allow for highly qualified applicants who live outside the historic districts.

## ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

Commissioner McMahon agreed with the comments. Assistant City Attorney Zechman Brown indicated that if the City Council chooses to implement Vice Chairman Macek's suggestion on staggering terms for the new board, the language could be added to the implementation ordinance rather than the final text for the Zoning Ordinance. Vice Chairman Macek also noted that it was surprising to only have one speaker and attributed the small number to a good community outreach process.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chairman Macek, seconded by Commissioner Wasowski, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Text Amendment #2018-0010, as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff recommendations.

### Amendments:

In Section 10-401(C), add "listed" before 100 year old building.

In Section 10-401(C), strike "strong" and "shall" and amend to read: "*Preference may be given to property owners....*"

In Section 10-401(C), strike "or" between "*architectural history or historic preservation*" and amend to read: "*...architectural history, historic preservation, planning...*"

8. Recommendation: Eisenhower West-Landmark Van Dorn Developer Contribution Policy  
Staff: City of Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** Without objection, the Planning Commission voted to defer the Eisenhower West-Landmark Van Dorn Developer Contribution Policy recommendation item. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 0. Commissioner Brown was not present for the vote.

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

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9. City of Alexandria Strategic Facilities Plan 2018 Information item: Update on the City Strategic Facilities Plan  
Staff: General Services Director Jeremy McPike, City of Alexandria, Department of General Services

## ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

Jeremy McPike, Director in Department of General Services gave the Planning Commission an update on the City's 2018 Strategic Facilities Plan. He indicated the plan has taken into account information from both the City's Strategic Plan and the Joint City Schools Task Force's recent work. It includes guidance and check points for capital planning for the future. As such, he indicated it identifies capital gaps within departments and facilities across the City. It also identifies opportunities for potential synergies between departments and opportunities for solutions such as co-location. He indicated the plan does not delve into specific projects but serves more as a launching point, with recommendations, to start exploring potential solutions for capital gaps and needs. It identifies the number of buildings at 151 between the City and schools and that those buildings total 4.3 million square feet. It also identifies population density and future density for planning purposes. He said there is a gap table that identifies related issues such as parking and storage that must be taken into account with capital planning. He indicated potential solutions to capital needs may be consolidation of facilities, new or expansion of facilities, repurposing facilities, and/or reconfiguration. He described some current priorities and he indicated that there is a small schools section but there will be a larger schools facilities planning effort next year.

Chair Lyman asked when referring to co-location are you talking about replacing the current facilities and joining uses at a new site. Mr. McPike indicated in cases where a facility has to be replaced, then yes; otherwise, it will entail joint planning on programming and capital needs. Commissioner Wasowski indicated that she does not want the City to lose the synergy between the transportation and planning staffs. She said having them in the same building facilitates their work. Mr. McPike also indicated that part of this effort is to look at City Hall in the future. It is projected to start in 2021-2022 with finding some swing space due to the extent of work that will be required with City Hall renovation. Commissioner Koenig said he is thrilled to see the plan and appreciates the overview. He referenced the gaps slide in the presentation and remarked that he appreciates that this plan will be a kick off for the work between the City and schools and other facilities that would be appropriate for potential co-locations. He also spoke to the needs and priorities slide in the presentation and said one additional consideration to take into account is housing. He pointed to the Potomac Yard fire station and how that is integrated with housing.

## ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2018

### 10. Commissioner's Reports, Comments, and Questions.

Commissioner Koenig indicated that the Potomac Yard Implementation Group is meeting weekly almost and the design team is working diligently to get the project to public hearing in December 2018. He also mentioned that the Green Building Task Force will have its initial meeting on November 14, 2018.

### **MINUTES:**

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11. Consideration of the minutes from the June 5, 2018 Planning Commission meeting.

12. Consideration of the minutes from the September 4, 2018 Planning Commission meeting.

13. Consideration of the minutes from the September 6, 2018 Planning Commission meeting.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chair Macek, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of June 5, 2018, as amended; of September 4, 2018, as amended; and September 6, 2018, as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 6 to 0, with Commissioner McMahon abstaining.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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14. Adjournment

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 10:32 p.m.