

Docket Item #9  
Planning Commission Meeting  
January 3, 2019

Consideration of approval of the Planning Commission minutes of the Public Hearing meeting  
of January 3, 2019

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ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – JANUARY 3, 2019

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

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION

January 3, 2019, 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

Max Ewart

Hillary Orr

Carrie Beach

Tamara Jovovic

Robert Kerns

Shaun Smith

Tony LaColla

Michael Swidrak

Brian Dofflemeyer

Megan Oleynik

Catherine Miliaras

Department of Planning & Zoning

Office of the City Attorney

Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Planning & Zoning

Department of Transportation & Environmental Services

Department of Planning & Zoning

Office of Housing

Department of Planning & Zoning

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### 1. Call to Order.

The Planning Commission Public Hearing was called to order at 7:02 p.m. All members were present at the call to order.

### **CONSENT AGENDA:**

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#### 2. Special Use Permit #2018-0104

1011 Duke Street– Commercial to Residential Conversion

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a special use permit for a parking reduction with lot modifications for a commercial to residential use conversion; zoned: CL/ Commercial low.

Applicant: Steven R. Saunders

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** By unanimous consent, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2018-0104, as submitted.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

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#### 3. Information/Discussion item: Draft FY 2020 Long Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program, City of Alexandria Department of Planning & Zoning

Carrie Beach (P&Z), Hillary Orr (T&ES), and Tamara Jovovic (Office of Housing) gave the Planning Commission an update on the City's draft FY 2020 Long Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program. Vice Chairman Macek stated that the Long-Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program is one of the most important items the Planning Commission hears annually, as it specifies what planning items will be emphasized in the coming year and he acknowledged that staff did a commendable job of listening to the Planning Commission and City Council to determine where such emphasis should be placed in this draft program. Vice Chairman Macek also stated that he liked the emphasis found within the draft program on affordable housing analysis, Inclusionary Zoning, and Accessory Dwelling Unit planning. Vice Chairman Macek went on to inquire as to whether any community meetings were planned in the near future in relation to the Transit Vision Plan. Staff stated there is a joint Transportation Commission and Alexandria Transit Company board meeting scheduled for February 13, as well as a community workshop planned for February 26, with more community engagement, in terms of online outreach and surveys, planned for later this spring.

Commissioner Wasowski inquired as to how transit efforts identified as part of the Transit Vision Plan would be implemented in areas likely to experience future development. Staff stated that the Transit Vision Plan takes into account transit in areas likely to experience future development. Staff added the implementation of transit in

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these areas would be largely dependent upon ongoing discussions with the community regarding frequency of service in denser areas versus having more coverage area across the whole City. Commissioner Wasowski also stated she thought the Transit Vision planning process needed to be more prominently represented on the City's website, as she noted it was difficult to locate. Staff indicated they would address the website comment to enhance visibility of the program.

Commissioner Koenig stated that he too believed the Long-Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program to be one of the most important items that the Planning Commission hears each year and thanked staff for their work on the draft program. In relation to the Amazon HQ2 - VA Tech Innovation Campus, Commissioner Koenig inquired as to whether the North Potomac Yard Coordinated Development District (CDD) update, scheduled for 2019, would be an evolution of work already done in relation to the plan or if there is a level of impact from Amazon's HQ2 that may affect Phase I of Potomac Yard. Staff responded that the plan would remain largely similar to what was originally envisioned. Commissioner Koenig also went on to state his excitement surrounding the Inclusionary Zoning and Accessory Dwelling Unit analysis which is scheduled to take place in Calendar Year 2019, and stated his opinion that Inclusionary Zoning could potentially be a powerful tool in addressing equity-housing affordability in Alexandria. Commissioner Koenig then asked staff about the implications that Amazon's HQ2 may have in regard to housing affordability, especially in Arlandria, and if pressures stemming from Amazon's HQ2 would affect the intensity of the impending affordability analysis. Staff responded by saying that, though the final version of the plan is still being shaped, the potential impacts of Amazon's HQ2 are being considered as part of the overall affordability analysis in relation to the Arlandria area.

Commissioner Koenig went on to ask staff how the Duke Street-Witter/ Wheeler Corridor analysis would relate to the pending Joint City/ Schools Facilities Masterplan. Karl Moritz, Director of Planning & Zoning, explained that the Duke Street-Witter/ Wheeler Corridor analysis is integrated with the Joint Facilities Masterplan and that a key component of the Duke Street-Witter/ Wheeler Corridor analysis will be reconciling the potential opportunities within the Witter/ Wheeler corridor with the needs identified within the City's Strategic Facilities Plan. Staff went on to explain that though the Duke Street Corridor analysis is taking place concurrently with the Joint Facilities Masterplan, the City will take care to make sure efforts are not being duplicated and are consistent across both plans. Staff added that the Witter/ Wheeler Campus Plan will have a public component which will be forthcoming. Commissioner Koenig inquired whether the Witter/ Wheeler Campus Plan and the Joint Facilities Master Plan are intended to be sequential or to potentially overlap, to which staff replied that there would potentially be overlap between the two endeavors, but it is likely there will already be results from the Duke Street-Witter/ Wheeler Corridor analysis prior to the completion of the Joint Facilities Masterplan.

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Commissioner Koenig then inquired about the Open Space in New Development initiative and whether the City will explore open space as a discussion item and/or in work sessions this spring, ultimately culminating in an item which would then go on Planning Commission and City Council dockets in June simultaneous with the Environmental Policy Commission's Phase II of the Open Space Plan. Staff responded that the City anticipates having policy statements completed by June in order to be incorporated into the Environmental Action Plan. Commissioner Koenig posed an additional question asking whether it was anticipated that public work sessions would be placed on the Planning Commission docket in order to further explore open space issues, which Mr. Moritz confirmed as being the case with an open space discussion scheduled as soon as the February 2019 docket.

Commissioner McMahon asked staff about their take on the effectiveness of Inclusionary Zoning and Accessory Dwelling Units as a means of creating a greater volume of long-term affordable housing stock. Staff replied that additional investigation will need to be undertaken to determine what the outcome would be as a result of changing a policy related to housing affordability tactics. In addition, staff noted that the City has been working with regional housing directors to examine the total supply of affordable housing to be built to determine if there is a constrained supply of approvable/ buildable housing units in the region compared to the number of jobs expected.

Commissioner McMahon then asked staff whether they had a sense of how many funding dependent items, which were identified within the FY 2020 Long Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program, are likely to make it through the implementation process. Staff responded that an accurate forecast of this matter would be difficult to make at this time; but, the City Manager's Office is currently in the process of reviewing each Department's submissions in order to determine funding priorities. Commissioner McMahon followed up on this response by noting that she was unsure if funding dependent items were being evaluated based on their time sensitivity, as this would affect her recommendations, as a Planning Commissioner, as to the order in which items are addressed. In addition, Commissioner McMahon went on to ask if in the case where there isn't extra funding on the horizon for planning projects, would staff envision needing to replace any items identified as already having funding with any funding dependent projects. Staff responded that they did not anticipate having to swap any items out, but noted that Commissioner McMahon's comments regarding time sensitive items are appropriate and now is the perfect time to foster discussions within the community surrounding which items should have priority.

Commissioner Brown followed up on Commissioner McMahon's point of the possibility of having to approach affordable housing in a different way down the road by stating it is

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his impression that Alexandria would follow the path taken by Arlington and learn from their best practices as well as the mistakes they made along the way.

In relation to the Beauregard Ellipse, Vice Chairman Macek asked staff whether as part of their analysis they would consider whether the traffic levels in the area warrant the ellipse, as he felt traffic levels have not risen to the amount originally anticipated when the plan was conceived. Staff confirmed that they would be evaluating existing traffic information as well as gathering additional data to inform their recommendation regarding the ellipse implementation. Chair Lyman agreed that the ellipse was one of the more unpopular aspects of the Beauregard Small Area Plan.

Commissioner Wasowski, in relation to Accessory Dwelling Units and Inclusionary Zoning, asked staff if they would be considering how many people would be allowed to reside in one Accessory Dwelling Unit, lest their use as a boarding house in practice. Staff responded that this was indeed an important sentiment and would incorporate this consideration into their analysis on the matter.

Commissioner Koenig followed up on Commissioner McMahon's comment regarding funding dependent items by stating that he thought the Inclusionary Zoning and Accessory Dwelling Unit analysis, a funding dependent item, should be considered as a high priority project.

Chair Lyman agreed with Commissioner McMahon's comments regarding the importance of prioritizing responses in relation to Amazon's HQ2 coming to Crystal City. She also stated that she has particular concerns related to the redevelopment in Arlandria and how it may look, especially as Arlandria has historically been a nest of market-rate affordable housing with a diverse community and may be at a high risk of over-development and gentrification.

To conclude, Chair Lyman inquired of staff whether the Oakville Triangle Plan was going to be completely up-ended and re-done from scratch or if the new vision for the plan would be incrementally incorporated into what is already in place. Staff responded by confirming that the latter would be the case, with the bulk of reconsideration taking place at the actual triangle area in order to accommodate the Innovation District.

4. 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

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**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** Without objection, the Planning Commission voted to approve the applicant's request to withdraw Special Use Permit #2018-0069.

5. Text Amendment #2018-0015

Zoning Ordinance Practical Updates

Initiation of a text amendment and Public Hearing and consideration of a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to add Section 2-113.2 to define attic spaces, Section 2-120.1 to define bay windows, and Section 2-200.1 to define trellises; to amend Section 4-300 to remove private school, commercial, from the list of special uses; to amend Section 7-100 to redefine the permitted location of accessory structures; to amend Section 7-2506 to remove duplicate language regarding driveway surface materials; to amend Section 7-200 to allow additional structures to be permitted in certain yards; and to amend Section 7-300 to add additional uses permitted as home occupations.

Staff: City of Alexandria Department of Planning & Zoning

Shaun Smith (P&Z) and Tony LaColla (P&Z) presented the case and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers: N/A

Discussion: Commissioner Brown asked staff about the applicability of Section 7-202(A)(5) of the Zoning Ordinance and how it has been applied. Staff stated that a trellis is allowed within a required yard in all locations unless located adjacent to a window or doorway that has a sill lower than eight feet facing a shared property line.

Commissioner McMahon asked staff if there is a process of notifying applicants for building permits or other zoning approvals that may have been denied under current zoning regulations that the Planning Commission would now be recommending for change. Staff stated that they keep a list of applicants that may have been denied and will reach out to them to notify them of changes if this text amendment were to be approved by City Council.

Vice Chairman Macek asked if sheds, garages, and other accessory structures may be reasonable permitted obstructions to allow to encroach into a secondary front yard. Staff stated that allowing larger accessory structures may create unintended consequences in certain situations, such as in the case where a neighboring property primary front yard would be adjacent to a secondary front yard. Staff stated that they are working on additional revisions to the infill regulations that may result in changes to where garages and sheds may be located on properties and would bring these recommendations to the Planning Commission in the future.

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**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chairman Macek, and seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Text Amendment #2018-0015. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Vice Chairman Macek, and seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Text Amendment #2018-0015, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis.

6. Rezoning #2018-0006  
Development Special Use Permit #2017-0025  
Transportation Management Plan Special Use Permit #2018-0078  
1201 North Royal Street - Craddock Site Redevelopment  
Public Hearing and consideration of requests for: (A) an amendment to the official zoning map to change the zone at 1201 North Royal Street from CD-X to CRMU-X and the adjacent outparcel from UT to CRMU-X; (B) a development special use permit and site plan with modifications to construct multifamily dwellings, including special use permits to increase the floor area ratio from 1.5 to 2.5 in the CRMU-X zone, utilize the 30 percent density bonus including a height increase of 12 feet for an arts and cultural anchor in Old Town North and a reduction of the number of required loading spaces for the arts and cultural anchor; and (C) a special use permit for a transportation management plan; zoned: CD-X/Commercial Downtown (Old Town North) and UT/Utilities and Transportation.  
Applicant: 1201 N. Royal LLC., represented by Kenneth W. Wire, attorney  
  
Michael Swidrak (P&Z), Robert Kerns (P&Z), Brian Dofflemeyer (T&ES), and Megan Oleynik (T&ES) presented the case and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Christie Susko, of 1211 N. Pitt Street, expressed her concerns with the project. Her main concerns related to the height of the proposed building and issues with potential traffic increases and streetscape improvements. Ms. Susko was concerned about the narrowing of N. Royal Street and its impact on traffic flow, and issues with delivery trucks serving the proposed building and potential issues with users of the proposed building using reserved parking spaces off N. Royal Street for Canal Place condominium residents.

Mary Harris, representing North Old Town Independent Citizens' Association (NOTICE), expressed concerns with the proposal. Ms. Harris argued that the building height was out of scale with adjacent residential properties. She also stated the support of NOTICE of the Old Town North Arts District but indicated there are concerns about the viability of



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the proposed arts anchor space and stated that additional safety refinements are needed where N. Royal Street and Bashford Lane converge and near the proposed garage entry for the project.

Joseph Teague, of 318 Third Street and representing the Printers Row Board, asked Planning Commission to add formal language to the conditions of approval to address construction impacts on adjacent properties through building monitoring. Staff and the applicant responded that condition language that addresses this concern can be added from previously approved projects.

Ken Wire, representing the applicant, spoke in favor of the project. Mr. Wire discussed the site constraints and the design considerations needed to comply with the Old Town North Urban Design Guidelines (OTN UDSG), including the 18-foot setback between the face of the four-story brick shoulders and the main midrise building portion. He noted that the applicant agreed to a condition on construction monitoring and will commit to making the safety improvements to N. Royal Street and Bashford Lane that were discussed by Ms. Harris. Mr. Wire also noted the changes to the conditions proposed by the applicant related to architecture, sewer tap fees and the undergrounding of utilities. Staff confirmed agreement with the proposed changes. In response to Conditions #10 and #52c, which had been proposed to be amended in a previous letter to the Planning Commission, Mr. Wire noted that the applicant accepts the latter condition and will meet with staff prior to the City Council hearing to address Condition #10.

### Discussion:

Commissioner Brown asked for confirmation from staff that the arts anchor square footage was excluded from net floor area, and that the floor area ratio (FAR) of the site would be approximately 3.4 if the arts anchor space counted toward FAR, which staff confirmed. He noted his general support for the project, including the inclusion of the arts use and the proposed height, though noted he could not vote to support the project due to his interpretation that the square footage of the arts anchor should be counted toward the total FAR. Commissioner Brown compared the arts district density bonus (Section 6-900 of the Zoning Ordinance) to the affordable housing density bonus (Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance), noting that the latter density bonus requires that the affordable housing be incorporated into the 30-percent density bonus. He noted that the Crowne Plaza redevelopment project (DSUP#2017-0011) was approved using the arts district density bonus and the arts anchor was not counted toward FAR, but he noted in that case the overall density of the project did not exceed the 30-percent density bonus when the arts anchor floor area was added. In response, Commissioner McMahon noted that the Old Town North Small Area Plan (OTN SAP) contains sections that state the intent to exclude the floor area for arts and cultural uses. Karl Moritz, the Director of Planning & Zoning, discussed the ground floor arts tenant (Section 6-903 of the Zoning Ordinance) and the arts anchor (Section 6-904 of the Zoning Ordinance) and noted the ground floor

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arts tenants are to be excluded from floor area, while a 30-percent density bonus is available for the inclusion of an arts anchor in a development. Mr. Moritz noted that staff had applied the arts anchor as an “arts tenant plus” where the arts anchor is excluded from floor area in addition to allowing for a density bonus of up to 30 percent. The remaining Commissioners concurred in their agreement with staff that the wording in Section 6-900 of the Zoning Ordinance was sufficiently clear to approve the proposal with the floor area exclusion for the arts anchor, though they would be amenable to a future text amendment to clarify the exclusion.

Commissioner Wasowski stated that the OTN SAP, both through the planning process and as part of the plan approval process, is clear on the intent of the Arts and Cultural District. Commissioner Wasowski also noted the limited area that the density bonus could be applied in the plan area (and City), and staff added that future cases in the plan area, including the WMATA Bus Barn redevelopment, will be utilizing the affordable housing bonus density. Commissioner Wasowski and Commissioner Lyle noted the site constraints for the development, including the triangular shape of the site. Commissioner Lyle added that the development continues the timely implementation of the OTN SAP. Commissioner Wasowski added that the project benefitted from the OTN SAP process, of which the applicant was a part, and the design refinements and discussion of the proposal that took place at the Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC) meetings.

Vice Chairman Macek noted his support for the project, and addressed speaker concerns regarding traffic, on-street loading and the viability of the arts anchor, stating that the Art League is an established neighborhood organization and the expectation is for their satisfactory management of the space that will activate the Arts and Cultural District. Staff added to the Vice Chairman’s discussion that a condition of approval was added that addressed the pedestrian safety improvements to N. Royal Street and Bashford Lane, and the details would be finalized during Final Site Plan.

Commissioner Koenig noted his concern that the applicant was not representing the full extent of the proposed above-grade open space in the open space exhibit (the exhibit currently shows 110 square feet of open space). He noted that there may not be an adequate safeguard in approving the minimal amount of open space for the rooftop and ensuring that a larger amount of open space would be constructed. Mr. Wire assured the Commission that the minimum amount of above-grade open space they will construct is 3,000 square feet, or about 8 percent of site area. This effectively guarantees that the site will have a minimum of 12,144 square feet of open space, including ground-level open space, for a total of approximately 32 percent combined ground and rooftop open space. Additionally, Commissioner Koenig noted the integration of the proposal with the site and adjacent properties and the evolution of the design throughout the process and thanked staff and the applicant for working out conditions related to architectural details,

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including the condition regarding the depth of the glass to the wall surface at the midrise portion of the building.

Commissioner McMahon noted that the site was well-designed with the future power plant redevelopment in mind, and that the proposal helps to realize the OTN SAP. Chair Lyman noted that the placement of the highest portion of the building at the rear of site was successful.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Wasowski, and seconded by Vice Chairman Macek, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Rezoning #2018-0006, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0. On a motion by Commissioner Wasowski, and seconded by Vice Chairman Macek, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Development Special Use Permit #2017-0025 and Transportation Management Plan Special Use Permit #2018-0078, as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 6-1, with Commissioner Brown voting against.

**Reason:** The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis and with the recommended changes to the conditions as shown below:

### **Condition #14(d)(ii)**

The setback of glass from the face of the building shall be a minimum of 24-to-8 inches. (P&Z)

### **Condition #14(e)**

The setback of glass for the brick shoulders and corner element from the face of the building shall be a minimum of 4-to-8 inches. (P&Z)

### **Condition #67 (New condition)**

Provide a Building Monitoring Plan, to include a plan for addressing damage to adjacent property, for adjacent and nearby structures that is approved by the Director of T&ES to detect building movement, settlement, and/or damage directly or indirectly attributed to the excavation or construction activities. The Building Monitoring Plan shall include a baseline survey prior to commencement of construction and a post-construction survey, if requested by the building owner. All properties adjacent to the site shall be afforded the opportunity to participate in the pre- and post-construction surveys. (T&ES)(PC)

### **Condition #68 (Formerly Condition 67)**

The sewer connection fee must be paid prior to release of the site plan, unless the timing of the payment is changed by the City.\* (T&ES)

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**Condition #78 (formerly Condition 77)**

No transformer and switch gears shall be located in the public right-of-way. The applicant may relocate existing switch gears which serve off-site properties to the nearest off-site utility pole. (T&ES)

7. Encroachment #2018-0013

901 and 901 A North Fairfax Street

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for an encroachment into the public right-of-way on Montgomery Street and N. Lee Street (Mount Vernon Trail) for parking garage vents; zoned: CRMU-X/Commercial Residential Mixed-use (Old Town North).

Applicant: CP Alexandria Owner LLC., represented by Kenneth W. Wire, attorney

Michael Swidrak (P&Z), Robert Kerns (P&Z), and Brian Dofflemeyer (T&ES) presented the case and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

**Speakers:**

N/A

**Discussion:**

Commissioner Brown asked if the existing garage wall on the Crowne Plaza property would remain. Ken Wire, representing the applicant, stated that the garage walls that are located at the property line will remain with the site redevelopment, and the garage vents are proposed to be located outside of the property line due to the location of the existing garage walls.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chairman Macek, and seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Encroachment #2018-0013, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

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

**MINUTES:**

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11. Consideration of the minutes from the December 4, 2018 Planning Commission meeting.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chairman Macek, seconded by Commissioner McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of December 4, 2018, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

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12. Consideration of the minutes from the December 6, 2018 Planning Commission meeting.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chairman Macek, seconded by Commissioner McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of December 6, 2018, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

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13. Adjournment

The Planning Commission Public Hearing was adjourned at 9:56 p.m.