

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 25, 2019

TO: CHAIR MACEK AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: KARL MORITZ, DIRECTOR; DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

SUBJECT: DSUP#2018-0028 – WMATA OFFICE BUILDING, PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

ISSUE:

The staff report for the subject project was published on Friday, June 14 for the June 25th Planning Commission hearing. Once the report was published, staff was alerted to two issues that we wanted to clarify with the Planning Commission ahead of the public hearing.

Open Space Contribution

As discussed in the staff report, the applicant has agreed to allow public use of an area under the elevated yellow line tracks between Mill Road and Eisenhower Avenue. While the staff report indicated that this would be an easement, this area would not be a recorded easement but an agreement between the City and WMATA for public access, in accordance with Federal regulations. To clarify this point, staff is recommending a revision to CDD Condition #145 as follows:

- 145. NEW CONDITION:** The applicant will provide public access for open space purposes on parcels identified as 072.04-03-08 and 072.04-03-12. The public access will be provided ~~as an easement or other comparable form of public access~~ through an agreement with the City consistent with Federal regulations, including but not limited to FTA Circular 5010.1I, to be mutually agreed upon by the City and WMATA and will be approved and provided prior to the release of certificate of occupancy permit for the office building.

The public access ~~easement~~ agreement will be for use of passive and/or active open space, entertainment and/or comparable uses for use by the public. The City and/or designee party will be responsible for the design, construction and maintenance of the open space improvements on the designated parcels. The design and construction of the open space will be reviewed by WMATA and will be subject to all applicable WMATA standards and requirements. (P&Z, RPCA)

Application of Open Space Contribution

In addition to clarifying the agreement between WMATA and City for public use of the two parcels, staff would also like to clarify the application of this contribution to open space. As the requested application includes a rezoning of the property to allow for increased density and height on the property, allowing the City public access rights to the property in this particular case as an in-lieu contribution fulfills the open space contribution requirement. Due to the importance of these access rights for activation of underutilized space for passive and/or active open space, entertainment, and other uses for the public in the Eisenhower East area, staff has agreed to allow this contribution to apply for the proposed new office building and any future development of the site.

Parking Section of the Staff Report

On page 16, section H of the staff report, discusses the parking associated with the proposed office building project. The first paragraph in this section currently ends as an incomplete sentence. For clarification, this sentence should read:

Given the amount of parking provided within the proposed building (184 spaces) and the site's proximity to a Metro station, staff **believes the proposed surface parking lot could be removed or significantly reduced.**

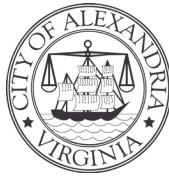
STAFF:

Karl Moritz; Director, Department of Planning & Zoning

Robert Kerns, AICP; Development Division Chief, Department of Planning & Zoning

Dirk H. Geratz, AICP; Principal Planner, Department of Planning & Zoning

Abigail Harwell; Urban Planner III, Department of Planning & Zoning



CARLYLE/EISENHOWER EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

DATE: June 25, 2019

TO: Alexandria Planning Commission and Alexandria City Council

FROM: Carlyle/Eisenhower East Design Review Board (Tom Canfield, Roger Lewis, Councilwoman Redella Pepper, and Lee Quill)

SUBJECT: DSUP 2018-00028 – WMATA Office Building – Block 15A

Dear Planning Commissioners, Mayor and City Council:

The Carlyle / Eisenhower East Design Review Board (DRB) serves in an advisory capacity to the City Council and Planning Commission on the design of projects within the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (EESAP) boundaries. In that role, the new WMATA Office Building, proposed within Block 15 on Mill Road within the Eisenhower East area, was discussed at the DRB meetings in April and Jun 2019.

The DRB first met with this applicant on April 25, 2019 at a work session to review the basic concepts of the project. As this was more of a conceptual review and discussion of the applicant's intent, the DRB provided feedback and general direction on the design, including general assent to the mass, height and design direction. The DRB was encouraged by the applicant's ideas and requested the team to come back with a more developed building design

At a second DRB work session, on June 13, 2019, an evolved proposed office building was presented for discussion. The building's mass/form/height was reevaluated along with new information and considerable effort that had been incorporated into the building's design. The applicant presented detailed plans, elevations and perspectives, along with a three-dimensional model and complete material and finish samples. Based upon the refined design, the DRB discussed with the applicant the building program and use, urban design and site plan solution, and basic massing strategy, including a potential second building on the western portion of the proposed Block 15A. Based on what was presented, the DRB reaffirmed their findings from the April review, that WMATA and their design team have come up with a successful and creative solution.

The consensus of the DRB was that the design for this new WMATA office building has progressed sufficiently and supports the project as presented to be taken to Planning Commission and City Council for approval. The DRB generally likes many of the architectural design attributes of the building, and future reviews would work on the refinement of the architecture.

It is the DRB's understanding that staff is recommending a condition of approval of the project that would allow the DRB to work with the applicant through the design review process following the City Council approval. If the City Council approves the project with staff's recommended conditions and based upon the design drawings presented at the July 9, 2019 public hearing, the final approval of the architecture will be made by DRB in a subsequent meeting or meetings. This alternative review process of the DRB will allow time for the applicant to refine the design and materials further, as well as to respond to the more detailed comments from the DRB.

The members of the DRB look forward to the further review and final approval of this exciting and important addition to the Eisenhower East neighborhood; it is a high-quality design which we believe will only become better through this process.

June 24, 2019

Via Email

Chairman Nathan Macek and Members
Alexandria Planning Commission
Room 2100
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

**Re: Master Plan Amendment #2019-0002; Rezoning #2019-003; CDD
Concept Plan #2019-0003; Development Special Use Permit
#2018-0028; and TMP Special Use Permit #2019-0033;
WMATA Office Building**

Dear Chairman Macek and Members of the Planning Commission:

I am writing on behalf of Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority ("WMATA") in support of the applications listed above to permit the development of WMATA's new Virginia headquarters within the City of Alexandria. We appreciate the diligent efforts of the city staff to move this forward and to consider our comments, and while both WMATA and city staff were able to come to amicable agreements on a variety of issues, there remain several outstanding concerns which WMATA has with the conditions as proposed. Accordingly, we respectfully request that you consider the following list of revisions to the conditions as proposed in the Staff Report:

DSUP Conditions (DSP #2018-0028)

Section A. Site Plan

3. Prior to the Final Site Plan, the applicant shall coordinate with the city to develop a mutually acceptable proposal to provide, to the extent permissible under applicable law, a perpetual public access easement for the portion of the drive aisle on the eastern portion of the site to allow vehicular access for future development of city owned property. The proposal shall be generally consistent with the attached Exhibit A.

Justification – WMATA and city staff have worked out the general framework for a mutually acceptable proposal for sharing a portion of site access at the easternmost curb cut of the WMATA

site. Further refinement is required to finalize all necessary details, and can be achieved prior to Final Site Plan.

Section F. Contributions

90. — ~~Contribute \$60,000.00 to the City towards Capital Bikeshare prior to Final Site Plan release. All checks shall be made payable to the City of Alexandria and submitted to the Department of P&Z with a cover letter citing the project name, contribution amount, and the condition being fulfilled. (T&ES) Condition removed.~~

Justification – WMATA should not be required to make “developer contributions” for Capital Bikeshare because it is a public authority with the single purpose of providing regional transit facilities. Spending WMATA capital funds on bikeshare is inconsistent with WMATA commitments to its funding partners to spend these limited funds on critical safety and state of good repair work needed to restore the system, and associated WMATA transit facilities and related support facilities such as administrative offices.

91. — ~~A voluntary contribution of \$2.00 per gross square feet (per the final site plan) to the Housing Trust Fund would be consistent with the conclusions of the Developer’s Housing Contribution Work Group accepted by The Alexandria City Council in December 2013. (Housing)*** Condition removed.~~

Justification – WMATA should not be required to make a “voluntary contribution” for affordable housing because it is a public authority with the single purpose of providing regional transit facilities. Spending WMATA capital funds on affordable housing is inconsistent with the WMATA Compact and the Authority’s commitments to its funding partners to spend these limited funds on critical safety and state of good repair work needed to restore the system, and associated WMATA transit facilities and related support facilities such as administrative offices. WMATA is funded by the jurisdictions, which means that any “voluntary contribution” for affordable housing must come from the jurisdictions, including the City of Alexandria.

Furthermore, the adopted City of Alexandria Procedures Regarding Affordable Housing Contributions excludes from contributions “public parks and playgrounds; public and private schools; preschools within a church or school building; non-commercial facilities (including such ones as recreational facilities and community centers designed to serve a neighborhood or other such uses as approved by the City).” The following buildings occupied by public agencies have been approved since adoption of the policy without requiring affordable housing contributions:

- *Alexandria Sanitation Authority Administrative Office*
- *National Science Foundation Headquarters*
- *Alexandria Police Headquarters*
- *City Storage Facility (S. Quaker Lane)*

CDD Conditions (CDD #2019-0003)

Section O. New Condition: Block 15A (DSUP # 2018-0028)

145. NEW CONDITION: The applicant will provide public access for open space purposes on parcels identified as 072.04-03-08 and 072.04-03-12. The public access will be provided ~~as an easement or other comparable~~ through an agreement with the City consistent with Federal regulations, including but not limited to FTA Circular 5010.1E, to be form of public access mutually agreed upon by the City and WMATA and will be approved and provided prior to the release of certificate of occupancy permit for the office building.

The public access ~~easement~~ will be for use of passive and/or active open space, entertainment and/or comparable uses for use by the public. The City and/or designee party will be responsible for the design, construction and maintenance of the open space improvements on the designated parcels. The design and construction of the open space will be reviewed by WMATA and will be subject to all applicable WMATA standards and requirements. (P&Z, RPCA)

Justification – WMATA is subject to certain restrictions on the alienation of property rights in its various properties, including the designated parcels in Condition 145. WMATA cannot offer a completely irrevocable interest for use of the designated parcels in part due to requirements of FTA Circular 5010.1E. WMATA and Staff have previously agreed upon this revised language for this Condition 145, however it was inadvertently not captured in the update of the Staff Report that was published for public consideration.

Thank you for your consideration of these revisions.

Sincerely,



Jonathan P. Rak

cc: Karl Moritz
Jeff Farner

Exhibit A



2395 MILL ROAD OFFICE BUILDING
GROUND FLOOR PLAN - OPTION 1