

Docket Item #14
Planning Commission Public Hearing
February 4, 2020

Consideration of approval of the Planning Commission minutes of the Public Hearing meeting of February 4, 2020.

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – FEBRUARY 4, 2020

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

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION

February 4, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers

Alexandria, Virginia

Members Present:

Nathan Macek, Chair
David Brown
John Goebel
Stephen Koenig
Mindy Lyle
Melissa McMahan

Members Absent:

Maria Wasowski, Vice-Chair

Staff Present:

Karl W. Moritz	Department of Planning & Zoning
Nancy Williams	Department of Planning & Zoning
Anh Vu	Department of Planning & Zoning
Christina Zechman-Brown	Office of the City Attorney
Ann Horowitz	Department of Planning & Zoning
Max Ewart	Department of Planning & Zoning
Tony LaColla	Department of Planning & Zoning
Robert Kerns	Department of Planning & Zoning
Jeffrey Farner	Department of Planning & Zoning
Jose Ayala	Department of Planning & Zoning
Carrie Beach	Department of Planning & Zoning
Nathan Randall	Department of Planning & Zoning
Al Cox	Department of Planning & Zoning
Radhika Mohan	Department of Planning & Zoning
Catherine Miliaras	Department of Planning & Zoning
Audrey Davis	Office of Historic Alexandria
Gretchen Bulova	Office of Historic Alexandria
Sam Shelby	Department of Planning & Zoning
Shaun Smith	Department of Planning & Zoning
Femi Adhlakun	Department of Planning & Zoning
Brian Dofflemyer	Transportation & Environmental Services
Megan Oleynik	Transportation & Environmental Services
Tamara Jovovic	Office of Housing
Tom Canfield	Department of Planning & Zoning

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1. **Call to Order.**

NOTATION: Items are listed in the order discussed by the Planning Commission, which differs from the docket order, due to deferral requests and the pulling of an item from the Consent Calendar.

The Planning Commission Public Hearing was called to order at 7:02 p.m. Vice Chair Wasowski was excused. All other members were present at the Call to Order.

Chair Macek asked whether there were any changes to the docket. The Planning Commission Clerk responded indicating that two deferral requests were received. Staff is requesting a deferral for Item #11, Popeye’s Special Use Permit Review, and the applicant is requesting a deferral for Item #13, Newport Village Resource Protection Area (RPA) Exception Request. The Chair noted the deferral requests.

As described immediately below, the Planning Commission voted to accept deferral requests for Items #11 and #13.

11. Special Use Permit #2010-00021
3402 Mount Vernon Avenue - Popeye’s Special Use Permit Review
Public Hearing and consideration of suspension or revocation of Special Use Permit #2010-00021; zoned: CG/Commercial general.
Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to defer Special Use Permit #2010-00021. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, with Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

13. Newport Village Resource Protection Area (RPA) Exception Request
4898 West Braddock Road
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for an exception, pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Section 13-119, to allow a new encroachment of up to 4,791 square feet of impervious surface in a Resource Protection Area (RPA) in connection with the future redevelopment of a multifamily residential property; zoned: RA/Multifamily.
Applicant: UDR Newport Village LLC, represented by Ken Wire, attorney

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to defer the Newport Village Resource Protection Area (RPA) Exception Request. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, with Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

CONSENT CALENDAR:

As described immediately below, Item #4 was removed from the Consent Calendar.

2. Special Use Permit #2019-00093
109 South Alfred Street - Mount Purrnon Cat Cafe
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit to operate a restaurant and animal care facility with overnight accommodation; zoned: CD/Commercial downtown.
Applicant: Kristin Cowan

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2019-00093, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, with Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

3. Encroachment #2019-00007
219 King Street - Two Nineteen Restaurant Encroachment
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for an Encroachment into the public right-of-way at the rear of the restaurant for the enclosure of a trash storage area, restaurant equipment and stairs; zoned: KR/King Street urban retail.
Applicant: Yupaporn Charoentra, represented by Paul Solon, architect

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Encroachment #2019-00007, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, with Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

4. Special Use Permit #2019-00104
1022 Pendleton Street and 521 North Henry Street – Rooming House
Public Hearing and consideration of a Special Use Permit request for a five-year review and for a change of ownership of a rooming house; zoned: CSL/Commercial service low.
Applicant: Janice Lee Howard

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

Speakers:

Lori Welsh, 511 North Henry Street, spoke in support of the request but voiced concern about the condition of the building and fence.

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Lilian Jackline of BLL Construction, the applicant’s contractor, confirmed that the applicant is developing renovation plans and will begin exploring financing options if the Special Use Permit is approved.

Chair Macek closed the Public Hearing.

Discussion:

Chair Macek confirmed with staff that Condition #3 would address the maintenance concerns of the resident about the exterior of the structure. Staff added that the applicant had recently stabilized the fence, which complies with Code requirements, and the applicant plans to improve the property if the Special Use Permit (SUP) is approved. The Chair expressed support for the application indicating it contributes to affordable housing options in the City.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: This item was removed from consent. On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2019-00104, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, with Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

Reason:

The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

NEW BUSINESS:

5. Planning Commission Statement of Recognition of William “Al” Cox

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to present William "Al" Cox with a Statement of Recognition. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, with Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

Speakers:

Chair Macek, in addition to presenting the Statement of Recognition to Al Cox on behalf of the Planning Commission, added that the work which the Planning Commission and City have accomplished over the years has been made better due to Al Cox’s involvement, whether the work was for the Waterfront, Old Town or the City as a whole.

Al Cox stated that he was sorry that Vice Chair Maria Wasowski could not be present tonight because he worked with her on many projects over the past 20 years including the Mount Vernon Plan, Old Town North Plan and more. He especially added that the commitment demonstrated by each member of the Planning Commission, as volunteers

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and as citizen architects, is to be recognized, and each member should know that it is appreciated. He ended with a thank you.

6. Informational Item: Small Business Practical Updates
Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

Ann Horowitz (P&Z) and Tony LaColla (P&Z) gave the Planning Commission an update on the proposed Small Business Practical Updates.

Speakers:
N/A

The Chair closed the Public Hearing.

Discussion:

Chair Macek asked staff how many people attended the various community meetings which were held in relation to this item. Staff responded that the Del Ray Land Use Committee meeting was to take place the following week on February 11 but, to-date, there were three community meetings. Two meetings were held at both Patrick Henry Recreation Center and Charles Houston Recreation Center to seek input from residents both on the West and East ends of the City respectively. Additionally, a meeting was held with the Alexandria Federation of Community Associations. Also, staff indicated that five meetings were held with the business community. Staff said there was an average attendance of seven people at the two community meetings and approximately 20 people were in attendance at the Federation meeting. The meetings with Alexandria's business communities totaled approximately 70 people.

Chair Macek asked if staff anticipates making any changes to the recommendations they will bring forward based on feedback they have received. Staff responded that over the course of the following weeks, internal meetings will be held to determine to what extent the recommendations will be altered based on feedback received. Chair Macek then cautioned that staff should be careful in crafting their recommendations to make sure that they are responding to comments received from the public, but, simultaneously, should be realistic in terms of what can be incorporated as part of these practical updates.

Commissioner Lyle then voiced her agreement in regard to Chair Macek's statements. She also inquired as to whether, in regard to the community meetings held with the residents, there were any businesspeople in attendance. Staff confirmed that there were.

Commissioner McMahon then inquired of staff why certain uses, based on resident comments, were being considered to be permitted via an administrative process as opposed to being permitted uses. Staff responded that, in regard to

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Amusement/Entertainment uses and Health and Athletic Club uses, specifically, there was a general concern regarding potential noise impacts and for Convenience Store uses there were concerns with loitering, traffic and head lights, and sometimes criminal activities. Chair Macek asked how pervasive a sentiment this was across all the meetings. Staff responded that the concern was not articulated by all individuals in attendance, but was a re-occurring theme across the various meetings.

Chair Macek asked if staff heard these comments from one person or from all residents at the community meetings. Staff indicated that the comments were not from every resident, but they were heard at these community meetings and, also, at the Federation meeting. Chair Macek indicated that the presentation may be a little premature as he would like to have the benefit of staff's analysis of community input and to use that analysis to craft a proposal that takes into account community input within the context of a balanced perspective.

Commissioner Brown commented that he would be glad to provide feedback on the text amendment once staff has made the draft language concrete.

Commissioner McMahon commented that whether a use is approved by right or by an administrative process, the operators of that use would still need to work with their neighbors to make their use compatible within the context of its surrounding neighborhood. She explained that this notion suggests an opportunity for civic associations to bring more businesses to the table regarding their conversations on what "works" for the community as a whole, thereby strengthening relationship management among neighbors directly.

7. Informational Item: Arlandria and Del Ray Plans Update Fall Engagement
Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

Radhika Mohan (P&Z) and Carrie Beach (P&Z) gave the Planning Commission an update on the Arlandria and Del Ray Plans Fall Engagement process.

Speakers:
N/A

Presentation:
Staff indicated that there have been a number of outreach activities for the Arlandria/Del Ray planning effort that consisted of: (1) One on One meetings; (2) Mobile Pop Ups; and (3) a Questionnaire. It was stated that the Questionnaire drew 850 responses and some of the key themes from those responding in Spanish were: (1) Housing/Affordability; (2) Increase in Minimum Wage and (3) Pedestrian Safety. From those responding in English, some of the key themes were: (1) Having Restaurants and Stores and (2)

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Pedestrian Safety. Across both, residents expressed a love for their community in that it is: (1) Walkable, (2) Provides a Small Town feel; and (3) is Close to Job Centers. They also generally expressed a desire to see the character of the communities maintained with any future development. Additionally, concern was expressed about rising rents and deteriorating housing conditions. Staff indicated that while some themes may be outside of a land use plan, P&Z will be working with other departments to help address those. Staff added that in terms of next steps: (1) In spring and fall of 2020 the focus is on Housing in Arlandria; (2) In spring of 2021, the focus is on Housing in Del Ray and Retail; (3) In spring and summer of 2021, the focus is on Plan Recommendations and (4) In summer and fall of 2021, the focus is on a Final Draft Plan.

Discussion:

After a video reflecting outreach to the community, Chair Macek indicated that staff should be commended on a great job in choosing the locations of meetings and indicated that the outreach for this Plan Update has been strong to-date. He underscored how important civic engagement is in this community to ensure everyone has a voice in the planning process.

8. Discussion Item: Draft FY 2021 Long Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program
Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

Carrie Beach (P&Z), Nancy Williams (P&Z), Jack Browand (RPCA), and Tamara Jovic (Office of Housing) gave the Planning Commission an update on the Draft FY 2021 Long Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program.

Presentation:

Staff indicated that this presentation is to provide an informational update for the Planning Commission on where staff is in the development of the FY 2021 Long Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program (LRPIWP), and staff will be back in the spring for Planning Commission action after further outreach. In that regard, staff indicated that P&Z began its work last fall on the LRPIWP by starting to engage other departments and the community into the process. For FY 2021, examples of work started in FY 2020 will continue or get underway, including the North Potomac Yard Plan to incorporate Virginia Tech; the Arlandria/Del Ray Plan Update; the Duke Street East Plan will launch in Spring 2021; the Pocket Park Plan and Urban Forestry Master Plan will continue and the Open Space Master Plan will follow those efforts. Additionally, the Alexandria Mobility Plan effort will continue (aka the Transportation Plan). Staff also provided an overview of the Housing and Affordability Initiatives. The Planning Commission was reminded of the initiatives which they saw back in October 2019 related to the Washington Metropolitan Council of Government's Housing Production and Affordability Initiative for the Region, with each jurisdiction assuming responsibility for sharing production and affordability goals over the next ten years. As stated in October,

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in order to meet Alexandria's share of the goals, staff anticipates bringing a draft Housing Prioritization Plan to the Planning Commission and to the City Council in March 2020. One element that staff expressed interest in highlighting tonight as part of the FY 2021 LRPIWP is the proposed Zoning for Housing Initiative. To provide the Planning Commission with information about the proposed Zoning for Housing Initiative, in particular, staff provided a brief description of four proposed Zoning for Housing Initiative components, including: (1) Inclusionary Zoning; (2) Accessory Dwelling Units; (3) the Alexandria Housing & Redevelopment Authority's Master Plan and (4) an Enhanced Tenant and Relocation Policy.

Staff added that in terms of next steps, February and March 2020 will be utilized for further outreach and then it is anticipated that the LRPIWP will come back for the Planning Commission's endorsement in May.

Discussion:

Commissioner Brown inquired about the Inclusionary Zoning Initiative and whether the City is considering advocating for changes in state law to enhance such an initiative. Staff responded that once an Inclusionary Zoning proposal is developed, with community input and City consensus, the City can then approach the state legislature for support that it will need to implement an Inclusionary Housing policy. It is likely that an opportunity to do that will be the 2021 Session of the State Legislature.

Chair Macek noted that the changes from the previous year's Work Program presented as part of the draft FY 2021 Work Program are consistent with where pressures are across the City, for example, Duke Street East, Arlandria/Del Ray and North Potomac Yard. That in addition to the housing component will help us strengthen policies for the future.

Commissioner McMahon complimented staff on their work on this Work Program and noted how difficult it can be to capture in a Work Program like this with such nuanced information related to both land use and transportation planning as well as public and private development initiatives.

Commissioner Koenig then voiced his agreement with Commissioner McMahon's statements. He stated that the Joint City Schools Facilities Master Plan is progressing from the conceptual phase to the civic engagement phase and stressed the importance of this specific Master Plan.

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9. City Charter Section 9.06 Case #2019-00004
1315 Duke Street and 225A South Payne Street
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for Planning Commission to review whether the proposed purchase of property by the City of Alexandria is consistent with the City of Alexandria Master Plan pursuant to Section 9.06 of the City Charter.
Applicant: City of Alexandria

Catherine Miliaras (P&Z), Audrey Davis (Office of Historic Alexandria), and Gretchen Bulova (Office of Historic Alexandria) presented the case and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Presentation:

Staff provided an overview of the historical significance of these properties, namely 1315 Duke Street (Freedom House) and 225A S. Payne Street (Parking Parcel), and how the City's proposal to purchase of these properties as a public museum is consistent with the City's Master Plan. The property served the domestic slave market from 1821 to 1861 and received National Historic Landmark Designation in 1978. It is owned by the Urban League and the City is seeking to purchase it as part of the City's museum portfolio.

Speakers:

N/A

The Chair closed the Public Hearing.

Discussion:

Chair Macek noted that this building is one of the most fitting buildings to add to the City's portfolio of museums and it is important to commemorate what occurred on this site. He appreciated that the City was able to provide the resources to acquire it.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to find the proposed sale of property consistent with the City of Alexandria Master Plan pursuant to Section 9.06 of the City Charter. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, with Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

Reason:

The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

10. Special Use Permit #2019-00094
3202 Old Dominion Boulevard - Substandard Lot
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit for the development of a single-family dwelling on a developed substandard lot; zoned: R-8/Single-family

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Applicant: Karina Vera-Lopez, represented by Frank Durkin, designer

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

Speakers:

Karina Vera-Lopez, applicant, presented her case and answered questions from the Planning Commission. She mentioned the letter, submitted by the North Ridge Citizens' Association, contained incorrect information regarding the proposed dwelling's height. She also felt that neighbors' concerns about the dwelling being occupied by more than one family could be racially motivated or based on cultural stereotypes. Ms. Vera-Lopez emphasized how much she and her designer had worked with staff to design a dwelling that would be compatible with the neighborhood.

Christopher Gay, 3201 Old Dominion Boulevard, expressed concerns about the proposed dwelling's bulk and height, finding both to be incompatible with the neighboring dwellings. Mr. Gay was also concerned about landscaping, particularly removal of the Southern Magnolia at the front of the property. He also clarified that his statement regarding the potential use of the dwelling's basement as a secondary dwelling unit was not meant to be racially or culturally insensitive. Mr. Gay recognized and appreciated the applicant's significant changes from the previous design.

Lyn Gubser, representing North Ridge Citizens' Association, spoke in opposition to the request, highlighting bulk and height-related concerns. He felt that the dwelling would be incompatible with the neighboring dwellings. He was also concerned about loss of landscaping, including the Southern Magnolia mentioned by another speaker.

Frank Durkin, representing the applicant, spoke in support of the request and answered questions from the Planning Commission. Mr. Durkin highlighted the challenges presented by the existing dwelling's configuration and the property's topography.

Chair Macek closed the Public Hearing.

Discussion:

Commissioner Brown asked if there was a difference between average pre-construction and finished grades along the front elevation. Staff confirmed that there would be no change between average pre-construction and finished grades. Commissioner Brown felt that the height measurement of the front-facing cross gables from average pre-construction grade did not accurately represent the visible height of the dwelling. He also confirmed with staff the front yard setbacks of the two adjacent dwellings at 3200 and 3204 Old Dominion Boulevard and asked for clarification regarding the front yard of the proposed dwelling. Commissioner Brown recognized the applicant's responsiveness to

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staff's previous recommendation but was disappointed that she did not engage further with North Ridge Citizens' Association. He spoke in opposition to the request, finding the proposal incompatible with the surrounding dwellings in terms of bulk, height and front setback.

Chair Macek spoke in support of the request and asked staff to confirm that the proposed dwelling's threshold height would be lower than that of the existing dwelling. Staff confirmed this statement. He also asked staff to clarify that the proposal would not require the Special Use Permit (SUP) review process if not for the substandard nature of the lot. Staff confirmed that the applicant had not requested modifications to setbacks or height and that the proposal complied with all zoning requirements. Chair Macek also asked staff to confirm that the Zoning Ordinance regulates floor area based on net rather than gross square footage measurements. Staff replied that the Zoning Ordinance just sets maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) based on net square footage measurements.

Commissioner McMahon found that the applicant's revised design was compatible with the neighboring dwellings. She also found that the revised design has features which create depth and variation that effectively minimize the perceived height and bulk. She commended the efforts by the applicant, staff and neighbors on their contributions to the evolution of the proposal.

Commissioners Lyle and Goebel echoed Commissioner McMahon's statements and expressed support for the proposal. Commissioner Goebel commended the applicant and designer for the difficult task of revising the application quickly and for presenting an approachable and balanced design.

Commissioner Koenig expressed support for the proposal indicating it reflected the spirit of the neighborhood and the infill regulations. He confirmed that the block face height was only relevant due to the SUP compatibility requirements and recognized that the applicant could have chosen a by-right approach which would have allowed for a taller home. He also stated that gross square footage should not be considered when evaluating bulk and that net FAR is the metric that accurately represents it.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2019-00094, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-1, with Commissioner Brown voting against and Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

Reason:

The Planning Commission agreed with staff analysis.

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12. Text Amendment #2019-00008

Wireless Facilities

(A) Initiation of a Text Amendment; and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of a Text Amendment to Sections 6-403 and 7-1200 of the Zoning Ordinance to amend provisions relating to telecommunications and wireless facility regulations.

Staff: Shaun Smith, City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

Speakers:

N/A

Discussion:

The Chair inquired as to whether the Planning Commission required a staff presentation on this item. No Planning Commission member indicated a need for a presentation on this item. The Chair then inquired as to whether there were any questions from the Planning Commission on this item. No Planning Commission member had any questions.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, and seconded by Commissioner Goebel, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Text Amendment #2019-00008. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Commissioner Koenig temporarily absent and Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, and seconded by Commissioner Goebel, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Text Amendment #2019-00008, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Commissioner Koenig temporarily out of the room and Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

Reason:

The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

14. Development Special Use Permit #2019-00007

Special Use Permit #2019-00109

Special Use Permit #2019-00110

Transportation Management Plan Special Use Permit #2019-00108

1112 First Street - Aspire Alexandria

Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Development Special Use Permit and Preliminary Site Plan to construct an age-restricted six-story multifamily building, including Special Use Permits to allow a restaurant use, for a parking reduction for both proposed uses and loading, for an increase in the floor area ratio up to 2.5, for an increase in density for the provision of affordable housing pursuant to Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance, and for a transportation management plan; and a modification of the open space requirement; zoned: CRMU-H/Commercial residential mixed use (high).

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Applicant: BRG Tony's Gulf, LLC, represented by M. Catharine Puskar, attorney

Karl Moritz (P&Z), Catherine Miliaras (P&Z), Femi Adedokun (P&Z), Megan Oleynik (T&ES), and Brian Dofflemeyer (T&ES) presented the case and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Cathy Puskar, attorney for the applicant, spoke in support of the project. She noted that the project was the first age-restricted independent building in the City. She further stated that nine units would be affordable given that the applicant was using Bonus Density for the provision of affordable housing. She further explained that the use involved a senior housing services payment which is a monthly payment for various services made available to assist residents. The monthly payment includes shuttle services (grocery store runs and transportation to medical appointments), a meal package and a range of other services and social activities, similar to those offered at the applicant's facility in Richmond.

Chair Macek closed the Public Hearing.

Discussion:

Commissioner McMahon requested clarification on the choice of an all-brick sidewalk in the proposed design. She also asked if there was anything in the process that could account for special exceptions to all-brick sidewalks for certain facilities, especially those residential buildings designed for people who are older and may be less firm on their feet, but, would still want to walk around the neighborhood. She further expanded on the hazards with brick sidewalks associated with the freeze/thaw cycle, noting that brick sidewalks become slippery faster than concrete sidewalks and are harder to maintain when icy.

Commissioner Lyle asked for clarification on the process of amending the Master Plan to remove the requirement for brick sidewalks. Department of Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Director Moritz explained that the Planning Commission has the discretion to deviate from a requirement on a project if particular circumstances warrant such a deviation and the overall goals and objectives of the Master Plan are being achieved. Director Moritz noted that to change a requirement in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan would require a Master Plan Amendment. Commissioner Lyle agreed with the safety concerns raised by Commissioner McMahon, stating that the more brick sidewalks that are used, the greater the danger it poses to older residents, families and children. She noted that the bricks tend to pop up over time, creating tripping hazards for pedestrians of all ages.

Chair Macek concurred with Commissioners McMahon and Lyle, noting that S. Washington Street's brick sidewalks were problematic during the first two winters the new streetscape was installed. He recounted that he himself had fallen on the sidewalk and such

injuries may be more severe for older people. He further stated that the present case warrants a special exception to recommend a different sidewalk treatment adjacent to the subject site due to the age-restricted nature of this building. He asked about the plans for streetlight illumination on the N. Fayette Street section adjacent to the subject site stating that the street is currently a dark street. Brian Dofflemyer, the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES), noted that as part of the Final Site Plan review, the applicant will be required to submit a photometric study to ensure that there are adequate light levels provided with the new streetlights.

Commissioner Brown asked staff to clarify if the applicant was utilizing the entire below-grade floor for parking and if staff thought that the 75 parking spaces proposed would be enough since the minimum parking requirement for a multifamily building is 119 spaces. Staff responded that the applicant intended to utilize the entire below-grade area for one floor of parking and that the proposed amount of parking is consistent with what the Institute of Traffic Engineers (ITE) Parking Generation Manual would require for a senior housing facility. Additionally, while this building does not fall under the definition of a Continuum of Care Facility, staff finds that the parking needs would be similar, and this project meets the parking requirement if it were classified as a Continuum of Care Facility. Commissioner Brown inquired as to what retail services were coming for the projects to the north that have been approved. He added that he hoped the applicant would provide a dedicated shuttle service for the 77-80 year old residents who would not drive nor have access to parking so that such residents are able to access grocery stores and other needs in Old Town North and Old Town, since the subject site is several blocks from any grocery store of any substantial size.

Commissioner McMahon noted that it would be great if the shuttle service to grocery stores could also be offered to the future residents at the Carpenter's Center site, if feasible. The applicant responded that they would discuss the shuttle and transportation services offered during their comments. Commissioner Brown also inquired about how the restaurant was integrated within the project, and it was noted that residents would have a service package that would include at least one meal a day with the option to have three meals a day. The restaurant would also be open to the public.

Commissioners McMahon and Lyle both noted that this was an exciting and unique project with many benefits. Chair Macek expressed support for the application, agreeing with earlier stated concerns regarding brick sidewalks. He offered strong support and noted that the proposal brought diversity to the neighborhood in terms of housing types and that it will be an important addition to the neighborhood. He observed that each redevelopment approval in this area brings about the realization of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan in a positive way.

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Staff noted the proposed technical revisions to Conditions #11, #88 and #126 as worked out with the applicant. Staff also provided clarification regarding the estimates for the contributions to the Braddock Open Space Fund and the Braddock Community Amenities Fund and how such contributions are calculated to determine the base gross square footage, in accordance with the approach used for DSUP #2017-0020 at 1200 N. Henry Street.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Development Special Use Permit #2019-00007, Special Use Permit #2019-00109, Special Use Permit #2019-00110, and Transportation Management Plan Special Use Permit #2019-00108, with the following amendments to Condition #11, Condition #37, Condition #88, Condition #126. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, with Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

Condition #11: CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF: The public access easement over the sidewalk and adjacent landscape area along the south property line is to be recorded prior to release of the ~~Final Site Plan~~ Building Permit.**

Condition #37: CONDITION AMENDED BY PLANNING COMMISSION: Provide the following pedestrian improvements to the satisfaction of the Directors of P&Z and T&ES:

- a. Complete all pedestrian improvements prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy permit.
- b. Install curb extensions and ADA accessible ramps at the southeast corner of the intersection with N. Fayette Street and First Street. Provide separate curb ramps for each direction of crossing (i.e., two ramps per corner). Curb ramps shall be perpendicular to the street to minimize crossing distances. Any changes must be approved by the Director of T&ES.
- c. Construct all concrete sidewalks to City standards. The minimum unobstructed width of newly constructed sidewalks shall be 6 feet
- d. All brick sidewalks shall comply with the City's Memoranda to Industry 05-08 and 01-13.
- e. Sidewalks shall be flush across all driveway crossings.
- f. All newly constructed curb ramps in Alexandria shall be concrete with detectable warning and shall conform to current Virginia Department of Transportation standards.
- g. Provide thermoplastic pedestrian crosswalks at all crossings at the proposed development, which must be designed to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES.
- h. All crosswalks shall be standard high-visibility crosswalks [white, thermoplastic ladder crosswalks as shown in the Manual on Uniform Traffic

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Control Devices (MUTCD)] may be required as directed by staff at Final Site Plan. All other crosswalk treatments must be approved by the Director of T&ES.

- i. All below grade utilities placed within a City sidewalk shall be designed in such a manner as to integrate the overall design of the structure with the adjacent paving materials to minimize any potential visible impacts. *** (P&Z) (T&ES)

(New Condition) The all-brick sidewalk shall be replaced with either a concrete or hybrid sidewalk to be determined in coordination with staff. (PC)

Condition #88: CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF: The use must comply with the City's Noise Ordinance. ~~All exterior loudspeakers shall be prohibited.~~ No amplified sounds shall be audible at the property line after 9:00 PM. (T&ES)

Condition #126: CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF: The use must comply with the City's Noise Ordinance. ~~All exterior loudspeakers shall be prohibited.~~ No amplified sounds shall be audible at the property line after 9:00 PM. (T&ES)

Reason:

The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

15. Master Plan Amendment #2019-00004
Eisenhower East Small Area Plan Amendment
(A) Initiation of a Master Plan Amendment; and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of an amendment to the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan Chapter of the Master Plan, to replace the chapter approved in 2003.
Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

NOTATION: Chair Macek stated that Commissioner Goebel recused himself from Item #15.

Jose Ayala (P&Z), Jeff Farner (P&Z), Megan Oleynik (T&ES), and Tamara Jovovic (Office of Housing) presented the case and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Kenneth Wire, land use attorney representing Hoffman Companies, referred members of the Planning Commission to his January 2020 letter. He expressed overall support for the Eisenhower Small Area Plan Update (Plan Update), but with specific recommendations for changes relative to the parking screening requirements. He stated that the Plan Update resolves the 2003 Plan's overly specific design and land use requirements and he praised the increased flexibility and overarching goals of the Plan Update, specifically the

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priority for affordable housing. Mr. Wire stated that the cost to provide both affordable housing and comply with the Plan Update's proposed above-grade parking requirements, may compromise the development of Blocks 11 and 12. He indicated he appreciates the exemptions allowed in recommendation 57 on page 45, but suggested adding "geometry" as one of the allowable reasons for an exemption, which would make projects more feasible.

Adam Peters, of Perseus Development, stated his overall support for the Plan Update, including the increased density close to the Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail Station. He shared project proposals for Blocks 11 and 12 with members of the Planning Commission and staff and described how the Plan Update's above-grade parking screening requirements affect project feasibility on these blocks. Mr. Peters noted that construction costs are extremely high while rents in Eisenhower East are only median. As such, he indicated the current market does not support the cost inherent in the level of architectural parking screening in the Plan Update, affecting his ability to move forward with his proposed development on those blocks. He suggested that the product needs to match the market to move forward.

Lee G. Lyles, LCS Development, said he is partnering with Perseus on a proposal for mid-rise senior housing on Block 11 that would be in high demand in the area based on market studies and more than 30 years' experience developing this product type. He expressed that they may choose to pass on the project if they have to provide underground parking and the other parking requirements as currently proposed in the Plan update.

Steve Smith, Cooper Carry Architects, said that his firm has worked on most blocks in the planning area, and that the irregular block shapes present a challenge to accommodate underground and screened above-grade parking. Because of the challenges, they typically design the building around the parking needs first. Mr. Smith said that screening the parking with "shadow-boxes" is extremely costly and can also be highly energy intensive because venting is needed instead of being open air. He expressed that the goal of the Plan Update should be to create development in a manner that it is economically feasible for current market demand.

M. Catherine Puskar, land use attorney representing Simpson Development and Perseus, praised the overarching goals of the Plan Update, especially the allocation of more density near the Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail station and the addition of affordable housing in the area given the current affordable housing crisis. Ms. Puskar stated that the worst outcome for the Plan Update would be that development would not occur in the area because of its inflexible parking recommendations. She stated that without the projects there will be no affordable housing. She continued that the Plan Update should serve as the guiding vision rather than specifying detailed requirements such as the

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maximum height of above-grade parking, which may ultimately compromise future development in the area.

Daniel Beason, Eisenhower East resident and representative of The Eisenhower Partnership, expressed his support for many Plan Update elements, such as the proposed enhanced pedestrian crossing at the Metrorail Station. He echoed previous speakers' concerns with the Plan Update's parking recommendations, expressing concern that it may inhibit development. Mr. Beason expressed concern that the Plan Update does not have a centralized open space and that the proposed open space under the Metrorail tracks may be dark and noisy. He also stated that he is concerned about traffic issues and the lack of road connections to Duke Street, beyond the proposed enhanced tunnel. Mr. Beason concluded by suggesting that a school for the area would be better located west of Telegraph Road.

Richard Bert, Eisenhower East resident, stated concerns about noise and other factors that would make the proposed open space under the Metrorail line unpleasant. He also suggested that the Plan Update require more open space, and more that is easily accessible to all including families.

Chair Macek closed the Public Hearing.

Discussion:

Commissioner McMahon asked staff to respond to the parking and financial feasibility issues raised by the speakers. Staff stated that the team did a robust financial analysis shared with the property owners that took into consideration affordable housing, parking, and all elements recommended in the Plan Update that may affect the economic viability of projects. Staff said that the analysis showed that what is recommended in the Plan Update generally works. Staff understands that some blocks may have constraints and, for that reason, Plan Update recommendation #57 provides a relief valve for projects that demonstrate they cannot comply with the parking requirements. Staff also mentioned that the proximity of a Metrorail Station, as well as all the other means of mobility in the area, may enable less parking overall. In general, the Plan Update attempts to balance the need for parking with the goals for creating a place, and the Development Review process provides a way for staff and developers to evaluate a proposal and work out an agreement.

Commissioner Lyle asked staff how long ago the economic analysis was done because construction costs have escalated significantly in the last six months. P&Z Director Moritz mentioned it was done mid-fall 2019. She said that many sustainability practitioners indicated that wrapping the above-grade parking adds to the carbon footprint. Commissioner Lyle agreed that proximity to the Metrorail Station may allow less parking to be provided now and/or in the near future. She questioned staff about the

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number of "A" Streets recommended in the Plan Update. Staff mentioned that the goal of "A" streets is to highlight the main and retail street locations of the Plan Update and that they were reduced from the 2003 Plan. Staff added that having underground parking allows more at-grade activities and open space. Commissioner Lyle mentioned that some of the proposed "A" streets have existing above-grade parking garages, contradicting the Plan Update's parking recommendations. She expressed concern with the level of detail in the recommendations and suggested revising it to avoid future small area plan amendments. Staff mentioned that the Plan Update has added significant flexibility compared to the 2003 Plan.

Commissioner McMahon expressed concern about speakers' comments comparing Eisenhower East to Tyson Corner. She stressed that the Plan Update is not aiming for Tysons Corner, but rather creating urban fabric around a finite resource – the Metrorail Station. She also expressed that people leaving the Metrorail Station should encounter a people-oriented place, not many levels of above-grade parking, and emphasized that we should strive for a high standard for Eisenhower's public realm. Commissioner McMahon also expressed concern about a building design process that starts with accommodating cars and parking – not people. She acknowledged comments about traffic concerns in the area but encouraged pushing to move Eisenhower East from a car-centric neighborhood to a more walkable environment by designing it for people first. She articulated that blocks close to the Metrorail Station should be held to a high standard since they are the most prominent location. She noted that we need to push as much parking below grade as possible, which can help achieve more at-grade open space, a human-oriented public realm, and a great neighborhood. Commissioner McMahon expressed support for the Plan Update recommendations as proposed.

Commissioner Koenig expressed appreciation for the proposed Plan Update and its evolution through the planning process. He added that the Metrorail Station is the most prominent location in Eisenhower East and reinforced the idea of holding adjacent blocks to a high standard. Commissioner Koenig appreciated staff's financial feasibility analysis and parking yield studies to determine the appropriate recommendations that allow for higher density and find a way to balance the needs of parking, design, and placemaking challenges. He stated that we shouldn't preemptively refine our vision to compromise what gets delivered. Commissioner Koenig praised Perseus' development on Block 6A and mentioned that while the above-grade parking is done well, he does not believe this type of approach would function on an 85' above-grade parking structure. He stated support for the Plan Update as proposed without modifications.

Commissioner Brown asked the staff to clarify intent of the use of the words "require" relating to past Plan requirements, and "recommend" relating to the Eisenhower East Plan Update (page 44 and 45 of the Plan). Staff clarified that at the small area plan level

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they are recommendations; when addressed at the Coordinated Development District (CDD) level they become requirements.

Chair Macek asked staff to address speakers' comments on traffic, school facilities, and open space. He asked staff to discuss the Mobility Study that was conducted to test the development scenario against the transportation network. Staff described how the study took into account the many different modes of travel in the area, and found that with some suggested mitigation measures, the traffic impacts were found to be manageable at full build-out. Staff also discussed that the study found that a portion of the traffic in the area is regional as opposed to local traffic, and that as local development increases, it will displace some of the regional traffic.

In response to open space comments from the public, staff stated that the Plan Update has a system of interconnected at-grade public open space and planned trail connections to open space beyond the Eisenhower East neighborhoods to the east and west. In addition to the public open space, there will also be private open space, which provides benefits to residents and reduces the load on public spaces. Staff noted that the Plan Update recommends multiple different park typologies, including playgrounds for children.

Chair Macek suggested that the Open Space map should reflect all the existing open space in Carlyle as well as the African American Heritage Memorial Park. Staff responded that they would make the existing open spaces more visible.

Regarding school related questions from the Eisenhower Partnership letter, staff stated that staff worked with Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) to develop student projections based on anticipated development and established student generation rates. Staff added that locating the school within the neighborhood is an important placemaking and community building element and creates an important civic space for the neighborhood. It also allows students to walk to school which reduces buses in the area. Location of the school facility will be determined during the CDD process.

Commissioner Koenig asked staff how the school location will be chosen and established by the CDD, and whether we anticipate ACPS and the City will be programming and examining the sites. Staff responded that during the CDD process there will be coordination among the stakeholders, as was done in North Potomac Yard, in order to identify the right locations for a school in the area.

Commissioner Brown asked staff to respond to the question raised by the Eisenhower Partnership letter regarding cases where the City might request more than 10 percent affordable housing. Staff explained that in these cases, the City would bear the burden of showing how more than 10 percent is financially feasible through a third-party financial analysis.

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Chair Macek expressed that the Plan Update does a good job of balancing both the long-term horizon and current neighborhood needs and builds in the right amount of flexibility. Mr. Macek emphasized the importance of getting the appropriate level of density expected in the planning area, especially adjacent to the Metrorail Station, both for creating a place and to take advantage of the valuable asset represented by the Metrorail Station. He expressed that the City is making an enormous investment to build the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station and to attract development there, while the Eisenhower East Metrorail Station has been taken for granted. Chair Macek expressed concurrence with the Plan Update's vision for creating a place and maximizing the existing Metrorail Station and expressed support for the Plan Update as proposed.

Commissioner Brown agreed that the Plan Update provides adequate flexibility for projects to proceed even when there are constraints, as there are opportunities for evaluation during the CDD and Development Review process. He stated that the Plan Update has a clearly articulated vision and goals and is supportive of the Plan Update.

Commissioner Lyle stated that, on the whole, she believes it is a good Plan Update, but expressed continued concern with some of the detailed parking recommendations. She stated that Eisenhower East is an important economic engine and she is concerned that staff will not be able to be flexible enough during the Development Review process to allow projects to proceed. She concurred about the importance of the blocks near the Metrorail Station and activation of the public realm facing the station. She noted that she supports the recommendation for the convertibility of all above-grade parking, but, indicated that underground parking will never be convertible in the future.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner McMahon, and seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Master Plan Amendment #2019-00004. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Commissioner Goebel recusing himself and Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

On a motion by Commissioner McMahon, and seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to adopt a resolution to recommend approval of Master Plan Amendment #2019-00004, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Commissioner Goebel recusing himself and Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

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16. Public Hearing and consideration of a request for the Planning Commission to adopt a resolution to set its meeting schedule and establish continuation dates for meetings. Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION: On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to adopt the resolution, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, with Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

OTHER BUSINESS:

17. Commissioners' Reports, Comments, and Questions.

Commissioner McMahon reported to the Planning Commission regarding the Boards and Commissions' training she attended and spoke to a few highlights from that training session. She also gave an update on the Alexandria Mobility Plan and conveyed that intensive outreach efforts are currently underway in relation to the Plan and spoke to the recent surveys.

Commissioner Lyle reported that, in relation to the new Douglas MacArthur School, the co-location of housing at the site is off the table, but other co-location opportunities are still being explored. She also reported that City Council voted to uphold the Planning Commission's approval of the Alexandria Presbyterian Church Development Site Plan after it had been appealed.

MINUTES:

18. Consideration of the minutes from the December 3, 2019 Planning Commission meeting.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

On a motion by Commissioner Lyle, seconded by Commissioner McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of December 3, 2019, as amended. The motion carried on a vote of 6-0, with Vice Chair Wasowski absent.

ADJOURNMENT

19. The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned at 11:29 p.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS

20. Special Use Permit #2019-00086
5101 Seminary Road
Administrative Special Use Permit request for a new use for a restaurant
Applicant: Alemseged B. Gebreyesus
Status: Approved 11/21/2019

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Special Use Permit #2019-00092

529 Montgomery Street

Administrative Special Use Permit request for a change of ownership for a restaurant

Applicant: Old Town Coffee LLC

Status: Approved 11/22/2019

Special Use Permit #2019-00095

1800 Diagonal Road

Administrative Special Use Permit request for a new use for valet parking

Applicant: Charlotte A. Hall

Status: Approved 12/3/2019

Special Use Permit #2019-00081

150 South Pickett Street

Administrative Special Use Permit request for a minor amendment to SUP #2001-0006 to enlarge an automobile sales area less than 33%; zoned: CG/Commercial General

Applicant: Passport Motorcars, Inc.

Status: Approved 1/2/2020