



## Proposed Remarks to the Planning Commission on October 6, 2020

First, I want to thank the Planning Commission members for reviewing the EPC's earlier letter on the NPY ESMP.

Today I want to urge the Planning Commission to add a friendly amendment to the DSUP to help the City and applicant move forward and better understand how to make this development even better than currently proposed.

As we mentioned in our earlier letter, the City of Alexandria declared a Climate Emergency on October 22, 2019, and issued an Environmental Action Plan (EAP 2040) and Green Building Policy last year as well. One of the most critical targets of the EAP was "reduce community-wide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 50% by FY2030 and 80-100% by FY2050."<sup>1</sup>

As outlined on page 47 of the ESMP, the applicant stated that during the short term (the next 5 years) they would "Develop a zero-carbon analysis of the entire district and representative buildings to evaluate the project for electrification, energy cost savings, renewable power, and any limitations (technology, cost, etc.)". But there is no mention of what will become of this analysis.

As we indicated earlier, the EPC members are excited about the applicant developing this zero carbon analysis and its district approach. The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports have shown that the use of the most basic steps such as high-performance envelope and highly efficient equipment can save 35-50% in energy costs compared to standard practice, while more advanced actions can save 50-80% on energy costs.<sup>2</sup> These kinds of savings could make this development more attractive to commercial and residential renters alike as well as help the City meet its EAP targets.

On September 22, the City committed to updating its 2011 Energy and Climate Change Task Force report and determining what steps will be needed to implement the EAP targets reducing GHG emissions, increasing energy efficiency and reducing miles per capita for transportation.

We believe the zero-carbon analysis developed by the applicant referenced on page 47 would be extremely valuable to the City's Task Force as they consider the kinds of actions and the priority of actions which would address these targets.

Thus by making such a small change and completing this analysis as soon as possible and then sharing it with the City would not only help the City achieve its targets and enhance the energy efficiency of the proposed buildings, but would also help the applicant when making future choices about sustainability of their buildings by reducing carbon.

Therefore, we are urging that applicant commit to sharing its zero-carbon analysis with the EPC, PC and Council and completing it within the next 12 months.

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<sup>1</sup> The EPC largely focused on the reductions to GHG emissions due to its critical nature, but that is not meant to be interpreted that other areas are not important as well.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/ar4-wg3-chapter6-1.pdf>

Thank you for your consideration.

Kathie Hoekstra  
Chair, Environmental Policy Commission

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 30, 2020

**TO:** CHAIR MACEK AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

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

**SUBJECT:** NORTH POTOMAC YARD STAFF REPORT - MINOR REVISIONS

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### ISSUE:

The staff report for the subject project was published on Friday, September 25, 2020 for the October 6<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission hearing. Once the report was published, staff was alerted by the applicant of corrections that were needed within the report and the recommended conditions. Below is a listing of the revisions to clarify with the Planning Commission ahead of the public hearing.

### Staff Report Items:

1. Page 2: Under *Special Use Permits and Modifications Requested*, the first item listed was revised to address the correct blocks as follows:
  - Master Plan Amendment to the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Chapter to amend the allowable building height for blocks 15 and 18 49;
2. Page 41: In section *L. Metro Plaza and Market Lawn*, the first sentence under “Market Lawn” has corrected the acreage to 0.2-acres as follows:
  - Market Lawn is a 0.2 ~~0.3~~-acre open space, directly adjacent to Building 14.
3. Page 59: In section *T. Urban Design Guidelines*, the third paragraph in this section where staff has bulleted attachments to the staff report, the date of the PYDAC meetings has been corrected to August 26, 2020 as follows:
  - *Attachment 7: North Potomac Yard Group 1 Design Excellence Standards Matrix (August 26 ~~23~~, 2020 PYDAC Meeting)*
  - *Attachment 9: North Potomac Yard Group 1 Staff Memorandum to PYDA (August 26 ~~23~~, 2020 PYDAC Meeting)*

4. Page 78: In section *D. Building 14 – DSUP#2020-0014*, the third paragraph within the discussion under “Market Lawn and Open Space” incorrectly included loggias as part of the building’s open space and has been removed as follows:
  - As has been discussed, there is approximately 2,221 square feet of ~~loggias and~~ terraces cut out from the façade of the building that provide private access to the office tenants with a mix of landscape and gathering spaces.
5. Page 110: In section *J. Building 20 Requested Special Use Permit*, under “Additional Penthouse Height” within item C, the third sentence has corrected the incorrect building number in as follows:
  - Currently, the height of Building **20** ~~90~~ is within the 90-foot height maximum.
6. Page 115: In section *VI. Community*, under “Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC)” the first paragraph’s last sentence has corrected the misidentified type of buildings as follows:
  - Group Two, in the South consistent of the two **residential** ~~office~~ buildings, Building 15 and Building 19 and the other two office buildings, Building 18 and Build 20.

Revisions to the Recommended Conditions for all building DSUPs:

7. Under the Open Space/Landscaping conditions section for each of the following buildings,
  - Building 10: Page 129, Condition #22a
  - Building 14: Page 173, Condition #22b
  - Building 15: Page 216, Condition #23a
  - Building 18: Page 260, Condition #24f
  - Building 19: Page 304, Condition #23a
  - Building 20: Page 349, Condition #23a

the condition has been revised to refer to include Potomac Yard Park as follows:

- Provide the following modifications to the landscape plan and supporting drawings to the satisfaction of the Directors of P&Z and RPCA:
    - a. Through the Final Site Plan process the applicant must meet the biodiversity requirements of the City’s Landscape Guidelines on a districtwide basis by coordinating the landscape plans of **Potomac Yard Park**, DSUP #2020-0012, DSUP #2020-0013, DSUP #2020-0014, DSUP #2020-0016, DSUP #2020-00015, DSUP #2020-0017, and DSUP#2020-0018. The planting design for street trees shall be modified to increase diversity on New Street A. (P&Z)
8. Under the Contaminated Land conditions section for each of the following buildings,
    - Block 10: Page 142, Condition #85

- Block 14: Page 185, Condition #83
- Block 18: Page 274, Condition #86

the condition has been revised to clarify final site plan from the bracketed list as follows:

- If environmental site assessments or investigations discover the presence of contamination on site, the final [ site plan /~~demo plan/grading plan~~] shall not be released, and not construction activity shall take place until the following has been submitted and approved by the Director of T&ES.

9. Under the Streets/Traffic conditions section for each of the following buildings,

- Block 10: Condition #46, page 134
- Block 14: Condition #47, page 178
- Block 15: Condition #49, page 220
- Block 18: Condition #48, page 265-266
- Block 19: Condition #50, page 309
- Block 20: Condition #49, page 354

the second sentence of this condition was revised to correct a typo as follows:

- Standard pavement materials are defined ~~as~~ **as** ~~ad~~ VDOT A-3 concrete (curb and gutter, and sidewalk), VDOT A-4 concrete (bus pads, dumpster pads) and asphalt pavement section made up of SM-9.5A (surface), BM-25.0A (base) and 21B (subbase).

10. Under the Retail Uses conditions section of each of the following buildings,

- Block 10: Page 150, Condition #117
- Block 14: Page 193, Condition #116
- Block 15: Page 237, Condition #123
- Block 18: Page 282, Condition #121
- Block 19: Page 326, Condition #124
- Block 20: Page 371, Condition #125

the condition has been revised so all building conditions have removed the brackets and the condition for Buildings 10, 14 and 18 match Buildings 15, 19 and 20 as follows:

- Day care centers shall be permitted ~~[as a permitted use with administrative approval of a pick-up and drop-off plan]~~ **as a permitted use with administrative approval of a pick-up and drop-off plan** provided they comply with the criteria listed below. Day care centers that do not meet these criteria may apply for a separate special use permit.

11. Under the Retail Uses conditions section of each of the following buildings,

- Block 10: Page 151, Condition #123
- Block 14: Page 194, Condition #122
- Block 18: Page 283, Condition #127

the condition has been revised to clarify the Business Improvement District's website as follows:

- The applicant shall encourage patrons to park off-street through the provision of information about nearby garages on advertising and on the **BID** restaurant's website.

12. Under the Signage conditions section for the following buildings,

- Block 10: Page 151
- Block 14: Page 195
- Block 15: Page 238
- Block 18: Page 283
- Block 19: Page 328
- Block 20: Page 372

within the noted language at the beginning of the section, the last sentence was revised to correct a typo as follows:

- If a separate plan **is** approved, those conditions shall govern signage.

#### Revisions to Specific Building Recommended Conditions:

##### Building 10:

13. Page 139: Condition #69 can be removed as it does not apply to this specific site:

- ~~➤ Sidewalks adjacent to public street B must be constructed of permeable pavement. (T&ES)~~

14. Page 143: Condition #92 has been revised to correct a typo as follows:

- If **a** ~~ka~~ restaurant use is proposed, kitchen equipment shall not be cleaned outside, nor shall any cooking residue be washed into any street, alley, or storm sewer. (T&ES)

##### Block 14:

15. Page 166: Condition #1 has been revised to correct a date typo as follows:

- Final Site Plan shall be in substantial conformance with the preliminary plan dated August 7, 2020, and as amended on August **21** ~~23~~, 2020, and comply with the following conditions of approval. (P&Z)

16. Page 168: Condition #10 has been revised to correct a date typo as follows:

- The building design, including the appearance, color and quality of materials, final detailing, three-dimensional expression, building projections, step-backs and massing

shall be consistent with the elevations in the Verification of Completeness submission dated August 7, 2020, and as revised August ~~21~~ 23, 2020, and as further revised in the elevations presented to PYDAC on August 26, 2020, and the following conditions. If there is a discrepancy between the two sets, the renderings as seen and recommended by PYDAC shall guide. (P&Z)

17. Page 187: Condition #90 has been revised to correct a typo as follows:

- If ~~a~~ ~~ka~~ restaurant use is proposed, kitchen equipment shall not be cleaned outside, nor shall any cooking residue be washed into any street, alley, or storm sewer. (T&ES)

Block 15:

18. Page 224: Condition #70 can be removed as it does not apply to this specific site:

- ~~Sidewalks adjacent to public street B must be constructed of permeable pavement.~~  
(T&ES)

Block 18:

19. Page 255: Condition #10 has been revised to correct a date typo as follows:

- The building design, including the appearance, color and quality of materials, final detailing, three-dimensional expression, building projections, step-backs and massing shall be consistent with the elevations in the Verification of Completeness submission dated August 7, 2020, and as revised August ~~21~~ 23, 2020, and as further revised in the elevations presented to PYDAC on August 26, 2020, and the following conditions. If there is a discrepancy between the two sets, the renderings as seen and recommended by PYDAC shall guide. (P&Z)

Revision to Attachment #6:

20. Page 499: Under **September 9, 2020 Record of Recommendations from PYDAC**, for Building 18, the second bullet has the wrong date and has been corrected as follows:

- The Committee voted unanimously to request a condition requesting the applicant return to PYDAC to seek additional input from the committee on the sitewide design elements, Market Lawn, an interim Metro Plaza design and a final Metro Plaza design as outlined in the staff memorandum to PYDAC for the August ~~26th~~ 23rd and September 9th meetings, related to compliance with Criteria 4.3 and 2.3 of the Design Excellence Standards.

**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  
Sara Brandt-Vorel; Urban Planner, Department of Planning & Zoning  
Abigail Harwell; Urban Planner, Department of Planning & Zoning



**ATTACHMENT 1: Master Plan Amendment Resolution**

**RESOLUTION NO. MPA 2020-00005**

WHEREAS, under the Provisions of Section 9.05 of the City Charter, the Planning Commission may adopt amendments to the Master Plan of the City of Alexandria and submit to the City Council such revisions in said plans as changing conditions may make necessary; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendments will amend the **North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan** chapter of the 1992 Master Plan;

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Zoning has analyzed the proposed revisions and presented its recommendations to the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, a duly advertised public hearing on the proposed amendment was held on **October 6, 2020** with all public testimony and written comment considered; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that:

1. The proposed amendments are necessary and desirable to guide and accomplish the coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the **North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan** section of the City; and
2. The proposed amendments are generally consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the 1992 Master Plan and with the specific goals and objectives set forth in the **North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan** section of the 1992 Master Plan; and
3. The proposed amendments show the Planning Commission's long-range recommendations for the general development of the **North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan**; and
4. Based on the foregoing findings and all other facts and circumstances of which the Planning Commission may properly take notice in making and adopting a master plan for the City of Alexandria, adoption of the amendments to the **North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan** chapter of 1992 Master Plan will, in accordance with present and probably future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria that:

1. The following amendments are hereby adopted in their entirety as an amendment to the **North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan** chapter of the 1992 Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia in accordance with Section 9.05 of the Charter of the City of Alexandria, Virginia:

*Update Figure 4.5B to increase building height from 85 feet to 95 on Block 15 and increase building height from 90 feet to 115 feet on Block 18.*

**Figure 4.5B: Maximum Building Heights**

Approved March 2020 Plan as amended



Proposed 2020 Height Amendments



2. This resolution shall be signed by the Chairman of the Planning Commission and attested by its secretary, and a true copy of this resolution forwarded and certified to the City Council.

ADOPTED the **6th** day of October 2020.

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Chair, Alexandria Planning Commission

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Karl Moritz, Secretary