

Docket Item #14  
Planning Commission Public Hearing  
December 1, 2020

Consideration of approval of the Planning Commission minutes of the Public Hearing meeting of December 1, 2020.

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ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES – DECEMBER 1, 2020

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

ALEXANDRIA PLANNING COMMISSION

December 1, 2020, 7:00 p.m.

Electronic Public Hearing

Alexandria, Virginia

Members Present:

Nathan Macek, Chair  
Melissa McMahon, Vice-Chair  
David Brown  
John Goebel  
Stephen Koenig  
Mindy Lyle  
Vivian Ramirez

Members Absent:

None

Staff Present:

Karl W. Moritz	Department of Planning & Zoning
Christina Zechman-Brown	Office of the City Attorney
Nancy Williams	Department of Planning & Zoning
Anh Vu	Department of Planning & Zoning
Ann Horowitz	Department of Planning & Zoning
Tony LaColla	Department of Planning & Zoning
Robert Kerns	Department of Planning & Zoning
Jeffrey Farner	Department of Planning & Zoning
Michael Swidrak	Department of Planning & Zoning
Catherine Miliaras	Department of Planning & Zoning
Nathan Randall	Department of Planning & Zoning
Maya Contreras	Department of Planning & Zoning
Dirk Geratz	Department of Planning & Zoning
Alexa Powell	Department of Planning & Zoning
Sam Shelby	Department of Planning & Zoning
Sara Brandt-Vorel	Department of Planning & Zoning
Ashley Labadie	Department of Planning & Zoning
Melanie Mason	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Khoa Tran	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Megan Oleynik	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Brian Dofflemyer	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Ryan Knight	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Alex Boulden	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Hillary Orr	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Lalit Sharma	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Bob Garbacz	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

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LaTheasha Hinton	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
William Skrabak	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Erin Bevis Carver	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Brian Rahal	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Jesse Maines	Department of Transportation and Environmental Services
Judy Lo	Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities
Tamara Jovovic	Office of Housing
Julia Santure	Office of Housing
Eric Keller	Office of Housing
Helen McIlvaine	Office of Housing

### 1. Call to Order.

The Planning Commission Public Hearing was called to order at 7:00 p.m. All members were present at the call to order.

Chair Macek then read the following into the record:

“Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic emergency, the December 1, 2020 meeting of the Planning Commission and the December 12, 2020 meeting of the City Council are being held electronically pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3708.2(A)(3), the Continuity of Government ordinance adopted by the City Council on June 20, 2020 or Section 4-0.01(g) in HB29 and HB30, enacted by the 2020 Virginia General Assembly (Virginia Acts of Assembly Ch. 1283 and 1289), to undertake essential business. All of the members of the respective public bodies and staff are participating from remote locations through Zoom Webinar. These meetings are being held electronically, unless a determination is made that it is safe enough for the meetings to be held in person in the City Council Chamber at 301 King Street, Alexandria, VA. Electronic access will be provided in either event. The meetings can be accessed by the public through: Zoom hyperlink provided below, broadcasted live on the government channel 70, and streaming on the City’s website. This Public Hearing’s video and audio recordings will be available a few days after the meeting. Members of the public may also participate by phone.

URL: [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_99DHQFPUTgOQsKNHOatIbA](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_99DHQFPUTgOQsKNHOatIbA)

To dial-in to tonight’s meeting: 301-715-8592

To access the meeting via Zoom, use the Webinar ID: 918 5525 0733

For both dial-in participants and those accessing via Zoom, use the password: 053209

Public Comment will be received at this Public Hearing. The public may make Public Comments through the conference call or Webinar functions. Public Comments which

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have been submitted to Department of Planning & Zoning staff at PlanComm@alexandriava.gov prior to the Public Hearing have been received and added to the Docket as part of the official record for this Public Hearing.

To address some virtual hearing etiquette that should be observed this evening, please remember to leave your microphone on mute and camera turned off when you are not speaking. In addition, before speaking, please remember to first identify yourself by first and last name. If you wish to speak on an item being heard this evening and have not already signed up to do so, please navigate to the Public Hearing Dockets' page of the City of Alexandria's website, select this evening's Planning Commission hearing, follow the "Sign Up to Speak" link, and fill out the Speaker Form that populates upon doing so. Once you have filled out a Speaker Form and are called upon to speak, please use the "Raise Hand" function located on the Webinar taskbar so that staff is able to quickly identify which User needs to be unmuted in order to provide Public Comment. If you are calling in via telephone this evening, you will press "\*9" to execute the "Raise Hand".

### **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

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2. Zoning Text Amendment #2020-00009  
Pick-up and Drop-off Requirements for Day Care Establishments  
(A) Initiation of a Text Amendment; and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of a Text Amendment to clarify pick-up and drop off requirements for day care establishments.  
Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Zoning Text Amendment #2020-00009. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Zoning Text Amendment #2020-00009, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

3. Development Site Plan #2020-00021  
550 South Pickett Street - Avanti 550 Warehouse/Retail Building  
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Development Site Plan to construct a new warehouse/retail building, with modifications; zoned: I/Industrial.  
Applicant: Avanti HG 500, LLC, represented by M. Catharine Puskar, attorney

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to approve Development Site Plan #2020-00021, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

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4. Public Hearing and consideration of an Update to the City's Affordable Housing Contribution Policy and Procedures  
Staff: City of Alexandria, Office of Housing

Tamara Jovovic and Helen McIlvaine (both of Office of Housing), presented the item and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:  
N/A

Discussion:

Commissioner Brown thanked the Office of Housing team for carefully walking him through the recommendations being made and stated he has great confidence that this is a carefully thought-out adaptation of the existing policies in place. Commissioner Brown then asked the Office of Housing staff whether it would be their recommendation that requests for reductions in other traditional contributions by developers who agree to comply with the Policy Update be viewed unfavorably. Staff responded that their analysis confirms that these recommendations, in terms of contributions, are generally reasonable and supportable. Helen McIlvaine, Director of the Office of Housing, added that the recommended Housing Contribution Policy and Procedures Update took into account other contributions be made. Commissioner Brown then inquired about the rounding methodology being used regarding residential unit values (i.e. would 2.2 units be counted as 2 units or 3 units). Tamara Jovovic stated that .5 was being used as a rounding threshold so that anything above that would be rounded up (i.e. 2.6 units becomes 3 units) and anything below that would be rounded down (i.e. 2.4 units becomes 2 units). Following up on this response, Commissioner Brown then asked if flex units would be included as residential units for purposes of contribution calculations. Staff responded that if the units had the potential to be used as residential units, they would be included as such in the calculations. Commissioner Brown then posed a final clarifying question asking if there was a rule with regard to the actual size of the affordable units in relation to the overall average size of units being proposed as part of project. Staff responded that the units provided would be proportional in size, based on the overall unit mix.

Chair Macek thanked City staff for their efforts on this proposed Housing Contribution Policy and Procedures Update and stated the importance of the work taking place, especially since there are some Small Area Plans that do not currently give the housing contributions guidance included in this City-wide Policy. He indicated that an outcome of this also is that this year's City's Legislative Package may seek General Assembly consideration to give the City the ability to obtain affordable housing more than on the voluntary basis.

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Commissioner Brown added that the earlier questions he posed on the project are just the tip of the iceberg in terms of questions that are likely to emerge over time in relation to the proposed Update, so he encouraged Housing staff to memorialize how they are approaching their answers to each of these questions so that it will increase fulfillment of the goal of certainty and even-handedness in treatment of all developers. Chair Macek concurred with Commissioner Brown's statement.

Commissioner Brown stated a motion to approve the proposal. Chair Macek asked for concurrence on a friendly amendment to that motion to also close the Public Hearing and Commissioner Brown agreed.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Vice Chair McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing and recommend approval of the proposed Update to the City's Affordable Housing Contribution Policy and Procedures, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

5. Informational Item: Presentation of the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Policy Recommendations.  
Staff: City of Alexandria, Department of Planning & Zoning and Office of Housing

Sam Shelby (P&Z) presented the item and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Mark Shiffer, 408 Cloverway Drive, stated he is in favor of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), but has concerns that the approval process for an ADU Policy is being rushed. In addition, he stated he is concerned about the potential for ADUs to be used overwhelmingly for short-term vacation rentals, such as Airbnbs. He also expressed concern that a spike in new construction related to ADUs has the potential to contribute to existing stormwater/ runoff issues. Finally, he stated he hopes there will be further study into the impacts of approval of an ADU policy.

Yvonne Callahan, Vice President of Old Town Civic Association and resident of 735 S. Lee Street, inquired of staff if they had any additional information on the definition of kitchens and how they would be applied to ADUs. In addition, she stated she thinks there needs to be a variety of ways in which a review of proposed ADUs can be triggered.

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### Discussion:

Commissioner Lyle inquired if, under the proposal, it would be allowable for an existing property with an ADU to be leased in its entirety to the singular individual. Staff responded with a yes; this would hypothetically be permitted, but there could not be two separate tenants in the main house and the ADU.

Commissioner Brown asked staff if, in regard to outreach, they had circled back around to community groups and civic associations across the City to gather feedback on the draft policy released in October. Staff responded that they had not yet been able to do this in the time between when the draft policy had been released in October and now. Commissioner Brown then inquired if the policy distinguished between substandard and standard lot sizes. Staff responded with a no; the proposed policy does not currently make that distinction, but, noted that ability to construct an ADU on a substandard lot could potentially be made a part of the special exception process. Commissioner Brown then inquired why the height limit was set at 20 feet. Staff responded that 20 feet would be the maximum number that staff is comfortable with to provide a little flexibility to owners of lots with unique configurations. Commissioner Brown then urged staff to consider the relationship between the proposed height limit and the setback requirement on windows. Commissioner Brown then also encouraged staff to consider how the proposed policy would fit with existing rules with regard to a general prohibition on the expansion of non-complying structures.

Vice Chair McMahon asked staff to speak to a question posed by Mark Shiffer in a written statement provided to staff on November 30, regarding whether or not allowing ADUs to be rented out as short-term rentals undermines the utility of the proposed ADU policy as a tool for expanding affordable housing volume. Staff responded indicating that that component has been evaluated resulting in the opinion that the option for short-term rentals provides flexibility to bridge the gap between long-term rentals.

Commissioner Koenig thanked staff for their work on the proposed ADU Policy. Commissioner Koenig then stated his support for Commissioner Brown's suggestion to consider allowing existing non-complying structures to be converted to ADUs via the Board of Zoning Appeals Special Exception process.

Vice Chair McMahon stated she believes staff's recommendations thus far have been sensible and strong. Vice Chair McMahon then inquired if there is anything currently built into staff's thinking on the proposed ADU Policy that incentivizes conversion of existing floor area to ADUs. Staff responded that the size limit for internal ADUs would be larger than detached ADUs.

Chair Macek inquired if, with respect to size and height limits, staff has considered what products are currently on the market that would allow homeowners to purchase

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prefabricated units. Staff responded with a yes; staff has investigated existing products akin to what Chair Macek described. Chair Macek then inquired, in regard to setback limits, where would the setbacks be measured from in relation to ADUs. Staff responded that it would be measured from the end of the eaves and that any projecting feature would need to meet setback requirements. Additionally, Chair Macek asked staff to confirm that the height limits are not an absolute elevation limit but, rather, are based on how height would typically be measured. Staff confirmed with a yes; height would be measured using the existing criteria present in the Zoning Ordinance.

Chair Macek indicated he appreciated the opportunity to weigh in at this stage of the process and he appreciates the intent to gather yet more information from others over the next few weeks and for staff to consider refinements based on what is being heard.

6. Master Plan Amendment #2020-00003  
Coordinated Development District Concept Plan Amendment #2020-00003  
Zoning Text Amendment #2020-00006  
2412, 2514, and 2610 Richmond Highway; 300, 403, 405, and 420 Swann Avenue; 2500 Oakville Street; 400 Fannon Street; 400 Calvert Avenue - Oakville Triangle  
Public Hearing and consideration of requests for: (A) amendments to the Oakville Triangle & Route 1 West Corridor and Vision Plan chapter of the Master Plan to facilitate the Inova Healthplex including an amendment to the mix and location of proposed uses to include medical care facilities; an amendment to building heights on Blocks B and D; an amendment to the framework streets; and an amendment to the location of open spaces within District 2 (Oakville Triangle); (B) an amendment to the previously approved CDD #2014-00002 Concept Plan to amend the definition of retail uses; an amendment to the location and mix of uses and add medical care facility use; an amendment to the location of open spaces; an amendment to building heights on Blocks B and D, and an amendment to street network; and (C) Initiation of a Text Amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to amend the provisions of Section 5-602 to add medical care facilities and amend the allowable uses within in CDD #24/Coordinated Development District #24; zoned: CDD #24/Coordinated Development District #24 (Oakville Triangle & Route 1 West Corridor and Vision Plan)  
Applicants: BRE/DP Alexandria Property Owner, LLC (Stonebridge Associates, Inc.), represented by Duncan W. Blair, attorney; City of Alexandria (Text Amendment and portions of the Master Plan)

Ashley Labadie (P&Z) and Jeffrey Farner (P&Z) presented the item and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

### Speakers:

Duncan Blair, Land, Carroll and Blair, PC, attorney representing Stonebridge, spoke in support of the project describing its role in revitalizing the west side of Route 1.



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Douglas Firstenberg, applicant and Principal at Stonebridge, spoke in support of the project. He expressed that the reduction of retail is to ensure delivery of meaningful and well executed retail, considering the changes in the retail market. He recognized the long-term benefits of the healthplex as well as the extended terms of housing affordability. He briefly explained a general phasing of development delivery and emphasized a robust community engagement process.

Cathy Puskar, attorney representing INOVA Healthcare Services, spoke in support of the project and emphasized the importance of the additional changes outlined in the staff memorandum dated December 1.

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Vice Chair McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Commissioner Goebel and Commissioner Ramirez recusing themselves.

### Discussion:

Commissioner Brown, Commissioner Koenig commended the process of considering the Coordinated Development District (CDD) Concept Plan and Master Plan Amendments prior to considering Development Special Use Permits (DSUPs).

Commissioner Koenig expressed his support of the evolved changes under current circumstances, especially the open space. Chair Macek reinforced the fact that the proposed changes are reasonable and align with the intent of the Oakville Triangle & Route 1 West Corridor and Vision Plan chapter of the Master Plan.

Chair Macek and Vice Chair McMahon commended the community process.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Master Plan Amendment #2020-00003. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Commissioner Ramirez and Commissioner Goebel recusing themselves.

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission voted to adopt a resolution to recommend approval of Master Plan Amendment #2020-00003, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Commissioner Ramirez and Commissioner Goebel recusing themselves.

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Zoning Text Amendment #2020-00006. The motion carried

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on a vote of 5-0, with Commissioner Ramirez and Commissioner Goebel recusing themselves.

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Zoning Text Amendment #2020-00006, as amended by the recommended changes in the staff memorandum dated December 1. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Commissioner Ramirez and Commissioner Goebel recusing themselves.

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Coordinated Development District Concept Plan Amendment #2020-00003, as amended by the recommended changes in the staff memorandum dated December 1. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Commissioner Ramirez and Commissioner Goebel recusing themselves.

Reason: The Planning Commission agreed with the staff analysis.

7. Development Special Use Permit #2020-10025  
3601, 3701, and 3901 Potomac Avenue - Potomac Yard Park  
Public Hearing and consideration of a Development Special Use Permit with Site Plan for the construction of a 4.5-acre extension of Potomac Yard Park, a new public park with community recreation structures, lighting and new children's play apparatus including a modification to the biodiversity standards of the landscape guidelines; zoned: CDD #19/Coordinated Development District #19 and CDD #10/Coordinated Development District #10.  
Applicants: CPYR Theater, LLC, represented by M. Catharine Puskar, attorney; City of Alexandria

Sara Brandt-Vorel (P&Z) presented the item and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Robert Brant, Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh PC attorney, representing the applicant stated his team's appreciation for staff's hard work bringing the North Potomac Yard Park, and other related applications, forward over the past year.

On a motion by Commissioner Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Chair Macek and Commissioner Ramirez recusing themselves.

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### Discussion:

Vice Chair McMahon asked staff to explain the requested biodiversity modification in the context of Phase 1 redevelopment. Staff stated the individual building Development Special Use Permits (DSUPs), as approved in October 2020, were unable to achieve the biodiversity requirements on a block-by-block basis but, if combined, with the Park DSUP (DSUP #2020-10025) the entire site 19-acre site complied with the biodiversity requirements.

Commissioner Koenig acknowledged the achievement of the park application as the culminating element of a comprehensive open space network spanning Four Mile Run in the north to Braddock Metro in the south. Commissioner Koenig found the design of the park network and the park to be thoughtfully integrated into the community and commended the applicant, designers, staff, the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission on their efforts to bring the park to fruition.

Vice Chair McMahon concurred with the sentiments expressed by Commissioner Koenig and identified both the City-wide and neighborhood benefits of the park. Vice Chair McMahon stated her desire to see staff continue to refine the final connections of the bicycle network within North Potomac Yard and create a successful connection with the protected bicycle facilities in Arlington County. Vice Chair McMahon also stated her appreciation of the shade structures in the park and their ability to enhance the usability of the park.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Development Special Use Permit #2020-10025, as amended per the memorandum to the Planning Commission from staff dated November 30. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Chair Macek and Commissioner Ramirez recusing themselves.

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

8. Development Special Use Permit #2020-10024  
3601 Potomac Avenue - Potomac Yard Pump Station Building  
Public Hearing and consideration of a Development Special Use Permit with site plan for the above-grade construction of a new pump station building and a waiver to Section 8-200(C)(5)(a) of the Zoning Ordinance for parking accessed from an alley or court; zoned: CDD #19/Coordinated Development District #19.  
Applicant: CPYR Theater, LLC, represented by M. Catharine Puskar, attorney

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Sara Brandt-Vorel (P&Z) presented the item and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

### Speakers:

Robert Brant, Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh PC attorney, representing the applicant spoke to the collaborative process between staff and the design team which enabled the transformation of a utilitarian building into an almost amenity-like building to complement the design of Potomac Yard Park.

On a motion by Commissioner Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Chair Macek and Commissioner Ramirez recusing themselves.

### Discussion:

Vice Chair McMahon and Commissioner Koenig spoke in favor of the project and noted the successful collaboration between the pump station building design and the park design seen in the Potomac Yard Park Development Special Use Permit (DSUP).

Commissioner Koenig stated his support of the project and his appreciation of the multi-faceted collaboration to develop a successful pump station building design which complemented Potomac Yard Park and incorporated feedback from the applicant, staff, the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee, the Board of Architectural Review and the community.

Vice Chair McMahon noted her appreciation for the building design and her excitement to see the building move from an initial concept in the Small Area Plan into a permanent element of North Potomac Yard.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Development Special Use Permit #2020-10024, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Chair Macek and Commissioner Ramirez recusing themselves.

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

9. Special Use Permit #2020-00043  
3601 Potomac Avenue - North Potomac Yard Coordinated Sign Program  
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for a Special Use Permit for a coordinated sign program for exterior signage for the Phase 1 redevelopment of North Potomac Yard; zoned CDD#19/Coordinated Development District #19  
Applicant: CPYR Theater, LLC, represented by M. Catharine Puskar, attorney

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Sara Brandt-Vorel (P&Z) presented the item and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

### Speakers:

Robert Brant, Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh PC attorney, representing the applicant spoke to the goal of the proposed Coordinated Sign Plan to provide a comprehensive and district-wide approach to signage to cover all Phase 1 redevelopment in North Potomac Yard.

On a motion by Commissioner Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Brown, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Chair Macek and Commissioner Ramirez recusing themselves.

### Discussion:

Vice Chair McMahon expressed concern regarding the maintenance of the digital kiosks and inquired who would be responsible to maintain operations of the kiosks. Mr. Robert Brant, of Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh PC, representing the applicant responded that the final design had not be settled but that a Business Improvement District (BID) was to be established in North Potomac Yard and would oversee the maintenance of the signs and other public realm elements. Vice Chair McMahon expressed appreciation that a BID would be established with a designated funding stream and maintenance schedule to maintain the pedestrian kiosks.

Commissioner Koenig expressed appreciation to see the proposed Coordinated Sign Plan in conjunction with the Park Development Special Use Permit and the level of coordination that occurred between the various plans. Commissioner Koenig acknowledged the potential challenges of introducing new sign types and technology in the Innovation District but believed maintenance concerns could be resolved and would result in a unique and vital public realm experience.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Special Use Permit #2020-00043, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 5-0, with Chair Macek and Commissioner Ramirez recusing themselves.

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

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10. Master Plan Amendment #2020-00008  
Rezoning #2020-00004  
Development Special Use Permit #2020-10027  
Transportation Management Plan Special Use Permit #2020-00076  
Vacation #2020-00004  
1352, 1356, 1360, and 1362 Madison Street; 711, 715, 719, and 727 North West Street;  
1319, 1321, 1323, 1325, 1327, and 1329 Wythe Street - Braddock West  
Public Hearing and consideration of a request for: (A) Amendments to the Braddock Road Metro Station Small Area Plan Chapter of the Master Plan through updates to the Development Site Map, Development and Land Use tables in the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan Overlay, and the Development Framework Map and Land Use and Development tables in the Braddock East Master Plan Overlay; (B) amendment to the official zoning map to change the zone for the site from RB to OCH; (C) a Development Special Use Permit and site plan with modifications to construct a 180-unit multifamily building with ground-floor commercial uses, including special use permits to increase the floor area ratio to 3.0 in the OCH zone, the utilization of Section 7-700 for bonus density and height for the provision of affordable housing, for a parking reduction for residential and commercial uses, to allow a restaurant, retail shopping or personal service establishments on a lot which does not include office buildings, provided such use supports and serves office uses in the immediate zoned area, and a fraternal or private club; (D) a Special Use Permit for a Transportation Management Plan (tier two); and (E) the Vacation of two public alleys serving the site; zoned RB/Townhouse.  
Applicant: West Street Acquisitions, LLC, represented by Jonathan P. Rak, attorney; City of Alexandria (portions of the Master Plan Amendment only)

Michael Swidrak (P&Z) and Catherine Miliaras (P&Z) presented the item and answered questions from the Planning Commission.

Speakers:

Jonathan Rak, McGuireWoods attorney, representing the applicant, spoke in support of the project. Mr. Rak noted that the development will provide benefits to the neighborhood but focused on two specific costs that the applicant argued are a significant burden on the project. First, Mr. Rak discussed the need for additional relief from the City (potentially above the sewer tap fee reimbursement) for the connection to the Potomac Yard Trunk Sewer. Mr. Rak also requested that the applicant contribute to the Braddock Community Amenities and Open Space funds based on the 2.5 FAR density maximum that is in the existing Braddock East Master Plan (BEMP) Development Table, instead of the 3.0 FAR requested by the applicant and included in the Master Plan Amendment. The applicant is also providing two on-site affordable housing units for the increase in density from 2.5 to 3.0 FAR and argued that the affordable housing contribution (based on 10 percent of the density and not yet an approved housing

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contribution policy as noted by Vice Chair McMahon) was a sufficient contribution for the increase in density.

John Dameron, CRC Companies LLC, spoke in support of the project. Mr. Dameron added to Mr. Rak's discussion of the project benefits and the need for a reduction in project costs and contributions, citing the sewer connection costs of previous developments in the Braddock neighborhood at the time of construction and occupancy, and outlining the applicant-proposed amendment to Condition #69 that would outline cost-sharing between the City and applicant for connection to the Potomac Yard Trunk Sewer.

John Craig, a resident of the Braddock neighborhood, noted his concerns with the project. Mr. Craig noted that the intersection of Braddock Road and N. West Street is subject to a significant amount of flooding which has been documented by the City and that it should be a high priority to mitigate before new development is approved in the vicinity. Specifically, Mr. Craig asked for improvements to the intersection and additional stormwater outfall infrastructure before the development is approved, noting concerns the development would exacerbate the existing situation. In response to Mr. Craig's concerns, staff outlined how the development would help to mitigate on-site stormwater runoff and the future process for addressing stormwater impacts in the vicinity. Regarding the proposed development, staff discussed the applicant's measures to address stormwater impacts, including the inclusion of an on-site stormwater vault, the conditioned requirement that the applicant reduce on-site stormwater runoff to 70 percent of current levels (as opposed to 90 percent as generally conditioned for Development Special Use Permit projects) and ensure the development would not negatively impact the adjacent area in the case of a 100-year storm event. Staff addressed the needed improvements to the Braddock Road, N. West and Wythe streets intersection, noting that the City of Alexandria Storm Sewer Capacity Analysis (CASSCA) designated the intersection for stormwater improvements. The City estimates that the cost of the improvements is approximately \$9 million and would need to be added to the City's Capital Improvement Program. Staff added that the project connecting to the PYTS will also improve conditions in the area related to sanitary sewer backups.

On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Vice Chair McMahon, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

### Discussion:

Chair Macek asked staff to respond to applicant's requests to provide City incentives for the construction of the Potomac Yard Trunk Sewer (PYTS) and reduction of the Braddock Community Amenities and Open Space Fund contributions. Karl Moritz, the Director of the Department of Planning & Zoning, responded that the applicant's request for City reimbursements for sewer construction beyond credits to the sewer tap fee would

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be “conditioning the City” to provide monetary contributions to the applicant in the conditions of approval. Staff noted that the applicant was aware that the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan (BMNP) required connection to the PYTS as early as 2017, when the applicant submitted an initial concept plan for the redevelopment of the site with Andrew Adkins (jointly with Alexandria Redevelopment & Housing Authority [ARHA]) in 2017 and received comments from the City. Staff added that it is the additional work to connect other adjacent sites to the PYTS connection to be constructed by the applicant that will allow for the City to provide sewer tap fee credits to the applicant as outlined in the conditions of approval. Staff also noted that connecting to the PYTS is a benefit for the applicant, as the Commonwealth Interceptor (the existing sewer connection in the area) has no available capacity and the PYTS has sewer outfall capacity for the applicant.

Mr. Moritz responded to the Braddock contributions request by stating that City Council has not approved the application of applying the contribution rate to bonus density sought through the use of Section 7-700, but there have been no cases where the applicant has not provided the full contributions based on the “base density” amount, including when there is a Master Plan Amendment for an increase (which in this case is from 2.5 to 3.0 FAR). Staff added that the increase of the contribution amount based on a 3.0 FAR is meant to offset the impacts of a greater amount of development from the 2.5 FAR originally envisioned.

Commissioner Lyle praised the project, and noted she was uncomfortable with adjusting applicant contribution amounts, as that is the purview of City Council. Vice Chair McMahon agreed with Commissioner Lyle’s statement, adding that she understood the magnitude of the proposed contributions compared to the relatively small project and wanted the contribution amounts to be fair. Vice Chair McMahon also praised the overall project that will enhance the area around the Metrorail Station, also noting that the City requirement that the applicant connect to the PYTS is based on sound planning principles. Commissioner Koenig added that the applicant provided exemplary outreach to the community on the proposal.

Commissioner Brown noted that he could not support the proposal based on the Master Plan Amendments and rezoning to Office Commercial High (OCH) that is not in the Master Plan. Commissioner Brown noted his disapproval of Master Plan Amendments to increase the agreed-upon FAR for a site without wider community outreach prior to the submittal of a Site Plan. Commissioner Brown added that rezoning to OCH instead of CDD (Coordinated Development District) as recommended in the Plan means the applicant is eschewing a coordinated development effort with ARHA of the block shared between the site and Andrew Adkins. Commissioner Brown wanted to know more information on why the original agreement between the applicant and ARHA fell through. Chair Macek responded to Commissioner Brown by indicating that market conditions often necessitate changes in the development program recommended in Small



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Area Plans, and that the proposal was as consistent with the Master Plan as it could be based on the splitting of the site with the Andrew Adkins development block.

Commissioners showed no objection with the condition amendments to Conditions #65, #77 and #78 proposed by staff, but inadvertently did not include the condition amendments in the motion to recommend approval of the DSUP.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Master Plan Amendment #2020-00008. The motion carried on a vote of 6-1, with Commissioner Brown voting against.

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission, the Planning Commission voted to adopt a resolution to recommend approval of Master Plan Amendment #2020-00008, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-1, with Commissioner Brown voting against.

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Rezoning #2020-00004, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-1, with Commissioner Brown voting against.

On a motion by Vice Chair McMahon, seconded by Commissioner Koenig, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of Development Special Use Permit #2020-10027, Transportation Management Plan Special Use Permit #2020-00076, and Vacation #2020-00004, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 6-1, with Commissioner Brown voting against.

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

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

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#### 11. Commissioners' Reports, Comments, and Questions.

Chair Macek reported that Robinson Terminal North warehouse has now been demolished and that the site will now be the staging area for the RiverRenew sewer remediation project before a portion is dedicated as park space. Chair Macek also reported that the process of scheduling a joint work session with the Planning Commission and Environmental Policy Commission was now underway.

### **MINUTES:**

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#### 12. Consideration for reapproval of the minutes from the June 2, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

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**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of June 2, 2020, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

13. Consideration of the minutes from the June 25, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of June 25, 2020, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

14. Consideration of the minutes from the September 1, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of September 1, 2020, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

15. Consideration of the minutes from the October 6, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of October 6, 2020, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

16. Consideration of the minutes from the November 5, 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

**PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:** On a motion by Commissioner Brown, seconded by Commissioner Lyle, the Planning Commission voted to approve the minutes of November 5, 2020, as submitted. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

### **17. ADJOURNMENT**

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The Planning Commission Public Hearing was adjourned at 11:04 p.m.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS**

18. Special Use Permit #2020-00069  
805 King Street  
Administrative Special Use Permit request for a Change of Ownership of an apartment hotel; zoned: KR/King Street urban retail.  
Applicant: Sonder USA Inc.  
Planner: Ray Roakes  
Approved 11/6/2020
- Special Use Permit #2020-00073  
190 South Whiting Street

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Administrative Special Use Permit request for a Change of Ownership of an automobile service station and repair establishment; zoned: OCM(50)/Office commercial medium (50).

Applicant: Landmark Petro Services, Inc

Planner: Ray Roakes

Approved 11/12/2020

Special Use Permit #2020-00087

2400 Mount Vernon Ave

Administrative Special Use Permit request for a New Use for a restaurant; zoned: CL/Commercial Low.

Proposed Business Name: Del Ray Boaccato

Applicant: Cristian Velasco

Planner: Anna Kohlbrenner

Approved 11/20/2020