

16
11-13-21

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.
219 South Alfred Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

November 10, 2021

Re: Matter **BAR APPEAL #2021-00341 OHAD, item #16** (Heritage)

Dear City Council,

My home is within two blocks of the proposed development. I have lived here for many years.

I ask you to DENY this appeal. I am seriously concerned by the Applicant's plans to construct these highly dense, massive and modern buildings. They are out of character with the neighborhood. The BAR's decision should stand.

Sincerely,

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Gloria Sitton

16
11-13-21

From: Richard Green <rileygreen1972@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 10, 2021 12:10 PM
To: Gloria Sitton
Subject: [EXTERNAL]BAR APPEAL #2021-00341 OHAD, item #16.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

You don't often get email from rileygreen1972@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To: Alexandria City Council

Re:
BAR APPEAL #2021-00341 OHAD, item #16.

Hello. I hope you will support the BAR's decision on the Heritage development.

I believe other local counties, such as Fairfax, have limited the size of light frame wood construction apartment buildings to four stories.

Please note that this developer could not build this project in his home city - it would be illegal. Light frame wood construction is illegal in all of New York City except the least dense parts of Staten Island. This is because of the fire hazards of such construction.

Is it really necessary to demolish the existing masonry and steel Heritage complex, evict all the tenants, and then haul off the debris to a landfill? What a waste.
So much for your "eco city."

Also, have any of you recently driven on Route 1 and contiguous streets in this area, especially during rush hour? I'd say it has already reached maximum capacity. Has there ever been any HONEST city planning of the effect of this project at the proposed scale to Alexandria and Old Town?

I hope you will please listen to the local residents of the City who you represent and who will have to live with your decision.

I hope you will respect the well-reasoned decision of the BAR who have been trying to protect Alexandria for us and future generations for so many years.

Please do not listen to outside developers, hedge funds, real estate development trusts, and lawyers whose main interest is building as much high-dollar, high-density square footage as permitted to achieve a maximum profit with no concern about this project's permanent impact on our community.

Sincerely,
Richard Green
Alexandria, VA

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16
11-13-21

JEANNE M. HAUCH, ESQ.
219 South Alfred Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
jeannehauch@gmail.com

November 10, 2021

By email only

To: The City Council of Alexandria

Re: **BAR APPEAL #2021-00341 OHAD, item #16**

Heritage Redevelopment Plan

I live and vote in Old Town Alexandria. My home is within two blocks of the proposed development. I have lived here for more than 20 years.

I write to urge you to deny this appeal and affirm the decision of the BAR to refuse a Certificate of Appropriateness. The proposed design is not consistent with the relevant standards. The project would overwhelm the neighboring buildings. The height, mass and scale are still too large and are out of character with the neighborhood. The proposed design remains too dense and boxy. Finally, it is not compatible with the historic district.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Hauch

Jeanne Hauch

16
11-13-21

Gloria Sitton

From: martha raymond <m.raymond2006@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 10, 2021 10:56 AM
To: Gloria Sitton
Subject: [EXTERNAL]BAR APPEAL #2021-00341 OHAD, item #16.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hello. I am writing to ask that City Council support the decision of the Board of Architectural Review with regard to the Heritage Project.

The BAR's decision is well-reasoned and their determinations are within their purview, outlined as part of their legal purpose "to assure that new structures ... be in harmony with their historic and architectural setting and environs." Over the course of many meetings, the BAR gave guidance to the applicant to greatly reduce the size and scale of the proposed new buildings so they would be more in keeping with their neighborhood context, and this guidance has not been heeded.

Significant reduction of the size and scale of the new buildings would also be consistent with the numerous requests of neighboring homeowners, who would support the project at a smaller scale.

It is not too late to make this a much better and less massive project for the neighborhood in which it is located. Thank you for sharing my comments with City Council.

Martha Raymond
Alexandria, VA
914/393-1387

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16
11-13-21

Gloria Sitton

From: Kimberlee Eveland <keveland@evelandpartners.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 10, 2021 9:59 AM
To: Gloria Sitton
Subject: [EXTERNAL]BAR APPEAL #2021-00341 OHAD, item #16.

You don't often get email from keveland@evelandpartners.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Alexandria Mayor Wilson and City Council Members:

I am writing to express my strong position as against the Heritage Redevelopment Plan (BAR APPEAL #2021-00341 OHAD, item #16).

I feel that the **numerous and genuine concerns** with the project that have been expressed on multiple occasions along with the **ongoing reviews and appeals** are clearly indicative of **serious and systemic issues** surrounding this project which has **massive impact** not only on the surrounding community, but also on the city at large.

We **fully support preserving affordable housing** and modernizing our neighborhood, but we are opposed to The Heritage Redevelopment Plan as it stands now for the following reasons:

- It is completely disregarding specific guidelines for the Historic District
- The developer's proposed buildings are too tall and too dense.
- The developer's proposed buildings are not in keeping with the aesthetics the Historic District.
- We want to see ALL of the current Heritage residents' qualifications on their "right to return" entered into the public record.
- An increase in affordable housing should not be a **green light** for developers to overdevelop my community.

Please do the right thing by listening to your City of Alexandria residents, and vote to **DENY the Heritage's Appeal of the BAR's Denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness.**

There is a better way to both preserve affordable housing, and maintain a comfortable quality of life for Southwest Quadrant residents.

Kind regards,
Kimberlee Eveland

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16
11-13-21

City Council Public Hearing - November 13, 2021
Re: Heritage at Old Town
BAR #2021-00341 OHAD

Mayor Wilson and members of the City Council:

Street parking in the Southwest Quadrant has been a neighborhood concern for the 20+ years I've lived in Old Town. In addition to resident and business related parking needs, our friends and neighbors at the Alfred Street Baptist Church have a large and growing congregation. To attend Sunday services as well as the many other popular Church events, congregants park, in part, on neighborhood streets.

I compared the developer's Traffic Impact Study to its Site Plan seeking insights into how this development will affect neighborhood parking.

Traffic Impact Study:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/HeritageTrafficStudy1220.pdf>

Site Plan:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/planning/info/HeritageDSUPPre20201117v1.pdf>

Mayor Wilson also facilitated a discussion between myself and the transportation planning staff. This message from staff sent February 10, 2021, was a revelation:

"Yes, it is correct that while there will be additional on-street parking spaces the rest of the week, there will be fewer on-street parking spaces available on S. Alfred Street and Wolfe Street on Sundays, and parking will no longer be allowed in the cul-de-sac. As noted, this is a result of improvements that will increase safety and bring the road network up to current industry and City standards. While parking has been allowed on S. Alfred St. on Sundays under the existing condition, the width of the existing roadway with parking on both sides is too narrow for emergency vehicle access or for two vehicles to pass in opposite directions without yielding. The proposed width is adequate for emergency vehicles and passing vehicles. The size of the existing cul-de-sac is considered inadequate for vehicle turn-arounds, especially when vehicles are parked there. The proposed cul-de-sac without parking provides adequate turn-around space. Though City Code prohibits vehicles from parking within 20 feet of a crosswalk, under current conditions, vehicle are often parked very close to corners and crosswalks on Alfred Street on Sundays. The proposed curb-extensions will prevent this illegal parking and create safer pedestrian crossings and better sight distance for vehicles. The Sunday on-street parking losses were considered necessary to meet these current safety standards."

Staff and I reviewed the following blocks in detail, at times down to the individual space, to determine what the actual reduction in on street parking would be during construction and post development.

Wolfe Street 900 Block North Side
Wolfe Street 900 Block Cul-de-sac
Wolfe Street 900 Block South Side
Alfred Street 400 Block East Side
Alfred Street 400 Block West Side
Gibbon Street 900 Block North Side

Table 1 summarizes the findings.

Table 1: Heritage Street Parking Availability Weekdays & Sundays Post-Development

	Weekday Pre-Development**	Weekday Post-Development	Sunday Pre-Development	Sunday Post-Development	Comments
Wolfe Street 900 Block North Side	6	4	6	4	
Wolfe Street 900 Block Cul-de-sac	5	0	5	0	
Wolfe Street 900 Block South Side	7	2	7	2	
Alfred Street 400 Block East Side	34	26	34	26	
Alfred Street 400 Block West Side	0	24	39	24	Current parking availability is restricted to Sunday's only from 7:30 AM to 9:00 PM
Gibbon Street 900 Block North Side	8	8	8	8	
Totals	60	64	99	64	
Difference		4		-35	
Parking Spaces Occupied by Residents or Visitors Weekdays 506 x .03; Weekends 506 x .06		-15		-30	Assumption: Percentage of the additional 506 units where residents & visitors will park on the street at any given time during daylight / evening hours. No overnight parking. Weekdays: residents 1%; visitors 2%. Weekends: residents 2%; visitors 4%.
Post Development Weekday & Sunday Parking Impact		-11		-65	
					**Heritage at Old Town Traffic Impact Study Page 72

Note: The 900 Block of both Wolfe and Gibbon Streets were NOT included in the Traffic Study's Sunday parking survey. These 2 blocks literally border the development and are a serious omission. The Sunday parking occupancy counts were not included in the Traffic Study's Appendix B and, therefore, the raw data could not be verified.

When this development is complete, there will be a net gain of 4 (four) available weekday street parking spaces on the relevant blocks vs the current availability. There will be a net loss of 35 (thirty-five) Sunday available street parking spaces vs the current availability. These initial "totals" assume residents or visitors to the development will never park on the street.

The next section of Table 1 assumes that during the week 1% of the residents of the additional 506 units and that 2% of the additional units will have a visitor that parks on the street at any given time during weekdays or evenings. This assumption equates to 5 street spaces being used by residents and 10 street spaces being used by visitors. Overnight parking will not be permitted.

For Sundays, Table 1 assumes that 2% of the residents and 4% of the visitors to the additional 506 units will park on the street at any given time. This assumption translates into 10 available street spaces being utilized by residents and 20 available street spaces being utilized by Sunday visitors. Overnight parking will not be permitted.

These modest assumptions are informed by the combined 10+ building entrances on the East and the West sides of South Alfred Street as well as by common sense.

Including the projected weekday and Sunday resident and visitor street parking from the additional 506 units results in a **net loss of 11 (eleven) weekday and 65 (sixty-five) Sunday available street parking spaces** vs current availability when the development is complete in 2025.

These assumptions do not take into account any Church related parking needs either during the week or on weekends. Any Church related parking requirements, regardless of day of the week or time of day, would highlight these street parking availability deficiencies.

In addition, please note that the Site Plans do not include fire hydrant positioning. Hydrant positioning could further reduce post-development parking availability.

Parking Availability During Construction

Table 2 recaps parking availability during Phase 1 construction from 2021 - 2023. It assumes that fencing will be placed beyond the current curb on the adjacent streets removing the currently available street parking spaces on: Gibbon 900 Block North Side, Alfred Street 400 Block West Side, Wolfe Street 900 Block South Side and the Wolfe Street Cul-de-sac. The Gibbon 900 Block North Side and Wolfe Street 900 block South Side will likely host construction site entrances / exits. Incorporating these assumptions results in a **loss of 22 (twenty-two) weekday available street parking spaces** and a **loss of 61 (sixty-one) Sunday available street parking spaces** during construction.

These conclusions do NOT take into account any Church related street parking needs during the week or on weekends.

Table 2: Heritage Street Parking Availability During Phase 1 Construction 2021 - 2023

	Weekday Pre-Development	Weekday During Construction 2021 - 2023**	Sunday Pre-Development	Sunday During Construction 2021 - 2023	Comments
Wolfe Street 900 Block North Side	6	4	6	4	The Traffic Impact Study states on page 72 that there are currently 8 spaces. In discussion with staff it was agreed that the correct number is 6. During construction at least 2 of these spaces will convert to a new fire lane.
Wolfe Street 900 Block Cul-de-sac	5	0	5	0	
Wolfe Street 900 Block South Side	7	0	7	0	Assumes fencing will encroach on the currently available street parking spaces & that construction vehicles will access the site from the Wolfe Street 900 Block South Side.
Alfred Street 400 Block East Side	34	34	34	34	
Alfred Street 400 Block West Side	0	0	39	0	Assumes the City will not permit Sunday parking on the West Side of Alfred during Phase 1.
Gibbon Street 900 Block North Side	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>	Assumes fencing will encroach on the currently available street parking spaces & that construction vehicles will access the site from the Gibbon Street 900 Block North Side.
Totals	60	38	99	38	
Difference		-22		-61	Reduction in Weekday and Sunday available street parking spaces during Phase 1 construction
					** Assumes NO weekday construction related vehicles will park on these streets.

Not relevant to this specific discussion, there are several critical issues that will impact Old Town residents and visitors, including Church parishioners, during construction: Where will construction workers park from 2021 - 2025? How strictly will the ban on construction workers parking at the site be enforced? Will the City establish and carry out consistent on site parking enforcement inspections? What will prevent construction workers from utilizing limited neighborhood street parking spaces thereby depriving customers supporting local businesses?

SUMMARY

Comparing current street parking availability on the designated blocks to the post-development availability reveals a net gain of 4 (four) weekday street parking spaces and a loss of 35 Sunday street spaces assuming no residents or visitors will ever park on the street. Factoring in a modest amount of resident and visitor street parking results in a **loss of 11 (eleven) weekday available street spaces and 65 (sixty-five) Sunday available street spaces** post development. It is critical to the residents of the Southwest Quadrant, as well as to our friends and neighbors at the Alfred Street Baptist Church, that the loss of Sunday and weekday / Saturday available street parking spaces be offset at no cost to the community, the Church or its parishioners.

Staff was aware that the street scape changes required of this project would result in a reduction in the number of available Sunday street parking spaces as stated in the February 10, 2021 message from a transportation staff member. Staff did not and has not quantified or conveyed this information to Council or to the general public.

At the February 20, 2021 City Council hearing, when Catharine Puskar (attorney for Heritage Development) and a transportation staff member were asked about the project's impact on parking, both responded that spaces would be added on the West side of South Alfred, ignoring the impact of all other street scape modifications. When questioning the developer's representative or city staff about street parking availability, the questioner must inquire about the net affect of all street parking modifications on the 900 Block of Wolfe Street, the 400 Block of South Alfred and the 800 block of Gibbon Street.

In addition, these findings demonstrate a violation of section 11-504 (B)(10) of the city code:

"Whether the proposed use will have any substantial or undue adverse effect upon, or will lack amenity or will be incompatible with, the use or enjoyment of the adjacent and surrounding property, the character of the neighborhood, traffic conditions, **PARKING**, utility facilities, and other matters affection the public health, safety and general welfare."

In the future, when blocks 3 & 5 of the South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy are developed, similar street scape improvements will result in additional reductions to the number of available neighborhood street parking spaces thereby compounding the problem.

I urge the City Council to deny a Certificate of Appropriateness until the street parking issues noted here are thoroughly reviewed and solutions agreed to with the developer. Since staff has been less than forthright with the reduction of available street parking spaces as a result of this development, the community must have input as these agreements are being negotiated. All parking related agreements should be shared with the community.

Respectfully,

Joe Johnson
822 Duke Street



16
11-13-21

218 North Lee Street, Suite 310
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
(703) 549-5811
www.HistoricAlexandriaFoundation.org
HistoricAlexandriaFoundation@gmail.com

November 10, 2021

The Hon. Justin M. Wilson
The Hon. Elizabeth B. Bennett-Parker
The Hon. Canek Aguirre
The Hon. John Taylor Chapman
The Hon. Amy B. Jackson
The Hon. Redella S. "Del" Pepper
The Hon. Mohamed E. "Mo" Seifeldein

Alexandria City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314

By email

City Clerk, Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov

Re: November 13, 2021 Hearing, DOCKET ITEM #16, File # 22-0441, BAR #2021-00341 OHAD.

Dear Mr. Mayor and Members of the Council:

We are writing to you in support of the decision of the Board of Architectural Review ("BAR") that has been appealed by the Developer in the above referenced matter. We urge you to uphold the decision of the BAR.

Historic Alexandria Foundation ("HAF") was formed in 1954 "to preserve, protect and restore structures and sites of historic or architectural interest in and associated with the City of Alexandria, Virginia, to preserve antiquities, and generally to foster and promote interest in Alexandria's historic heritage." In furtherance of this mission, we are vitally concerned with the proper administration of the Zoning Ordinance in the Old and Historic District, the proper functioning and observance of the process and jurisdiction of the Board of Architectural Review ("BAR"), and the preservation of the historic fabric of our City.

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HAF is both an owner of real estate in the Old and Historic District of Alexandria (410 South Washington Street), and the holder of preservation easements on numerous properties in close proximity to the development that has been denied a certificate of appropriateness by the BAR. These properties include 711 Prince Street, 301 S. St. Asaph Street, 811 Prince Street, 601 Duke Street, and 1018-1020 Prince Street. We provide tens of thousands of dollars each year to support worthy and important restoration work on historic properties in the Old and Historic District and elsewhere in the City. Moreover, our membership includes property owners throughout the City of Alexandria including those in close proximity to the proposed project.

The project under review consumes one and a half blocks of property located in the Old and Historic District, and directly abuts another five blocks in the District. The Old and Historic District, the third oldest historic district in the United States, is a Landmark of statewide and national importance that is listed on both the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. It is therefore important that you give due consideration to the Landmark status of the District and the effect this project will have upon the District when evaluating the proposal. Va. Code § 10.1-2204(B); Alex. Zon. Ord. § 10-101(A).

Four times the Developer in this case brought its plans to the BAR for concept review and received detailed, thoughtful, and substantive responses to their proposed designs. Each time, the BAR clearly conveyed to the Developer that the design was not suited to the Old and Historic District. But the Developer stubbornly refused to make any substantial adjustment to address the concerns of the BAR or the local community — the people who will have to live with the project day in and day out.

Because the negative advice and comments from both the BAR and the local community were so frequently and consistently expressed, the Developer could never have entertained any reasonable expectation that its plans would ever secure BAR approval. But apparently the Developer believes that it is immune from the requirements of BAR review that apply to everyone else in the Old and Historic District.

Like the numerous neighbors who have opposed the Developer's design, we at HAF find the proposal under review to be an alarming departure from the principles that have successfully guided development in Alexandria since the creation of the first Historic District in Virginia in 1946. The proposed structures and their excessive height, mass and scale are completely at odds with the character of the Old and Historic District. Indeed, as discussed more extensively below, the project does not withstand review under any of the criteria for a certificate of appropriateness.

The BAR has well established design guidelines for projects of this nature that the applicant has chosen to ignore. *Design Guidelines for the Old and Historic Alexandria District*, Chapter 6-New Construction at 4 (See attached with highlighted language in yellow). In considering the applicant's plans against the established Design Guidelines, you should ask the following questions:

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Does the proposed “building massing” reflect the “building massing prevailing along the blockface?”

Can you find that these multifamily structures, exceeding the prevailing heights of single-family houses, do not overwhelm the adjacent buildings?

Is the façade articulation compatible with the nearby buildings?

Does the roof form reflect the roof forms expressed along the blockfaces?

The correct answer “NO” to each of these questions requires you to uphold the BAR’s denial of the certificate of appropriateness.

It is unfortunate that your Staff’s report so seriously misreads the content and purpose of the Historic District Ordinance. Whenever it purports to apply the criteria that are required to be reviewed by Section 10-105(A)(2) of the City Zoning Ordinance, it ignores the overall purpose that is expressly applied to each, viz. the BAR and the City Council “shall review such features and factors **for the purpose of determining the compatibility of the proposed construction**, reconstruction, alteration or restoration with the existing building or structure itself, if any, and **with the Old and Historic Alexandria District area surroundings.**” Alex. Zon. Ord. § 10-105(A)(1).

The way the City Staff report is drafted invites you to apply the Section 10-105(A)(2) criteria without any reference at all to the requirements of Section 10-105(A)(1). **Indeed, the Staff Report does not even mention Section 10-105(A)(1).** It also omits the operative language of Section 10-105(A)(2) which states: “Subject to the provisions of section 10-105(A)(1), the board of architectural review or the city council on appeal shall consider” the enumerated factors listed in Section 10-105(A)(2)(a)-(j) Attempting to limit your review by omitting the language of Section 10-105(A)(2) invites **plain legal error** and none of the staff analysis applying this incorrect standard can be relied upon in your review.

Any fair-minded observer will readily see that the plans rejected by the BAR are completely incompatible with the Old and Historic Alexandria District area surroundings.

10-105(A)(2)(a) Overall architectural design, form, style and structure, including, but not limited to, the height, mass and scale of buildings or structures.

Every component of this factor argues against the proposed design. Neither the design, form, style or structure is in keeping with the Old and Historic District. The height, mass and scale of the proposed buildings greatly exceed any others in the District, and the proposed design will act as a barrier wall at the very entrance of Historic Alexandria.

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10-105(A)(2)(b) Architectural details including, but not limited to, original materials and methods of construction, the pattern, design and style of fenestration, ornamentation, lighting, signage and like decorative or functional fixtures of buildings or structures; the degree to which the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site (including historic materials) are retained.

The proposed plan makes no serious attempt to adapt any of these criteria to make them compatible with the surroundings of the Historic District. To the contrary, the Developer appears to take pride in proposing a design that overshadows the neighborhood.

The City's Staff Report does not even address Section 10-105(A)(2)(b), with the assertion that it is related only to revisions to existing buildings. (Staff Report at 8). But the plain language of the Ordinance is not limited in that fashion. Among other things it expressly applies to the "site" of proposed construction.

10-105(A)(2)(c) Design and arrangement of buildings and structures on the site; and the impact upon the historic setting, streetscape or environs.

Throughout the approval process, the Developer has unapologetically sought maximum building density at the expense of all other considerations and has made no effort to arrange the proposed buildings and structures to be compatible with the Old and Historic Alexandria District area surroundings.

10-105(A)(2)(d) Texture, material and color, and the extent to which any new architectural features are historically appropriate to the existing structure and adjacent existing structures.

Here again, the Developer has not provided a design where the "[t]exture, material and color, or any of the new architectural features are historically appropriate to the adjacent existing structure" "for the purpose of determining the compatibility of the proposed construction, ... with the Old and Historic Alexandria District area surroundings."

10-105(A)(2)(e) The relation of the features in sections 10-105(A)(2)(a) through (d) to similar features of the preexisting building or structure, if any, and to buildings and structures in the immediate surroundings.

The Developer's plans make no attempt to meld the features of its project with similar features of the buildings and structures in the immediate surroundings of the Old and Historic District. It is instead a monument to Computer Aided Design ("CAD") ungrounded in the history or regional architecture of Historic Alexandria.

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10-105(A)(2)(f) The extent to which the building or structure would be harmonious with or incongruous to the old and historic aspect of the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

While not physically on the George Washington Memorial Parkway, there is nothing about the proposed project that is harmonious with the Parkway.

10-105(A)(2)(g) The extent to which the building or structure will preserve or protect historic places and areas of historic interest in the city.

The meager justification set forth in the Staff Report in support of this criteria demonstrates the paucity of support any consideration of historic preservation features in the Developer's plan, and simply ignores the overall damage to the Landmark historic District that will occur if the project were to be approved with the proposed design.

10-105(A)(2)(i) The extent to which the building or structure will promote the general welfare of the city and all citizens by the preservation and protection of historic interest in the city and the memorial character of the George Washington Memorial Parkway.

Whatever may be said about the proposed development's impact on the general welfare of the city and all citizens, it is clear that none of those considerations has anything to do with the "preservation and protection of historic interest in the city," which is what is required when evaluating the architectural approval of new construction in the Old and Historic District. It is precisely because the commercial interests in Development often seem more pressing than historic preservation — to the detriment and permanent loss of society at large — that the City Charter and the Historic Preservation Ordinance exist in the first place. Section 10-105(A)(2)(i) therefore mandates that the BAR, and City Council on review, put aside the purely economic considerations and focus instead on "preservation and protection of historic interest in the city." Here, the protection of the Landmark Historic District as a whole from a massive and incongruous development is paramount and requires upholding the BAR's decision.

The City Staff Report does not even address Section 10-105(A)(2)(i) of the Ordinance.

10-105(a)(2)(j) The extent to which such preservation and protection will promote the general welfare by maintaining and increasing real estate values, generating business, creating new positions, attracting tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans, attracting new residents, encouraging study and interest in American history, stimulating interest and study in architecture and design, educating citizens in American culture and heritage and making the city a more attractive and desirable place in which to live.

HISTORIC ALEXANDRIA FOUNDATION

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Here again, the Developer's plans may serve many interests, but preservation and protection of the Historic District is not one of them. There is no basis for finding that the particular design of this project will increase the value of neighboring property or generate any business. And certainly this project as designed will not attract tourists, students, writers, historians, artists and artisans. Nor will it encourage study and interest in American history, stimulate interest and study in architecture and design, or educate citizens in American culture and heritage. Indeed, there is nothing particular in the Developer's proposed design, as opposed to all the other structures that could be built on the site, that promotes any of the values described in this section of the ordinance, which are there for determining the compatibility with the Old and Historic District and surrounding property.

Much of the discussion before the BAR has focused on the height, scale, and massing of the proposed design. But we at HAF hope that the Council will also recognize that the project does nothing to satisfy the basic requirements of the ordinance. It is an incongruous collection of proposed structures intended to stand out from and not adapt itself to the history of Alexandria.

We therefore urge the Council to uphold the BAR and its denial of the proposed architectural design because it is completely out of place in the Historic Landmark District of our City.

Thank you for your consideration of our statement.

Respectfully submitted,

Historic Alexandria Foundation
By: /s/ Morgan D. Delaney
President

cc. Karl Moritz, Director, Planning & Zoning
karl.moritz@alexandriava.gov
William Conkey, Historic Preservation Architect
william.conkey@alexandriava.gov
M. Catharine Puskar
cpuskar@thelandlawyers.com

CHAPTER 6

NEW CONSTRUCTION - RESIDENTIAL

INTRODUCTION

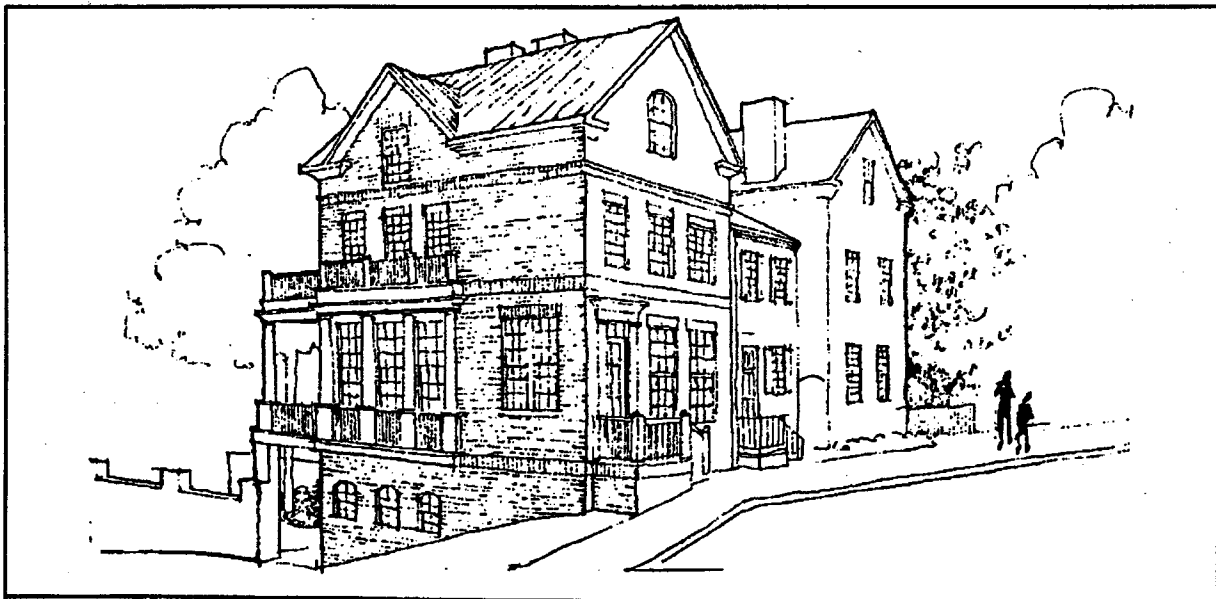
The construction of new residential buildings that are visible from a public way require the review and approval of a certificate of appropriateness by the Boards of Architectural Review.

The character of the historic districts is primarily defined by its residential structures. Such structures range in age from before the founding of the city in 1749 to the current day. Expansion of the housing stock within the historic districts is continual. Since the establishment of the Board of Architectural Review in 1946, the design of new residential buildings has been one of its primary concerns. These guidelines are intended to

provide information to property owners within the historic districts about the Boards' philosophy regarding the design of new residential buildings.

These guidelines apply to all new residential construction projects that lie outside of the waterfront area or that do not front on Washington Street. Residential construction projects in these areas must meet additional requirements and these are set forth in the Guidelines for Washington Street and the Guidelines for the Waterfront. The waterfront area is defined in the Zoning Ordinance as Height District #3, Potomac River, whose boundaries run east of Union Street to the River and extend from Pendleton Street south to the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (§6-400 of the Zoning Ordinance).

Generally speaking, there are only scattered parcels of vacant land in the historic districts which are suitable for the development of new residential construction projects without demolishing an existing structure. The demolition of an existing historic building to permit construction of a new residential structure is strongly discouraged by the Boards. Therefore, most new residential projects are in-fill construction that make use of a vacant



Perspective view of new townhouse in relation to existing adjacent residential structures.
SOURCE: 700 South Lee Street, BAR Case #90-176, Robert Morris, Morris Damm, Inc., Architects

lot. In these cases, the Boards are primarily concerned with the compatibility of a new building with adjacent historic structures.

The guidelines should be viewed as a distillation of previously accepted design approaches in the historic districts. The guidelines should not be viewed as a device that dictates a specific design response nor should the guidelines be viewed as prohibiting a particular design approach. There may be better ways to meet some design objectives that have not been reviewed by the Boards in the past. New and untried approaches to common design problems are encouraged and should not be rejected out of hand simply because they appear to be outside the common practices outlined in the guidelines.

Architectural styles in Alexandria have been more conservative than in other parts of the country. The approvals of the Boards have reflected this since the establishment of the historic districts. As a general rule, the Boards favor contextual background buildings which allow historic structures to maintain the primary visual importance. Singular buildings in the latest architectural vocabulary are generally discouraged.

It is not the intention of the Boards to dilute design creativity in residential buildings. Rather, the Boards seek to promote compatible development that is, at once, both responsive to the needs and tastes of the late 20th century while being compatible with the historic character of the districts. This balancing act will clearly be different in different sections of the historic districts.

These guidelines should be used in conjunction with the guidelines for specific architectural elements contained in Chapter 2. For example, that chapter contains information on such topics as window and door treatments, siding and chimneys and flues which must be appropriately combined to create a building that is compatible with the architecture in the districts.

As a general rule, the Boards do not review conceptual design plans. The Boards strongly prefer to review complete design submissions. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to meet with B.A.R. Staff as early as possible during the design development stage to review proposals and zoning requirements.



Proposal for two new Colonial Revival style townhouses, each of which faces a different street.
SOURCE: 370 N. St. Asaph St. & 600 Princess St., BAR Case #91-102, Historical Concepts, Inc., architects

REQUIREMENTS

- All applications for new construction must comply with the requirements of the zoning regulations prior to consideration by the Boards of Architectural Review. The specific requirements may be obtained from the Zoning Administrator (703/838-4688).

- New construction must conform to the requirements of the applicable small area plan chapter of the Master Plan. In the Old and Historic Alexandria District the Small Area Plans include Old Town, Old Town North, Northeast and Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens. In the Parker-Gray District, the applicable Small Area Plans are Braddock Road Metro Station and Northeast.

- Side, Front and Rear Yard Requirements
The Zoning Ordinance requires that residential buildings must be removed a certain number of feet from a property line. This setback will depend upon the specific zone and the width of the lot.

- Open Space Requirements
The Zoning Ordinance requires that a certain amount of land in residential zones be maintained as open space to ensure adequate light and air, absorb water runoff and help prevent the spread of fire. The amount of open space required varies by zone. Driveways and parking areas cannot be used to satisfy the open space requirement.

As a general rule, land under a covering such as a canopy, roof, eave, or deck may not be counted as part of the required open space.

- Vision clearance
There is a general City requirement that buildings on corner lots must maintain a vision clearance at the corner for purposes of transportation safety. In such instances, structures may be no higher than 42" (3' 6") above the curb. There is also a general policy to maintain the average front building line in the historic districts. Therefore, the Zoning Ordinance gives the Boards of Architectural Review the power to waive this requirement as well as other yard requirements in the vision clearance area where the

maintenance of the building line is important to the character of the blockface.

- Generally speaking, building height for residential construction is limited to 35 feet but may be increased in certain zones to 45 feet with approval of a Special Use Permit by City Council.

- New residential projects which involve three or more units require the approval of a Site Plan by the Planning Commission (See §11-400 of the Zoning Ordinance). Information on Site Plan requirements may be obtained from the Site Plan Coordinator, Department of Transportation and Environmental Services, Room 4130, City Hall (Telephone: (703/838-4318).

New residential construction which requires the approval of a Site Plan must comply with the provisions of the Alexandria Archaeological Protection Procedure (§11-411 of the Zoning Ordinance). The specific requirements may be obtained from the City Archaeologist, Alexandria Archaeology, 105 North Union Street, 3rd Floor. (Telephone: (703/838-4399).

- Construction of all new buildings must meet the requirements of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) and requires the issuance of a building permit by Code Enforcement.

- Construction of new multi-family buildings must meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

- Tree removal for new construction requires prior approval of the City Arborist.

- New residential construction, both single and multi-family, must include off-street parking. (See Article 8 of the Zoning Ordinance).

- New residential construction on lots which involve land disturbance of 2,500 square feet or more of land area must comply with the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Protection Ordinance.

GUIDELINES

- Applicants should consult Building Alterations, Chapter 2, regarding guidelines for specific elements of a proposed new building. For example, Chapter 2 provides information on compatible window treatments, paint colors and building materials.

- Style

No single architectural style is mandated. Designs should complement and reflect the architectural heritage of the City. For example, abstraction of historic design elements would be preferred to a building which introduces design elements that are not commonly used in the historic districts. While new residential buildings in the historic districts should not create an appearance with no historical basis, direct copying of buildings is discouraged.

- Massing

Building massing is the enclosed volume which constitutes a building's exterior form. In the historic districts, new residential construction should reflect the building massing prevailing along the blockface. For example, uneven massing should be avoided along a blockface which has buildings of

uniform massing.

- Height

Building height should generally reflect the existing heights of buildings in the immediate vicinity of the proposed new construction.

- *Single family houses*

Most single family houses in the historic districts are 2 or 3 stories in height. New single family residential construction should generally reflect this prevailing pattern.

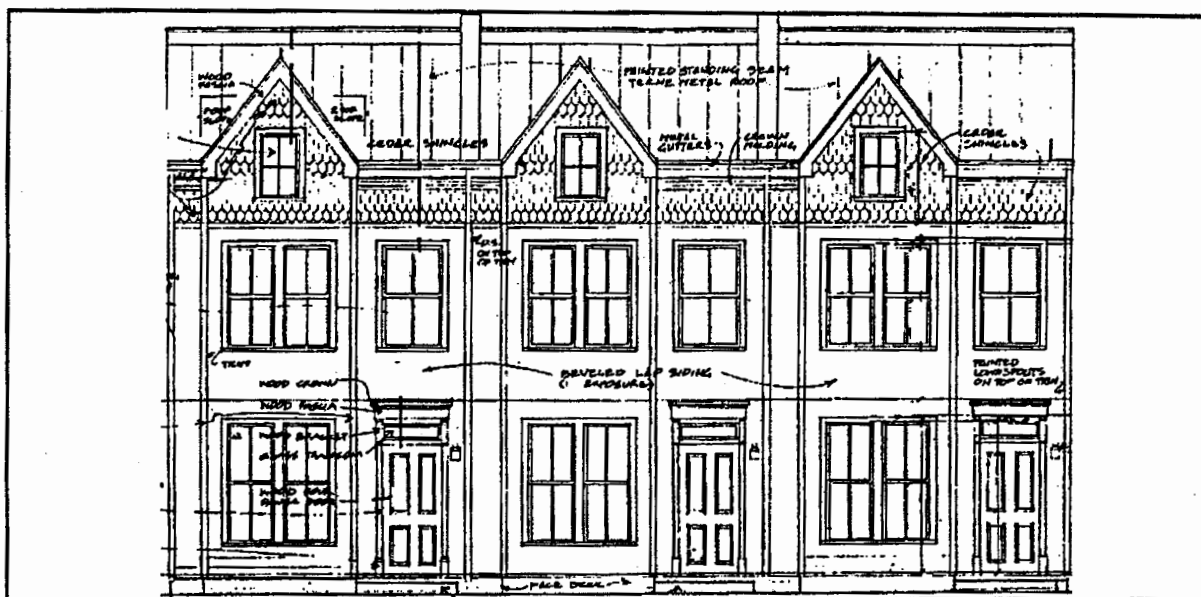
- Multi-family structures

Multi-family structures such as apartment buildings often exceed the prevailing height of single family houses. Such structures may be constructed to the maximum permitted height by zone, but should not overwhelm adjacent buildings.

- Width

- *Single family houses*

Most single family houses in the historic districts are 20 to 35 feet in width. New single family residential construction should generally reflect this traditional pattern.



Proposal for three new Victorian style residential townhouses.

SOURCE: 1320-1324 Princess Street, BAR Case #90-15PG; John Savage, Architect, P.C.

• Multi-family structures

In general, multi-family structures such as apartment buildings are much wider than single family residential structures. The facade articulation should be compatible with nearby buildings.

• Siting

New residential structures should be sited so that the front plane of the building is in line with the prevailing plane of the other residential buildings on the street. Such a requirement has a long history in Alexandria. The founding act of the city in 1748 required houses "to be in line with the street...."

Side and rear yard setbacks should also reflect the prevailing pattern in the immediate vicinity of the proposed new construction.

• Fenestration

The fenestration pattern, that is the relationship of solid to void, such as walls and windows, should be compatible with the historic fenestration patterns in the districts. For example, buildings which express very large areas of void are discouraged.

• Roof

In general, the roof form should reflect the roof forms expressed along the blockface. However, as a general rule, the gable end of a structure should not face the street. Such a requirement has a long history in Alexandria. The founding act of the city in 1748 required "that no gable or end of such house to be on or next to the street...."

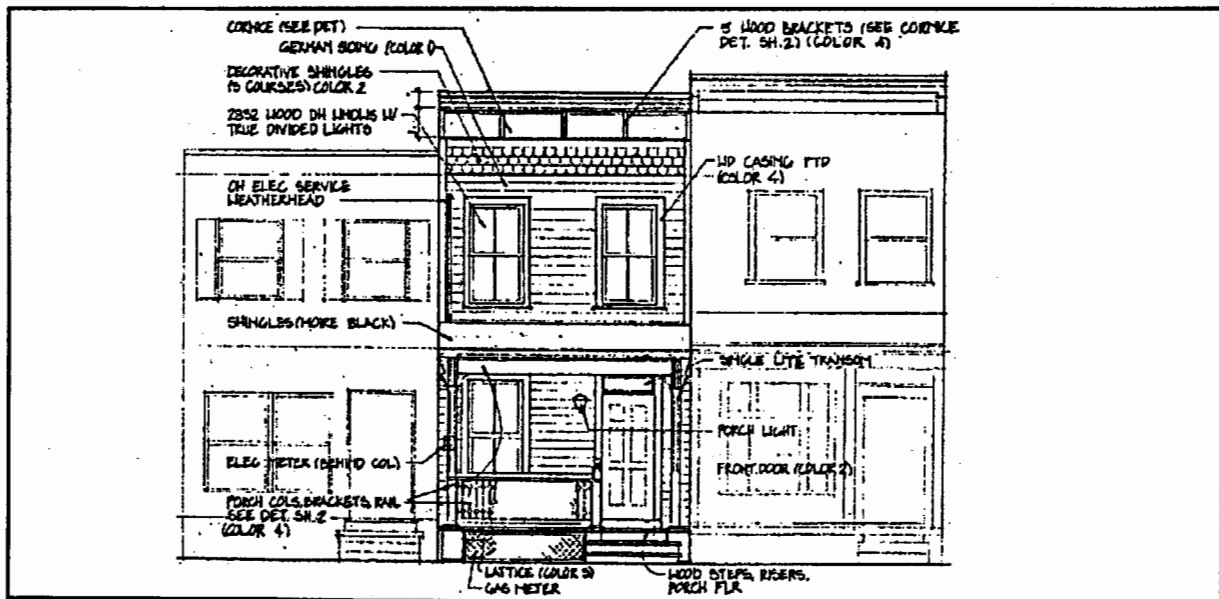
Roofing materials should reflect the traditional use of wood, metal and slate in the historic districts. Additional information is provided in the Roofing section of Chapter 2, Building Alterations.

• Spacing Between Buildings

The spacing or lack of it between a new residential building and existing structures should reflect the pattern of spacing between buildings along the blockface to maintain a consistent rhythm. For example, party wall rowhouse construction is inappropriate in certain areas of the historic districts which have large detached residential buildings.

• Building Orientation

The front entrances to new residential buildings should be oriented to the primary street frontage.



Proposal for a new infill residential building between two existing houses.

SOURCE: 307 North West Street, BAR Case #92-6PG, Frank Deichmeister, Design Plus, Architects

- **Architectural Detailing**

Architectural detailing such as cornices, lintels, arches, and chimneys should express the traditional quality and quantity of architectural detailing found on historic structures throughout the districts.

Side and rear walls which face open areas should be designed with as much attention to detail as the primary facade. It is the general preference of the Boards that surface articulation be provided on otherwise unrelieved side walls to break-up apparent massing through such means as the articulation of false windows, pilasters and changes in brick patterns.

- **Directional Expression**

The orientation of a building to the street is important. The relationship of height and width of a proposed new residential building should reflect the prevailing pattern along the blockface. For example, wide buildings are not encouraged in areas of narrow row-houses.

- **Materials**

The predominant building materials for residential buildings in the historic districts are wood and brick. In addition, there are a

number of stone buildings. The building materials for new residential structures should reflect these traditional materials.

- **Utilities**

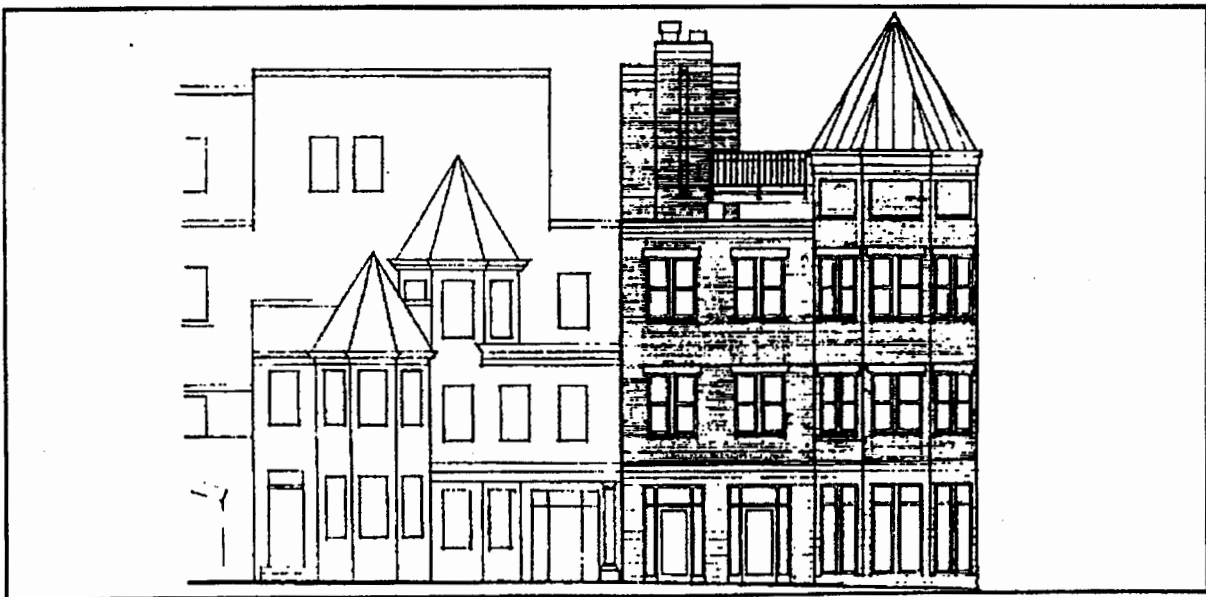
While the Boards are cognizant of 20th century infrastructure requirements, such items as electrical meters and transformers and HVAC equipment should be visually and acoustically screened from public view.

- **Color**

The colors proposed for new residential buildings should be compatible with those in use on historic buildings in the districts. The B.A.R. Staff has developed a *Color Chart of Historically Accurate Paint Colors in the Old and Historic Alexandria District and the Parker-Gray District* which can be consulted to help determine appropriate colors which reflect the historic heritage of the City.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to properly evaluate the appropriateness of a design for new construction, the Boards of Architectural Review require that an accurate depiction of the design and its



Proposal for a new three story brick apartment building.

SOURCE: 109-111 South West Street, BAR Case #91-170, John Savage, Architect, P.C.

relationship to the immediately surrounding area be presented. Sketches are not acceptable. Most designs for construction of new buildings presented to the Boards of Architectural Review are prepared by design professionals, such as architects and engineers; however, a professionally prepared submission is not mandatory. Applicants, however, should be aware that drawings sealed by an architect or engineer licensed in Virginia may be required by Code Enforcement prior to the issuance of a building permit.

All applications for approval of new residential construction must contain the following information:

Alexandria Business License

Proof of a valid Alexandria Business License is required at the time of application for contractors, subcontractors, architects and designers.

Photograph of Existing Conditions

Clear photographs of the site and surrounding properties are required for reference.

Plot Plan/Site Plan

A plot or site plan accurately showing the location and dimensions of the footprint of the new building including property lines, accessory structures, fences and gradelines as well as existing improvements is required. A roof plan showing water drainage and location of mechanical units should also be indicated.

Drawings

Drawings accurately representing all elevations of the proposed structure indicating materials and overall dimensions, including height, are required. In addition, a drawing showing the contextual relationship of the proposed structure to existing adjacent buildings is required. The location of such ancillary items such as HVAC units, heat pumps, roof guards, fire hose connections,

ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The construction of new residential buildings creates ground disturbing activities which may affect archaeological resources. With its rich history, the City of Alexandria is particularly concerned about its archaeological heritage. Archaeological resources in the historic districts are great in number and highly diverse in materials. They often consist of ceramic and glass fragments in the backyards of historic properties; however, archaeological resources are also brick-lined shafts in yards and basements; brick kilns; foundations, footings, postholes and builders trenches of non-extant buildings; landscape features such as walkways and gardens; and even American Indian artifacts which pre-date colonial Alexandria. Often these clues to the City's past appear to be unimportant debris, yet when the artifacts and building remains are excavated and recorded systematically, they provide the only knowledge of lost Alexandria.

Every application to the B.A.R. which potentially involves ground disturbance is reviewed by the City Archaeologist to determine whether significant archaeological resources may still survive on the property. Therefore, the potential for additional requirements to protect archaeological resources exists with any project that involves ground disturbing activities.

The applicant can speed along the archaeological review

process by requesting a Preliminary Archaeological Assessment from Alexandria Archaeology at the earliest date. Call (703) 838-4399, Tuesday through Saturday. Alexandria Archaeology is located on the third floor of the Torpedo Factory Art Center.

• RESIDENTIAL ZONES

In residential zones, the application for construction of new buildings is reviewed by City archaeologists. In most cases, the applicant is required to notify Alexandria Archaeology before ground disturbance, so that a City archaeologist may monitor this work and record significant finds. However, when a property has a high potential for containing significant archaeological resources, a City archaeologist may request permission to excavate test samples in the affected area before the project begins.

• COMMERCIAL ZONES

In commercial zones and for residential projects involving the construction of three or more houses, the ground disturbing activities associated with the construction of new buildings may necessitate compliance with the Alexandria Archaeological Protection Procedure (§ 11-411 of the Zoning Ordinance). The specific requirements may be obtained from the City Archaeologist. Occasionally, compliance in such projects may require the property owner to contract with an independent archaeologist to document conditions before and during construction. Property owners should contact the City Archaeologist as early as possible so that there are no project delays.

utility meters and risers should be noted on the drawings. The drawings should have a minimum scale of $3/32" = 1'$; however, larger scale drawings may be required. At least one set must meet the maximum permit size of 24" x 36". Additional copies of the required drawings may be reduced if they are clearly legible.

Floor Area Ratio and Open Space Calculations

Applicants must provide accurate F.A.R. and open space calculations for the new residential construction. Forms for these calculations are available at the time of application.

Materials

The materials to be used for the structure must be specified and delineated on the drawings. Actual samples may be provided, if appropriate.

Color

The proposed color of the structure and trim-work must be indicated and actual color samples provided.

RELATED SECTIONS

Guide to the B.A.R. Process

Use of the design guidelines

History of the physical development of the historic districts

Chapter 2 - Building Alterations

Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

Accessory Structures

Awnings

Chimneys & Flues

Decks

Exterior and Storm Doors

Dormers

Roof Drainage Systems

Electrical and Gas Service

Fences, Garden Walls & Gates

HVAC Systems

Exterior Lighting

Paint Colors

Parking

Driveways and Paving

Planters

Porches

Roofing Materials

Security Devices

Shutters

Siding Materials

Skylights

Solar Collectors

Stoops, Steps and Railings

Windows

Storm Windows

Chapter 4 - Demolition of Existing Structures

NOTE: Illustrations are provided for information only. Applications for certificates of appropriateness are reviewed and approved on a case-by-case basis.

ADOPTED BY THE BOARDS OF
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, 5/25/93

16
11-13-21

Gloria Sitton

From: Kim Burstein <kimburstein@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 11:53 AM
To: Gloria Sitton
Subject: [EXTERNAL]For Nov. 13 meeting-Heritage

You don't often get email from kimburstein@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please pass this on ahead of Saturday's meeting.

Dear City Council Members:

I am writing today to submit comments ahead of the November 13 meeting regarding the Heritage project. I kindly request the City Council to DENY the Heritage's Appeal of the BAR's Denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness.

I am extremely concerned about the mass of the project and its seven-story height. Even though the developer has slightly reduced the number of units since its submission of plans in January 2020, the current plan seems architecturally out of character for our residential neighborhood. While it may give a "face lift" to area, that will come with more burdens on our roads, sewers, and schools.

I have been a homeowner at 526 South Alfred Street for 20 years. My home is located across the street from Block 4 of the Heritage Project. I chose to move here because of the unique charm of Old Town that is substantially enhanced by the tree-lined streets and its quiet location, while still being close to King Street.

I understand the project is trying to accommodate many needs, including affordable housing, which I support; however, I believe the height and density of the buildings is out of character with the neighborhood, where the highest building is the four-level Clayborne Apartments on South Columbus Street, the easiest and closest comparison.

My neighbor had requested a shadow study be completed because we are concerned about the diminished sunlight that would result from the height of the buildings and its impact on our homes, which are across the street. I still have no idea if this has been conducted even though Ms. Puskar previously said it would be.

I urge you and your fellow members to encourage the developer to reconsider adjusting the mass and scale of this project, so it more appropriately fits into the residential neighborhood. We already have such dense areas in Old Town. And we don't need to triple capacity, which will cause even more traffic problems and further erode our lack of parking. I assure you, you wouldn't even have to think twice about voting against this project if you lived across the street like I do.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kimberly Burstein
703-474-9889
kimburstein@yahoo.com

Gloria Sitton

From: Shelley Murphy <smurphy@whdc.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 12:06 PM
To: Gloria Sitton
Subject: [EXTERNAL]BAR Appeal #2021-00341 OHAD Item #16, The Heritage Redevelopment Plan

You don't often get email from smurphy@whdc.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

I am writing as both the CEO of Wesley Housing, a developer of affordable housing in the City of Alexandria, and as a resident of the City at 613 E Nelson Avenue.

I urge you City Council to overturn the BAR's decision to deny the Certificate of Appropriateness for The Heritage.

The BAR decision exceeds its authority in what can be considered in approving/denying a Certificate of Appropriateness. The applicant has made a number of design changes to scale Buildings 1 and 2 to match the size and scale of adjacent buildings, and is using materials and fenestration which is in keeping with the adjacent buildings. The existing buildings are outdated and ugly, and have no historic significance. They are also past their useful life and are providing housing that is below the standards for affordable housing that are now being required by the City.




The decision to deny the Certificate of Appropriateness undermines the provisions of the new RMF zoning policy, which is allowing the preservation of the existing affordable housing for the people who live there now, plus adding additional affordable and market rate housing which is needed to meet the demand. This zoning also protects the right to return of the existing residents.

As we emerge from the pandemic, there is no question that we are facing a "K-shaped recovery" that is severely impacting the lower income residents of Alexandria. Many of them are increasingly rent burdened and face the potential loss of housing. The need for additional high quality affordable housing has never been greater. This project has been through significant design changes to meet the architectural guidelines. More importantly, it protects and improves the quality of the housing of the people who live there now, and provides additional housing to meet the needs of a broad range of Alexandria City residents.

Sincerely,

Shelley Murphy



Shelley S. Murphy
President/CEO
5515 Cherokee Ave, Ste 200, Alexandria, VA 22312
O: 703.642.3830 ext. 212
C: 703.887-3216
wesleyhousing.org
  

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16
11-13-21

Gloria Sitton

From: Yvonne Callahan <yvonneweightcallahan@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 12, 2021 11:55 AM
To: Justin Wilson; Elizabeth Bennett-Parker; Del Pepper; Amy Jackson; Canek Aguirre; John Chapman; Mo Seifeldin; Gloria Sitton
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Heritage

Dear Mr. Mayor, members of City Council and Madame Clerk,

I will be out of town tomorrow when you begin deliberations concerning the Heritage development.

Much has been said about this project, and even more has been written about it. I don't know if there are any significantly new issues to be considered, but I would like to remind you of a few points that I believe remain key.

This project has been a mismatch with its neighborhood from the beginning.

The developer, James Simmons, has been tone-deaf to the community since he first appeared before the Board of Architectural Review and pitched his project. His words to the effect that he believed architecture should develop with time "or we'd all be living in lean-to's", showed that he never did understand, much less agree with, the neighborhood he wishes to place an architectural monster.

No citizen of the City has ever spoken in favor of the height, mass and design of this project.

There is only one factor which is supported by citizens of the city, and that is the provision of affordable housing. The city MUST work better and more with the citizens and the residents of the city, so we are not constantly left with the Hobson's choice of affordable housing vs. impossible height, mass and density. Mr. Simmons continues to show disdain for the goals of the City to preserve the Old & Historic District, by pressing for an architectural design supported by no one. At best, it is "all right", and that is not what this city should embrace.

There is way out.

The city can work with the developer to "buy down". The city should determine that the maximum height of this project must be no more than 50 feet, and that the cost differential be met by additional cash contributions by the city to the project as a whole. While the city has told us repeatedly that this project is "good" because it is being built without city contributions, the ugly fact of such a position means that the neighborhood is bearing the entire burden of this project rather than by all taxpayers throughout the city.

Lower height will mean more neighborhood compatibility with the project. Otherwise, in ten or perhaps twenty years' time, this project will be viewed as a blight. It is doomed to fail.

There is still time to make this project successful and to provide the neighboring community with something they can live with and support. To date, the desires and wishes of the neighborhood have not been considered in any meaningful manner. It is time to listen to them and come up with something better.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter.

Yvonne Callahan

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116
11-13-21

TO: Mayor Wilson and Members of the Alexandria City Council

FROM: Stephen & Barbara Hayes

DATE: November 12, 2021

SUBJECT: Support of BAR October 20, 2021 Vote re: Heritage Project

We are writing to urge Alexandria's mayor and city council members to support the BAR's October 20, 2021 decision to disapprove the standing proposal for the Heritage project.

We want to state from the outset that we agree with the need for affordable housing in the City and we support the proposed increase in affordable housing units at the Heritage site. However, by insisting on adding some 500 new market rate units to the surrounding historic neighborhood, the developer is proposing a monstrous complex that is grossly out of scale with the surrounding historic neighborhood. If the project were to be built as proposed, it would result in more than 1,000 people living and traveling in and out of a quadrant of Alexandria which is ALREADY the most densely populated urban area in the Commonwealth. Furthermore, the project plan is in violation of existing zoning ordinances and, as the BAR stated in its recent decision, the proposed height, mass and scale of the project does not comply with BAR guidelines.

We urge you to disapprove the plan before you and to require the developer to revise his plan so that no building in the complex rises to more than five (5) stories. This can be accomplished by retaining the same number of proposed affordable housing units and reducing the number of market rate units. This approach has the additional benefit of reducing the strain on traffic and congestion in the southwest quadrant of Old Town which is already severe.

16
11-13-21

TO: Mayor Justin Wilson, Members of City Council

VIA EMAIL TO: Gloria Sitton, City Clerk, Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov

APPEAL HEARING DATE: November 13, 2021

FROM: Cecily Crandall

DOCKET ITEM #16: File # 22-0441, BAR #2021-00341 OHAD

I am writing to you in **SUPPORT** of the October 20, 2021, Board of Architectural Review's (BAR) decision to *Deny* a Certificate of Appropriateness for The Heritage development plan that has been appealed by the developer in the above-referenced matter. I respectfully ask that you **uphold the decision of the BAR**.

My reasons for requesting that you uphold the BAR's decision are as follows:

For the City Council to not agree with or to override the Board of Architectural Review's (BAR) decision to DENY a Certificate of Appropriateness would be a very strong, negative and discouraging statement about the council members and the city's opinion of the BAR members work, dedication and decision making. Many citizens bought their homes with the belief that owning property in the OHAD meant something. In particular, that their homes and surrounding homes/neighborhood(s) are protected by the OHAD Guidelines. Guidelines which all agree to follow (and happily do so) when purchasing property within the OHAD boundaries. Anything but a concurrence with the BAR's decision would lead down a path that would forever question their decisions—past and present. For City Council to in any way over-ride the BAR's decisions would send the message that the BAR is irrelevant. In a word, it would show a lack of respect.

The BAR has held numerous concept reviews for this project. During this time, BAR members have provided the appellant with the OHAD Guidelines to refer to properly design their project (and by which they, and all others living and building in, the OHAD are required to follow). Additionally, the BAR over and over again provided constructive feedback to the appellant about what is needed to comply and what they are looking for with regard to the projects' height, mass, scale, architectural character & detail, and conformity to the existing buildings in the neighborhood. From the start, the appellant provided a knowingly non-conforming, inappropriate design claiming it was "Too expensive" for them to adhere to the required guidelines. The appellant repeatedly and arrogantly flouted the feedback by the BAR, (as well as that from neighbors for whom they seemed to have contempt) and made no real changes to the design and did not try to comply with the Guidelines and advice of the BAR. It was only when it was convenient for the appellant at the July 29, 2021 hearing when Cathy Puskar stated that she/Heritage were *now* ready to work with neighbors (i.e., acknowledge they exist), to follow the OHAD Guidelines (an admittance it would seem, that they had not been following them), that they were going to respect the surrounding neighborhood, that they were going to listen to and work with the BAR to come up with an appropriate design/project and on and on. These statements by Puskar were made over a year after the Concept Review process began. However, once again, the design presented to the BAR at the October 6, 2021 hearing included only minor changes (to an already non-conforming project) to which Cathy Puskar adamantly made clear that they would make no further changes.

The BAR made the correct decision to DENY the Certificate of Appropriateness for The Heritage as it does not meet the criteria laid forth in the OHAD Guidelines; as the appellant chose not to take the experienced advice of the BAR members; as it overwhelms the existing 2-3 story neighborhood home; as it is not an appropriate development project for the OHAD or for the SouthWest Quadrant of Old Town, as it does not fulfill the requirements of the Rt. 1 Re-Development Plan to be a "Gateway" to Old Town. That the OHAD Guidelines need to be applied equitably not arbitrarily and capriciously as they would be if the BAR's decision to deny were overturned.

Additionally, we are aware of several zoning variances that are inconsistent with the Zoning Code, Zoning Ordinance, and the City Code which I have attached to this letter. Our community has highlighted these zoning variances to Mr. Patrick Silva at the Planning Commission on February 1, 2021, and to Ms. Gloria Sitton at the City Council on February 16, 2021, Mr. Karl Moritz in July 2021 (and continues to do so). Additionally, at the February 2, 2021 Planning Commission hearing and the February 20, 2021 City Council hearing for this project as well as at all subsequent BAR hearings, neighbors have testified about the aforementioned inconsistencies. *None* of these zoning variances were captured in the City staff reports brought forth before the Planning Commission on February 2, 2021, or to the City Council on February 20, 2021. At the very least, City officials should have received an opinion of the zoning variances through the Board of Zoning Appeals. However, as our neighbors have only been told, these inconsistencies will be resolved behind the scenes with staff and the appellant and that there will be no more public hearings or input to address these issues. It would appear that for any City entity-- board, commission or elected official to pass an entire 3-block project with such glaring violations would be reckless and would leave the City of Alexandria open to liability.

To conclude, I ask the members of the City Council to weigh heavily the serious and numerous shortcomings (and zoning ordinance inconsistencies) of this project. and to vote to **UPHOLD** the BAR's thoughtful and correct DENIAL of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the Heritage project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Cecily Crandall

Heritage Project Zoning Issues Related to BAR Appeal

City Code / General

Existing Code: **City Code Section 1-400 B-4** states: **"In the case of a conflict among various zone requirements, such as density, lot size, height and floor area ratio, permitted development shall comply with the most restrictive of such requirements."**

Noncompliance Category Issues:

None. The city code is good to know.

Zoning Ordinance / General

Existing Code: **The Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan)** is the base and underlying land use designation that's controlling the design features within the small area plan

Zoning Ordinance / Rezoning Agreement

Existing Code: **Zoning Ordinance 5165 Affordable Housing Recommendation 2.2** states **"rezoned properties are also subject to all other recommendations of the Strategy."**

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The applicant agreed to provide 140 committed affordable housing units in exchange for the rezoned property, bonus density and subject to all recommendations in the Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan) however the applicant does not appear to be adhering to all recommendations.

Zoning Ordinance / BAR

Existing Code: **Page 21 of Zoning Ordinance 5165:** **"Additionally, a portion of the core area lies within the Old and Historic Alexandria District (OHAD), as shown in Figure 3.2. Buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary will be subject to Board of Architectural Review"**

Noncompliance Category Issues:

Per the Zoning Ordinance 5165, BAR reviews buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary.

Existing Code: **Page 77 of Zoning Ordinance 5165:** **"The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) reviews all buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary...Additionally, redevelopment of Blocks 1 and 2, which are located within the OHAD boundary, will require BAR review."**

Noncompliance Category Issues:

Per the Zoning Ordinance 5165, BAR reviews buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary.

Zoning Code / Height

Existing Code: **Zoning Code RMF Zone 3–1407 Height.** The maximum permitted of buildings shall be the height as depicted in the governing small area plan (Zoning Ordinance 5165).

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The application building height exceeds the height limits in the Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan) and exhibits noncompliance with this zoning code.

Zoning Ordinance / Height

Existing Code: **Zoning Ordinance 5165—recommendation 3.1, and Table 1, Notes 4 & 5 regarding height and ensuring compatibility with the neighborhood.**

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The application exhibits noncompliance with the Zoning Ordinance 5165 height limits, and compatibility with the neighborhood.

Existing Code: **Zoning Ordinance 5165 Affordable Housing Recommendation 2.1** states “use additional density and height as a tool to incentivize the retention of all existing committed affordable units of which 140 units for the Heritage are applicable here”.

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The application has used additional height for committed affordable units in excess of 140 units already retained and those are outside the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan).

Existing Code: **Zoning Ordinance 5165 Table 1 Note 5** states Section 7–700 is “subject to compliance with the Strategy’s affordable housing, planning, and land use recommendations”.

Noncompliance Category Issues:

This request for additional height/density for extra units exhibits noncompliance with the Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan) recommendations as required if the property is rezoned. Please review the other Zoning Ordinance 5165 issues in this document that show how the application exhibits noncompliance with Zoning Ordinance 5165.

Zoning Code / Height Block 2

Existing Code: **“Zoning Code 7-703—Limits on increases which may be allowed**

(B) Height may not be increased pursuant to this section by more than 25 feet beyond the height otherwise permitted by this ordinance; provided, however, that no building located in any zone or height district where the maximum allowable height is 50 feet or less may be allowed to exceed such height limits.

Noncompliance Category Issues:

Application exhibits noncompliance with Zoning Code 7-703(B) by using bonus height on Block 2 where the Height District Map states the height limit is 50 feet. The exiting 62 ft. building is addressed under another Zoning Code 12-102.

Zoning Code/Height Block 2 and 1

Existing Code: **“Zoning Code 6-403—General regulations and exceptions.**

Relationship of height to setback. In all height districts, the allowable height of a building at any point shall not exceed twice the distance from the face of the building at that point to the centerline of the street facing such building.

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The application building heights and setbacks exhibit noncompliance with Zoning Code 6-402 regarding the Height District Map Limit of 50 feet on Block 2 and setbacks for all blocks.

Zoning Code / Height Block 2—reconstruction of 62 ft. bldg.

Existing Code: **"Zoning Code 12-102—Noncomplying structures.**

Noncomplying structures shall be permitted to continue indefinitely and shall be considered legal structures, but subject to the following restrictions:

(B) Reconstruction. If a noncomplying structure is destroyed, demolished or otherwise removed, it may be reconstructed provided that there is no increase in the floor area ratio, density, height or degree of noncompliance which existed prior to such destruction."

Noncompliance Category Issues:

Zoning Code 12-102 (B) The application's new building on Block 2 has increased in the floor area ratio, density, height and degree of noncompliance which did not exist prior to such destruction. The replacement building exhibits noncompliance with this code therefore the new building does not qualify for the prior height of 62 ft. therefore the application must now adhere to the 50 height limit per the Height District Map.

Zoning Ordinance / Scale

Existing Code: **Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan) Table 1, Note 5 states "ensuring the building scale is compatible with the neighborhood and intent of the Strategy"**

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The building scale dominates the neighborhood and is not compatible with it. The intent of the strategy was for the buildings to be blend with the neighborhood not overwhelm it. It appears that the application's building scale is neither compatible with the neighborhood nor with the intent of the Strategy.

Other Non-Compliant Issues

Zoning Code/ x - FAR

SUP requests for Section 7-700 bonus height and RMF Zone 3-1406(B) FAR up to 3.03 bonus density use should be denied. Applying Section 7-700 bonus height, for additional affordable units in excess of 140 Heritage units already retained, to RMF zone 3-1406(B) bonus density use is not in compliance with the RMF zone Sec. 3-1401, 3-1406(B), 3-1407 & Zoning Ordinance (small area plan) Recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 & 3.34 limiting bonus density use to retaining 140 Heritage units, plus additional city codes and zoning codes.

Zoning Ordinance RMF Zone-3-1406(B) SUP FAR bonus density use, per Ordinance 5165 Recommendations 2.1 and 3.34, states "the floor area ratio may be increased to an amount not to exceed 3.0 if the applicant commits to providing committed affordable housing." These units are defined in the Zoning Ordinance (small area plan) as the retention/preservation of the 140 Heritage units and this bonus density use tool is limited to those units, not other uses such as 55 or any number of additional units in excess of the 140 units already retained.

Zoning Ordinance/ x - FAR

Ordinance 5165 Strategy Planning and Land Use Recommendation 3.34 states "the additional FAR provided by the new zone (RMF zone Section 3-1406) is available to the affordable housing sites (1, 2 & 4) that provide the recommended committed affordable housing units (as stated in 2.1)." There is no mention of affordable units in excess of the 140 already retained.

Zoning Code/ x - Parking

Does not comply with Sec. 8-200 (A) (2)(a) (ii)(i)(B) and (C), Parking Reduction. Walkability distance credits: The applicant shall provide a scaled area plan or map showing the location of the project site...qualifying uses are based on walking distance. The application does not qualify for parking reductions requested per their own document.

Zoning Code/ x - Units

Does not comply with Zoning code 3-1400: Residential Multifamily (RMF) Zone 3-1401. The RMF zone is established to provide land areas for multifamily residential development and to enhance or preserve long-term affordability of housing. Extra units in excess of 140 affordable units does not comply with the Zoning code nor does it comply with the Zoning Ordinance (small area plan) where the purpose is the retain 140 HUD units.

Strategy Ordinance 5165—the objective of this ordinance is to preserve 140 HUD units, not adding them.

Does not comply with Zoning Ordinance NO. 5165: The Strategy Objective is to preserve 140 affordable units. Extra units in excess of 140 affordable units does not comply with the Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning Code / x- Height

Zoning Code 3-1401 RMF zone—this SUP requesting additional height results in adding extra affordable housing units to the small area plan and RMF zone yet the small area plan and zone is restricted to enhancing or preserving affordable units, not adding units.

Zoning Ordinance / x- Units

SUP requests for Section 7-700 bonus height and 3-1406(B) FAR up to 3.03 bonus density use should be denied. Applying Section 7-700 bonus height, for additional affordable units in excess of 140 Heritage units already retained, to RMF zone 3-1406(B) bonus density use is not in compliance with the RMF zone Sec. 3-1401, 3-1406(B), 3-1407 & Recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 & 3.34 limiting bonus density use to retaining 140 Heritage units, plus additional city codes and zoning ordinances.

16
11-13-21

To the members of the City Council:

A 35-year resident of Old Town, I write to urge you to reject the appeal from the developers of the Heritage proposal.

In its most recent meeting, the BAR, which has a clear legal charge, properly voted against the proposal because it violates several provisions of law, rules, and regulations. It would be wrong for Council to overrule that vote, which was based on sound reasoning and valid requirements.

If Council can overrule decisions of boards and commissions just because a majority of Council members wants to, then why have boards and commissions in the first place?

Surely the memory of Council's actions on SROs should be foremost in your minds.

Others with competence I lack have detailed the ways in which the Heritage proposal is in violation of several provisions of statutes, rules, and regulations. A recent national administration's approach, when faced with proposals that failed to meet established standards, was to go ahead and let others sort it out later. Surely we do not want a Council that embraces the same approach!

Please, in the interests of proper procedure, reject the Heritage appeal.

Albert C. Pierce
320 S. Alfred St.
Alexandria VA

The height, mass and scale of the current design of the Heritage redevelopment project is incongruous with the Old and Historic Alexandria District and its design guidelines. The height in particular flouts the OHAD height limits. To give one developer a break on height is to open the floodgates to other developers making the same request, and at the rate that development is happening in this City, before you know it, the historic district is no more.

There are ways to make this current design more compatible with the Old and Historic Alexandria District, and the developer was offered ample opportunities through the course of multiple concept reviews to do just that. And surely if the developer were truly interested, it could still work with the community to find a design solution that strikes a compromise and respects the rules of the community it is building in, instead of having to ask for special treatment from the Council.

I would hope that jeopardizing the historic district and the economic benefits the historic district brings is not in Council's interest. I also hope it is not in Council's interest to blatantly apply one set of rules to citizens and another set of rules to developers.

To be clear, it should be noted that upholding the BAR's denial and preserving the historic district doesn't mean that affordable housing shouldn't be and isn't a priority. In fact, if it were a true priority, this project itself could be designed within the historic district guidelines and pass the BAR easily — and could've done so from the get go so the project would be under way.

The need for affordable housing is beyond the scope of one project of course, and City Council and this region as a whole need to look at innovative measures to help people of all economic means afford housing, whether that be rental housing or home ownership. In addition to initiatives that directly help tenants and homeowners and encouraging adaptive reuse of existing commercial buildings, expanding the metro system and the VRE to better serve the region and allow room for the population to grow without enduring ridiculous commutes should be prioritized, too. In this era of climate change, it would also behoove the City to preserve green space and improve our tree canopy, instead of taking away such space as this current project design does. We can work toward all of these goals and make progress, without sacrificing the historic district and its tangible and intangible benefits in the process.

Best regards,
Rachel Sheedy
Old Town Alexandria resident

November 11, 2021

To: Mayor Wilson and City Council

Re: November 13th City Council Meeting, BAR APPEAL #2021-00341 OHAD, item #16

I write to join my neighbors and fellow citizens to ask City Council to deny the applicant's appeal and uphold the BAR's denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the Heritage redevelopment project.

The City Council has appointed highly qualified members to the Board of Architectural Review, and Council should uphold the decision of this group of experts. By doing so, Council not only supports the Board that Council themselves appointed, but makes it clear that the Council is steadfast in the commitment to upholding the City of Alexandria's crown jewel — the Old and Historic Alexandria District.

To quote the large historical marker sign outside the Alexandria Visitor Center on 221 King Street, "In 1946, Alexandria created the third historic district in the United States to protect its 18th- and 19th-century buildings." When I asked the Visit Alexandria CEO about historic preservation during the Spring 2021 City Academy, the reply I received is that it is the authenticity of our historic district that is a key driver to our success as a tourist destination. It is the city's historic buildings and Old Town charm that draws many tourists, residents and businesses, and propels the City to the top of "best of" lists, including most recently in October when Alexandria was named the "#3 Best Small City in the U.S.," according to the 2021 Condé Nast Traveler Readers' Choice Awards.

The buildings in the historic district that now attract media attention, visitors and visitors' dollars alike didn't survive all by themselves: It took concerted effort by many citizens of the City of Alexandria through the years to save the buildings we still have today. The creation of a historic district was a significant step to protecting the buildings that still remain standing through hundreds of years, honoring the craftspeople whose work has lasted through the test of time. Protecting and preserving the historic district is not only in the interest of historic preservation, but it is also in the interest of protecting the economic engine of tourism, which will help power this City as we recover and rise out of the pandemic and bring dollars to help provide funding for solutions to problems the City faces.

What does protecting the historic district mean at this very moment? Upholding the standards set by the historic district design guidelines, which the BAR has done with its denial. Those guidelines do—and should—apply to all property owners in the historic district, not just to individual homeowners but to developers of multifamily and commercial buildings as well.

To Members of the City Council,

Friday, 12 November 2021

I write this letter in support of the Board of Architectural Review's (BAR) 5-2 vote on October 20, 2021 to deny the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness (BAR #2021-00341) to the applicant, *Heritage at Old Town PropCo LLC*.

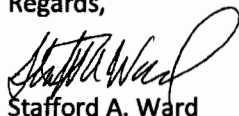
The BAR engaged in four concept reviews of the architectural designs submitted by the applicant with no formal approval votes taken until October 20, 2021. However, during those reviews, each BAR member expressed widely differing opinions on whether the architectural designs were consistent with the ten factors identified in Section 10-105(A)(2) of the *Zoning Ordinance of the City of Alexandria*. In addition, the applicant made little or no changes to the architectural designs requested by BAR over the four concept reviews, and the applicant stated at the October 6 BAR hearing that no changes would be made to the designs. The applicant's statement harkened back to BAR Chairperson, Ms. Christine Roberts, who inquired with the applicant during the September 2, 2020 BAR by stating: *"Why are you asking for our opinion if what we get back isn't actually changed? It's just more lipstick on a pig."*

More importantly, the views and opinions of myself and my neighbors residing the Southwest Quadrant (SWQ) have either been significantly marginalized, or ignored. I am aware of several zoning variances that are inconsistent with the Zoning Code, Zoning Ordinance, and the City Code which I have attached to this letter. My community highlighted these zoning variances to Mr. Patrick Silva at the Planning Commission on February 1, 2021, and to Ms. Gloria Sitton at the City Council on February 16, 2021. None of these zoning variances were captured in the City staff reports brought forth before the Planning Commission on February 2, 2021, or to the City Council on February 20, 2021.

Since the City Council voted to pass the South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy (SPSHAS) in September 2018 (and adopted in October 2018), I have been extremely frustrated in understanding the City's entire application process submitted by real estate investment firms, or other commercial developers. Although my inquiries to better under the application process were sent to the Department of Planning & Zoning, the BAR, and the Planning Commission, their collective answers have either been limited, or contradictory at best.

If the City Council decides to overrule the BAR's denial, and thus, overrule the input provided by its constituents, I ask that the City Council approve the application with conditions to fully review the zoning variances identified by the SWQ residents that were not captured in the City staff reports. The conditions should also include reducing the height of the three proposed buildings consistent with the SPAHS (page 31) at 55 feet.

Regards,



Stafford A. Ward

600 Block of South Columbus St.

Zoning Variations with regard to the Heritage Redevelopment Plan

Zoning Ordinance / General

Existing Code: The Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan) is the base and underlying land use designation that's controlling the design features within the small area plan

Zoning Ordinance / Rezoning Agreement

Existing Code: Zoning Ordinance 5165 Affordable Housing Recommendation 2.2 states "rezoned properties are also subject to all other recommendations of the Strategy."

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The applicant agreed to provide 140 committed affordable housing units in exchange for the re-zoned property, bonus density and subject to all recommendations in Zoning Ordinance 5165.

Zoning Ordinance / BAR

Existing Code: Page 21 of Zoning Ordinance 5165: "Additionally, a portion of the core area lies within the Old and Historic Alexandria District (OHAD), as shown in Figure 3.2. Buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary will be subject to Board of Architectural Review"

Noncompliance Category Issues:

Per the Zoning Ordinance 5165, BAR reviews buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary.

Existing Code: Page 77 of Zoning Ordinance 5165: "The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) reviews all buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary...Additionally, redevelopment of Blocks 1 and 2, which are located within the OHAD boundary, will require BAR review."

Noncompliance Category Issues:

Per the Zoning Ordinance 5165, BAR reviews buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary.

Zoning Code / Height

Existing Code: Zoning Code RMF Zone 3-1407 Height. The maximum permitted of buildings shall be the height as depicted in the governing small area plan (Zoning Ordinance 5165).

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The application building height exceeds the height limits in the Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan) and exhibits noncompliance with this zoning code.

Zoning Ordinance / Height

Existing Code: **Zoning Ordinance 5165—recommendation 3.1, and Table 1, Notes 4 & 5 regarding height and ensuring compatibility with the neighborhood.**

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The application exhibits noncompliance with the Zoning Ordinance 5165 height limits, and compatibility with the neighborhood.

Existing Code: **Zoning Ordinance 5165 Affordable Housing Recommendation 2.1 states “use additional density and height as a tool to incentivize the retention of all existing committed affordable units of which 140 units for the Heritage are applicable here.”**

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The application has used additional height for committed affordable units in excess of 140 units already retained and those are outside the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan).

Existing Code: **Zoning Ordinance 5165 Table 1 Note 5 states Section 7–700 is “subject to compliance with the Strategy’s affordable housing, planning, and land use recommendations”.**

Noncompliance Category Issues:

This request for additional height/density for extra units exhibits noncompliance with the Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan) recommendations as required if the property is rezoned. Please review the other Zoning Ordinance 5165 issues in this document that show how the application exhibits noncompliance with Zoning Ordinance 5165.

Zoning Code / Height Block 2

Existing Code: **“Zoning Code 7-703—Limits on increases which may be allowed**

(B) Height may not be increased pursuant to this section by more than 25 feet beyond the height otherwise permitted by this ordinance; provided, however, that no building located in any zone or height district where the maximum allowable height is 50 feet or less may be allowed to exceed such height limits.

Noncompliance Category Issues:

Application exhibits noncompliance with Zoning Code 7-703(B) by using bonus height on Block 2 where the Height District Map states the height limit is 50 feet. The exiting 62 ft. building is addressed under another Zoning Code 12-102.

Zoning Code/Height Block 2 and 1

Existing Code: **“Zoning Code 6-403—General regulations and exceptions.**

Relationship of height to setback. In all height districts, the allowable height of a building at any point shall not exceed twice the distance from the face of the building at that point to the centerline of the street facing such building.

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The application building heights and setbacks exhibit noncompliance with Zoning Code 6–402 regarding the Height District Map Limit of 50 feet on Block 2 and setbacks for all blocks.

Zoning Code / Height Block 2— Reconstruction of 62 ft. bldg.

Existing Code: "Zoning Code 12-102—Noncomplying structures.

Noncomplying structures shall be permitted to continue indefinitely and shall be considered legal structures, but subject to the following restrictions:

(B) Reconstruction. If a noncomplying structure is destroyed, demolished or otherwise removed, it may be reconstructed provided that there is no increase in the floor area ratio, density, height or degree of noncompliance which existed prior to such destruction."

Noncompliance Category Issues:

Zoning Code 12-102 (B) The application's new building on Block 2 has increased in the floor area ratio, density, height and degree of noncompliance which did not exist prior to such destruction. The replacement building exhibits noncompliance with this code therefore the new building does not qualify for the prior height of 62 ft. therefore the application must now adhere to the 50 height limit per the Height District Map.

Zoning Ordinance / Scale

Existing Code: Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan) Table 1, Note 5 states "ensuring the building scale is compatible with the neighborhood and intent of the Strategy"

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The building scale dominates the neighborhood and is not compatible with it. The intent of the strategy was for the buildings to be blend with the neighborhood not overwhelm it. It appears that the application's building scale is neither compatible with the neighborhood nor with the intent of the Strategy.

To: Mayor Wilson and Members of City Council
From: Ellen Mosher
Date: 11/11/21
Re: 11/13/21 Hearing - DOCKET ITEM 16 - BAR #2021-00341 OHAD Heritage Project

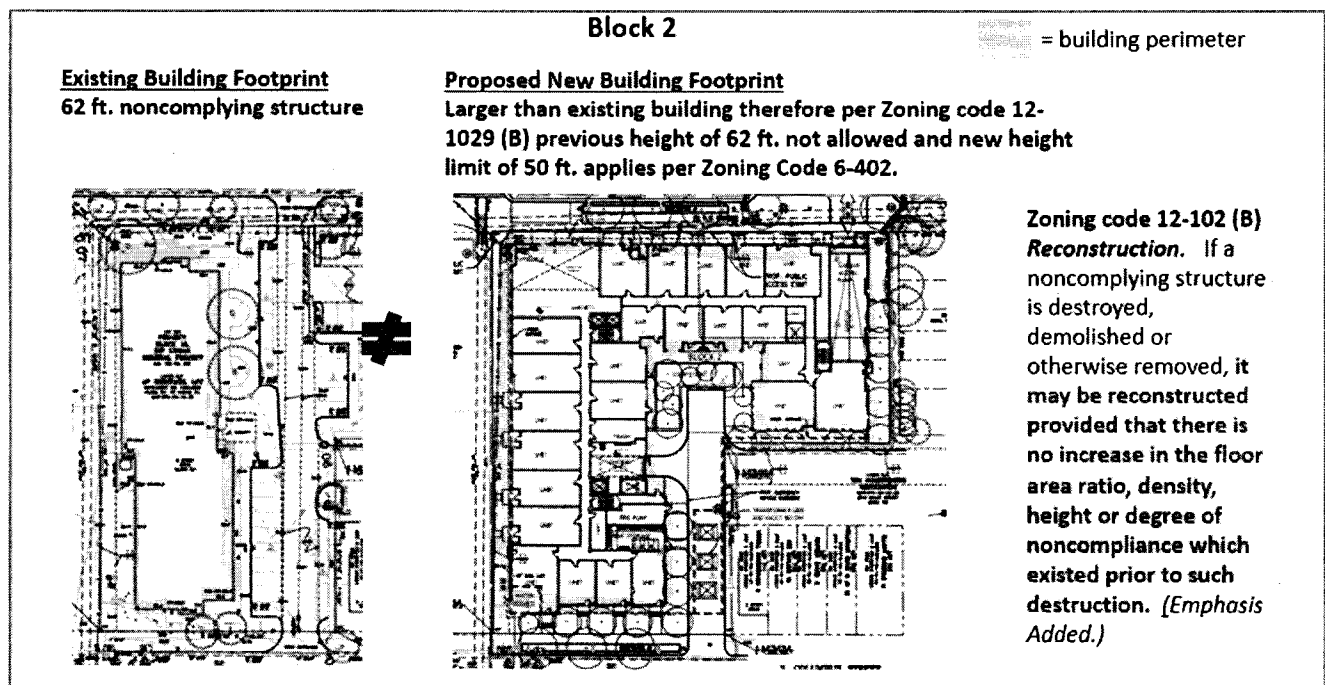
I support the Board of Architectural Review's (BAR) 5-2 vote on October 20, 2021 to deny the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness (BAR #2021-00341) to the applicant, Heritage at Old Town PropCo LLC.

This application does not comply with the factors identified in Zoning Ordinance Section 10-105(A)(2) and does not qualify for a Certificate of Appropriateness. Please note these two important points about Zoning Ordinance 5165 and BAR's purview of Blocks 1 and 2 (details on the attached 2 pages):

- Per Zoning Ordinance 5165, 2.2, rezoned properties are also subject to all other recommendations of the Strategy.
- Per Zoning Ordinance 5165, Blocks 1 and 2 are under BAR's purview and subject to Board of Architectural Review.

In addition, the height and scale exhibit noncompliance with Zoning Codes and Zoning Ordinances, yet zoning variances have not been requested. Below are a recaps of the details on the attached 2 pages.

- Per Zoning Codes 12-102 (B), 6-402, 6-403, 7-703, on Block new building replacing the existing 62 ft. building is not identical in size therefore does not qualifies for height of 62 ft. The Height District Map for Block 2 is 50 ft. and bonus density height exceeding 50 ft. the is not allowed. Please see below illustration.



- Per Zoning Ordinance 5165 recommendations 2.1, 3.1, Table 1, Notes 4 & 5, extra height is subject to compliance with the recommendations and this application exhibits noncompliance with them.
- Per Zoning Ordinance 5165 Table 1, Note 5 section 7-700 is subject to "ensuring the building scale is compatible with the neighborhood and intent of the Strategy". With Section 7-700, the 80 ft. height and density on Blocks 1 and 2 makes the building scale not compatible with the neighborhood and not with the intent of the Strategy.

These zoning variance issues are concerning and should have been resolved before submitting the BAR application, per BAR guidelines. There's a disconnect between the plain meaning of city codes, ordinances and policies, and this application. Leeway can be given if it's a question of interpretation, however these codes, ordinances and policies are unambiguous and clearly state what needs to be done. Please support BAR's vote to deny the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

Argument

Zoning Ordinance / Rezoning Agreement

Existing Code: Page 13 of Zoning Ordinance 5165 Affordable Housing Recommendation 2.2 states "rezoned properties are also subject to all other recommendations of the Strategy."

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The has applicant agreed to provide 140 committed affordable housing units in exchange for the re-zoned property, bonus density and subject to all other recommendations in the Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan) however the applicant does not appear to be adhering to all recommendations.

Zoning Ordinance / BAR

Existing Code: Page 17 of Zoning Ordinance 5165: "Additionally, a portion of the core area lies within the Old and Historic Alexandria District (OHAD), as shown in Figure 3.2. Buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary will be subject to Board of Architectural Review"

Category Issues:

Per the Zoning Ordinance 5165, BAR reviews buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary. Please note, the building on Block 1 is one large building.

Existing Code: Page 73 of Zoning Ordinance 5165: "The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) reviews all buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary... Additionally, redevelopment of Blocks 1 and 2, which are located within the OHAD boundary, will require BAR review."

Category Issues:

Per the Zoning Ordinance 5165, BAR reviews buildings located wholly or partially within the OHAD boundary. Please note, the building on Block 1 is one large building.

Zoning Code / Height Block 2—reconstruction of 62 ft. bldg.

Existing Code: "Zoning Code 12-102—Noncomplying structures.

Noncomplying structures shall be permitted to continue indefinitely and shall be considered legal structures, but subject to the following restrictions:

(B) Reconstruction. If a noncomplying structure is destroyed, demolished or otherwise removed, it may be reconstructed provided that there is no increase in the floor area ratio, density, height or degree of noncompliance which existed prior to such destruction."

Noncompliance Category Issues:

Zoning Code 12-102 (B) The applicant's new building on Block 2 has increased in the floor area ratio, density, height and degree of noncompliance which did not exist prior to such destruction. The replacement building exhibits noncompliance with this code therefore the new building does not qualify for the prior height of 62 ft. therefore the applicant must now adhere to the 50 height limit per the Height District Map. *See illustration above.*

Existing Code: "Zoning Code 7-703—Limits on increases which may be allowed

(B) Height may not be increased pursuant to this section by more than 25 feet beyond the height otherwise permitted by this ordinance; provided, however, that no building located in any zone or height district where the maximum allowable height is 50 feet or less may be allowed to exceed such height limits."

Noncompliance Category Issues:

Application exhibits noncompliance with Zoning Code 7-703(B) by using bonus height on Block 2 where Zoning Code 6-402 (above) states the height limit is 50 ft. and the use of bonus height exceeding 50 ft. is also prohibited. The existing 62 ft. building is addressed under Zoning Code 12-102.

Zoning Code / Height

Existing Code: "Zoning Code 6-402—Operation of height districts.

"The maximum heights of buildings and structures shall be as specified for each zone, except that no building or structure shall be erected to a height in excess of the height shown on the applicable Height District Map. If the regulations of a particular zone allow an increase in height to be authorized by special use permit, the maximum height authorized under such a special use permit shall not exceed the height shown on the applicable height district map. The regulations and exceptions set forth in section 6-403 are applicable in each height district, and are to be read in conjunction with the height limitations contained in the various zones. In all cases, the lowest applicable height limitation shall prevail."

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The applicant's building height on Block 2 exhibits noncompliance with Zoning Code 6-402 regarding the Height District Map Limit of 50 ft. on Block 2. Please note this Zoning Code also prohibits bonus height that exceeds the Height District Map Limit of 50 ft.

Existing Code: "Zoning Code 6-403—General regulations and exceptions.

Relationship of height to setback. In all height districts, the allowable height of a building at any point shall not exceed twice the distance from the face of the building at that point to the centerline of the street facing such building.

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The applicant's building heights and setbacks exhibit noncompliance with Zoning Code 6-402 regarding the Height District Map Limit of 50 feet on Block 2 and setbacks for all blocks.

Zoning Ordinance / Height

Existing Code: Zoning Ordinance 5165—recommendation 3.1, and Table 1, Notes 4 & 5 regarding height and ensuring compatibility with the neighborhood.

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The application exhibits noncompliance with the Zoning Ordinance 5165 height limits, and compatibility with the neighborhood of two and three story charming row houses.

Existing Code: Zoning Ordinance 5165 Affordable Housing Recommendation 2.1 states "use additional density and height as a tool to incentivize the retention of all existing committed affordable units of which 140 units for the Heritage are applicable here".

Noncompliance Category Issues:

The applicant has used additional height for committed affordable units in excess of 140 units already retained and those are outside the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan).

Existing Code: Zoning Ordinance 5165 Table 1 Note 5 states Section 7-700 is "subject to compliance with the Strategy's affordable housing, planning, and land use recommendations".

Noncompliance Category Issues:

This request for additional height/density for extra units exhibits noncompliance with the Zoning Ordinance 5165 (small area plan) recommendations as required if the property is rezoned. Please review the other Zoning Ordinance 5165 issues in this document that show how the application exhibits noncompliance with Zoning Ordinance 5165.

Michael McConnell
432 South Columbus Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

November 12, 2021

Alexandria City Council
301 King St.
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear Mayor Wilson and Members of the City Council,

I am writing with regard to the Heritage of Old Town PropCo LLC's appeal of the Board of Architectural Review's denial for a Certificate of Appropriateness. I would ask that the City Council deny the appeal and ask the applicant to work with city officers to ensure that Alexandria's own ordinances, regulations, and standards are met. As I have stated in previous hearings regarding this project, I have no objection to the plans to increase the affordable housing supply in the neighborhood. However, the current project requires dimensions and scale that are incompatible with the neighborhood, the South Patrick Street Affordable Housing Strategy (SPSAHS, adopted by City Ordinance 5165), and the Board of Architectural Review's guidelines for new construction in this district. My comments are specifically focused on Block 2 of the application.

First, the statement that the current plan is compatible with the objectives of the SPSAHS is not correct. The plan selectively follows certain aspects of the plan, while ignoring fundamental objectives codified in the SPSAHS. The SPSAHS objectives include:

- **"Focus taller building height generally on South Patrick Street and apply a variety of building heights to achieve compatibility with the existing neighborhood."**

This objective of the SPSAHS is on equal standing to the plan's objective of preserving the 215 affordable units. Block 2 of the design does not adhere to this, however, as it presents an 80-foot building on Alfred and Columbus Streets. Previous statements by city officials, staff, and the applicant, that this design is compatible with the SPSAHS are simply incorrect.

Second, the City of Alexandria's "Design Guidelines for the Old and Historic District and the Parker-Gray District" state under its section on height and massing (page 4 of the "New Residential Construction" Chapter) that:

- **"Multi-family structures such as apartment buildings often exceed the prevailing height of single family houses. Such structures may be constructed to the permitted height by zone, but should not overwhelm adjacent buildings."** (emphasis added)

The BAR made clear that this issue is one of the key factors that led to the denial for a Certificate of Appropriateness. More specifically, the current building on the Block 2 location is already the tallest building on Columbus and Alfred Streets. The application proposes increasing the height by an additional 25 percent. That is not a trivial increase. The building shares the city block with other residences and all the adjacent buildings would be less than half the height of the proposed Block 2. In addition to the added height, the design would result in a substantially larger footprint than the current

building that would wrap around and close off its neighbors. This design would certainly overwhelm the adjacent homes and buildings, not only from the perspective on the street as presented by the applicant, but also from within the homes and outdoor spaces of the adjacent properties.

Finally, this application will likely set a precedent for the development of other properties in the SPSAHS-- most notably Old Town West III, which shares many of the same characteristics of Block 2. The end result could be multiple 80-foot buildings on residential streets within the Old and Historic District, that are book ended by adjacent properties of 25-35 foot townhomes. This is not a desirable outcome for the city from an urban planning standpoint, is it not a just outcome for individual property owners that must follow city ordinances and BAR rulings, and does not reflect the text or spirit of the SPSAHS.

I thank the Council for its time and service to the City. There is an opportunity to redevelop and improve this part of the city, expand affordable housing and the overall housing stock, and maintain the spirit that has made this city such an attractive place to live for so many people. At the same time, the city must enforce its own ordinances consistently and transparently in order to realize those goals. I hope the council provides a reasonable decision and facilitates an outcome that meets all—not just a selective subset—of the priorities laid out by the SPSAHS and the city's own guidelines.

Sincerely,

Michael McConnell

16
11-13-21

To: Mayor Wilson and City Council
From: Charles and Jane Weber
Date: 11 November 2021
Re: November 13, 2021 Hearing, DOCKET ITEM #16, BAR #2021-00341 OHAD.

We are writing to urge Council to affirm the Board of Architectural Review denial of Certificate of Appropriateness for the Heritage development and deny the Applicant request for reversal of the BAR decision .

The Staff Report states: "New construction must conform to the requirements of the applicable small area plan chapter of the Master Plan." "With the approval of the DSUP, City Council found that the proposed buildings are in compliance with the adopted South Patrick Street Affordable Housing Strategy". This appears to be a conflict:

- Heritage is only three of the nine blocks in the Small Area Plan, yet the Heritage plan is for 750 units (85%) of the 889 +/- total units estimated in the total nine block plan. Is this the precedent for the remaining six blocks? Will those six blocks be limited to approximately 139 units?
- The Small Area Plan recommends height limits for individual blocks, but through the approval process the building heights have grown from a recommended 45-55 feet to 78+ feet. Section 7-700 bonus height and density states that with it the building scale must be compatible with the neighborhood and intent of SAP.
- "Staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for new construction with the following conditions..." The design revision "conditions" in the Council Staff Report recommendation for approval would remove the BAR from the final design and staff would make the final determinations.

The proposed development does not meet the requirements of the "Purpose of Zoning for the Old and Historic District".

Zoning Ordinance: Sec. 10-100 - Old and Historic Alexandria District.

10-101 - Purpose

- (G) To assure that new structures, additions, landscaping, and related elements *be in harmony with their historical and architectural setting and environs*; and
- (H) To safeguard the city's portion of the George Washington Memorial Parkway and *other significant routes of tourist access to the city's historic resources* by assuring that development in and along those transportation arteries be in keeping with their historical, cultural and traditional setting.

Please see the Presentation Document prepared for the BAR outlining the non-compliance issues that should have been addressed *before* a Certificate of Appropriateness was considered. Adding arches to a few windows and faux gables does not make the buildings in character with the Old and Historic District. Adding cornices to the tops of the flat roofs does not diminish the height of these buildings towering over the two and three story houses in the neighborhood. Slightly recessing sections of the facade and specifying a multitude of materials, does not diminish the massive scale. Purposely designing a streetscape that is boring and bland so as to not distract from the historic houses across the street seems depressing for the neighbors who will have that as their view. The minor design changes throughout the four BAR Concept reviews and additional Certificate of Appropriateness sessions have not resulted in a project that is suited to the surrounding neighborhood.

Please affirm the BAR denial of the Certificate of Appropriateness.

Sincerely
Jane and Charles Weber
407 South Saint Asaph Street

Presentation to
City Council
13 November 2021
Heritage Project
BAR #2021-00341 OHAD



SUMMARY



- **Does not comply** with 11-503 (A (6), 11-504 (A)(3), 11-504(B)(10), 11-504(B)(11) criteria for approval of Section 7-700 bonus height for affordable units in excess of 140 affordable units already preserved for the Heritage.
Page 3, 19-26
- **Does not comply** with 6-402, 6-403(A), 12-102 (B), 7-703, Sec. 8-200 (A) (2) (a) (ii)(i)(B) and (C), 3-1401, 3-1407 related to height, setbacks, parking reductions and bonus density use.
Page 4
- Heritage Development represents 85% of the total units planned in the 9 Block South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy
Pages 6-12
- **Does not comply** with Zoning Ordinance NO. 5165: The Strategy Objective is to **preserve 140 affordable units**.
Page 8-9
- **Does not comply** with Zoning Ordinance 3-1400: Residential MultiFamily (RMF) Zone 3-1401. The RMF zone is established to provide land areas for multifamily residential development and to enhance or *preserve* longterm affordability of housing.
Page 10
- **Does not comply** with 3-1407 Height. The maximum permitted of buildings shall be the height as depicted in the governing small area plan.
Page 10
- **Does not comply with Sec. 8-200 (A) (2) (a) (ii)(i)(B) and (C), Parking Reduction.** Walkability distance credits: The applicant shall provide a scaled area plan or map showing the location of the project site... qualifying uses are based on walking distance and not a radius. **The application does not qualify for parking reductions** provided a radius map with establishments outside the walkability zone.
Page 13
- **Does not comply** with 12-102 (B) Reconstruction. The Block 2 proposed new building must comply with the 50 FT Old Town Building Height Limit.
Page 15-16
- City Code Section 1-400 B-4 states: "In the case of a conflict among various zone requirements, such as density, lot size, height and floor area ratio, permitted development shall comply with the most restrictive of such requirements."
Page 17

SUP APPLICATION PROCEDURES



SUP Application Procedures for Section 7–700 Bonus Height and/or Density and Section 3–1406 FAR up to 3.03 Bonus Density

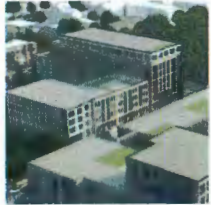
SUP requests for Section 7–700 bonus height and 3–1406(B) FAR up to 3.03 bonus density use should be DENIED. Applying Section 7–700 bonus height, for additional affordable units in excess of 140 Heritage units already retained, to RMF zone 3–1406(B) bonus density use is not in compliance with the RMF zone Sec. 3–1401, 3–1406(B), 3–1407 & Recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 & 3.34 limiting bonus density use to retaining 140 Heritage units, plus additional city codes and zoning ordinances.

- 11–503 (A)(6) Include: Plans and other documents exhibiting compliance with any other requirements contained in this ordinance for the special use proposed.
- **11–504 Considerations on review.**
- 11–504 (A) The city council may approve the application, **provided all regulations and provisions of law have been complied with**, if it finds that the use for which the permit is sought:
 - 11–504 (A) (3) Will substantially conform to the master plan of the city.
 - 11–504 (B) In reviewing the application, the city council may take into consideration the following factors where it determines that such factors are relevant and such consideration appropriate:
 - 11–504 (B)(10) Whether the proposed use will have any substantial or undue adverse effect upon, or will lack amenity or **will be incompatible with**, the use or enjoyment of adjacent and surrounding property, **the character of the neighborhood, traffic conditions, parking**, utility facilities, and other matters affecting the public health, safety and general welfare.
 - 11–504 (B) In reviewing the application, the city council may take into consideration the following factors where it determines that such factors are relevant and such consideration appropriate:
 - 11–504 (B) (11) Whether the proposed use will be constructed, arranged and operated so as not to dominate the immediate vicinity or to interfere with the development and use of neighboring property in accordance with the applicable zone regulations.
 - **In determining whether the proposed use will so dominate the immediate neighborhood, consideration may be given to:**(a) **The location, nature, height, mass and scale of buildings, structures, walls, and fences on the site;** and(b) **The nature and extent of landscaping and screening on the site.**

RESPONSE:

- Zoning code 11–503(A)(6)—Plans and documents exhibit noncompliance with the requirements contained in this ordinance for the special use permit.
- Zoning code 11–504(A)—Plans for Block 2 exhibit noncompliance with height limit and relationship to height setback.
- Zoning code 11–504(A)(3)—Plans exhibit noncompliance with RMF zone purpose and height limit.
- Zoning Code 11–504 (B)(10)—Plans exhibit noncompliance of incompatibility with the character of the neighborhood
- Zoning Code 11–504 (B)(11)—Plans exhibit noncompliance by dominating the immediate neighborhood with building location, height, mass and scale.

SUP APPLICATION PROCEDURES



Summary of Noncompliance for Section 7-700 SUP and Section 3-1406 Requests, Continued

SUP requests for Section 7-700 bonus height and 3-1406(B) FAR up to 3.03 bonus density use should be DENIED. Applying Section 7-700 bonus height, for additional affordable units in excess of 140 Heritage units already retained, to RMF zone 3-1406(B) bonus density use is not in compliance with the RMF zone Sec. 3-1401, 3-1406(B), 3-1407 & Recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 3.1 & 3.34 limiting bonus density use to retaining 140 Heritage units, plus additional city codes and zoning ordinances.

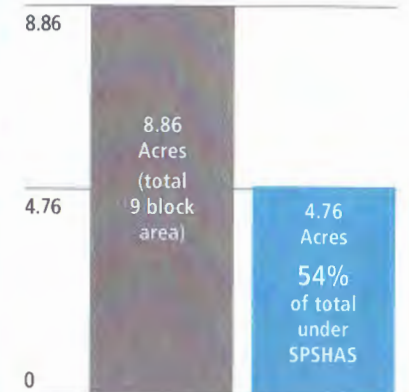
- **Zoning code 6-402** Old Town Height limit of 50 feet on Block 2—plans exhibit noncompliance with the height limit.
- **Zoning code 6-403(A)** Relationship to height setback in Old Town Height limit map —plans exhibit noncompliance to these setbacks.
- **Zoning code 12-102 (B)**
Noncomplying structure expansions and reconstruction—plans exhibit noncompliance with these codes therefore building height cannot be prior building height before reconstruction.
- **Zoning code 7-703**—plans exhibit noncompliance with bonus height on building height 50 feet or less on Block 2.
- **Sec. 8-200 (A) (2) (a) (ii)(i)(B) and (C)** Plans exhibit noncompliance with required minimum garage parking space requirements. Walkability Index calculation therefore ineligible for 10% parking garage reductions requested.
- **Zoning Ordinance 3-1401 RMF zone**—this SUP requesting additional height results in adding affordable housing units to the RMF zone yet the zone is restricted to enhancing or preserving affordable units, not adding units.
- **Zoning Ordinance RMF Zone-3-1406(B) SUP FAR** bonus density use, per Ordinance 5165 Recommendations 2.1 and 3.34, states “the floor area ratio may be increased to an amount not to exceed 3.0 if the applicant commits to providing committed affordable housing.” These units are defined as the retention/preservation of the 140 Heritage units and this bonus density use tool is limited to those units, not other uses such as 55 or any number of additional units in excess of the 140 units already retained.
- **Zoning Ordinance 3-1407 RMF zone**—this SUP requesting additional height in noncompliant with this ordinance where the height restriction for the zone is the maximum height permitted in the governing small area plan..
- **Strategy Ordinance 5165**—the objective of this ordinance is to preserve 140 HUD units, not adding them.
- **Ordinance 5165**—Plan exhibits noncompliance with recommendations 3.1, Table 1, Notes 4 & 5 regarding height and ensuring compatibility with the neighborhood.
- **Ordinance 5165 Affordable Housing Recommendation 2.1** states “use additional density and height as a tool to incentivize the retention of all existing committed affordable units of which 140 units for the Heritage are applicable here”, not affordable units in excess of the 140 already retained.
- **Ordinance 5165 Affordable Housing Recommendation 2.2** states “rezoned properties are also subject to all other recommendations of the Strategy.”
- **Ordinance 5165 Strategy Planning and Land Use Recommendation 3.34** states “the additional FAR provided by the new zone (RMF zone Section 3-1406) is available to the affordable housing sites (1, 2 & 4) that provide the recommended committed affordable housing units (as stated in 2.1).” Not affordable units in excess of the 140 already retained.
- **Table 1 Note 5** states Section 7-700 is “subject to compliance with the Strategy’s affordable housing, planning, and land use recommendations” but it is not in compliance with them as noted above.
- **Table 1, Note 5** states “ensuring the building scale is compatible with the neighborhood and intent of the Strategy” but the building scale is not compatible nor with the intent of the Strategy.

BUILDING UNITS



[illegible]

Source: BAR #2021-00341 Staff Report (29 July 2021) Page 16

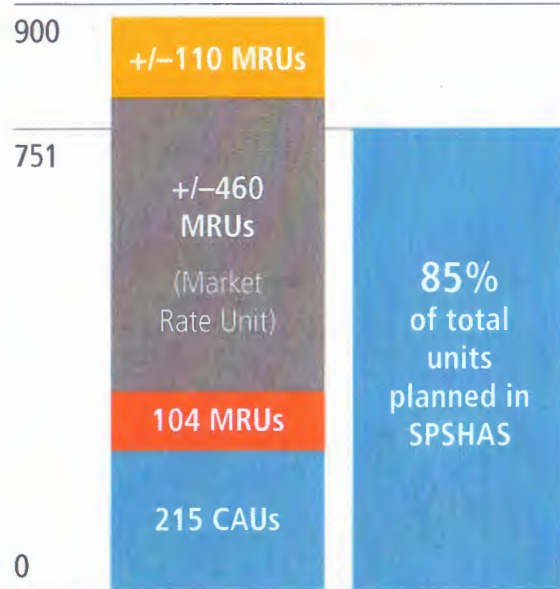


Site Acreage for:
Heritage Blocks
1, 2, 4
Source:
DSUP2020-10032
Site Plan
Page 1

- South Patrick Street Housing Affordability: total 9 blocks
- Heritage Blocks 1, 2, 4

HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT AREA COVERS ONLY 3 BLOCKS WITHIN THE 9 BLOCK
SOUTH PATRICK STREET HOUSING AFFORDABILITY STRATEGY

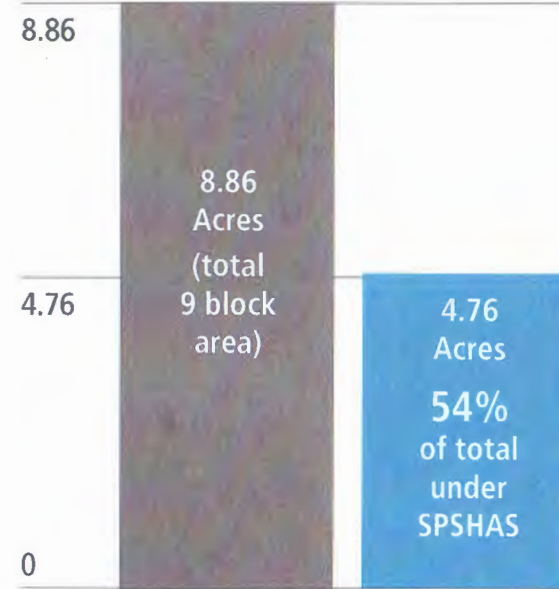
Unit totals: 9 Block Area Plan vs
Heritage Proposal



889 +/- Total
Units Estimated for
9 Block SPSHAS
Source: South Patrick Street
Housing Affordability Strategy,
Page 12

750 Total Units
proposed:
Heritage Blocks
1, 2, 4
Source: DSUP2020-10032
Site Plan, Page 1

Acreage totals: 9 Block Area Plan
vs Heritage Proposal



Site Acreage for
9 Block South
Patrick Street
Housing Plan
Source: SPSHAS,
Page 31

Site Acreage for:
Heritage Blocks
1, 2, 4
Source: DSUP2020-10032
Site Plan
Page 1

HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT UNIT TYPES

FAR TABULATIONS

	FAR	DENSITY	UNITS
SUP RMF	3.00	621,474.00	744
BY RIGHT RMF	0.75	155,368.50	193
RMF BONUS (3.0 – 0.75)	2.25	466,105.50	551
AFFORDABLE 1/3 OF RMF BONUS	0.75	155,368.50	193
SEC 7-700 BONUS	0.03	5,260.00	6
AFFORDABLE 1/3 OF 7-700 BONUS	0.01	1,753.33	2
TOTAL PROPOSED	3.03	622,853.00	750
TOTAL AFFORDABLE BONUS	0.76	155,828.17	195
TOTAL MARKET	2.27	467,024.83	555

* MARKET AND AFFORDABLE UNIT COUNT
AND TYPE MAY CHANGE SUBJECT TO
HUD AND FAIR HOUSING
REQUIREMENTS.

Source: DSUP2020-10032 Site Plan, Page 1

Per ZONING ORDINANCE NO. 5165:

The Strategy Objective
is to **preserve 140**
affordable units.

UNIT TYPES

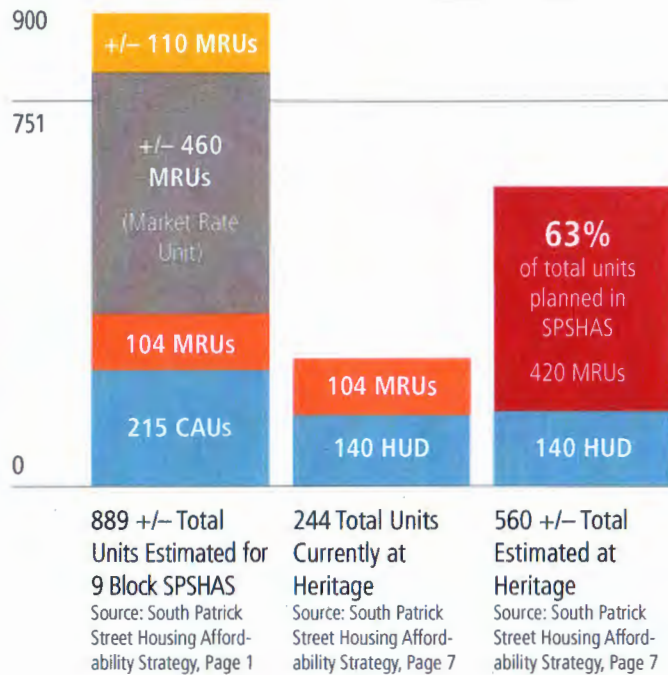
Total Units: 750

Affordable Units: 195

Market Rate Units: 555

HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT PER SOUTH PATRICK STREET HOUSING AFFORDABILITY STRATEGY

Units: Per Table 1:
Development Summary Table

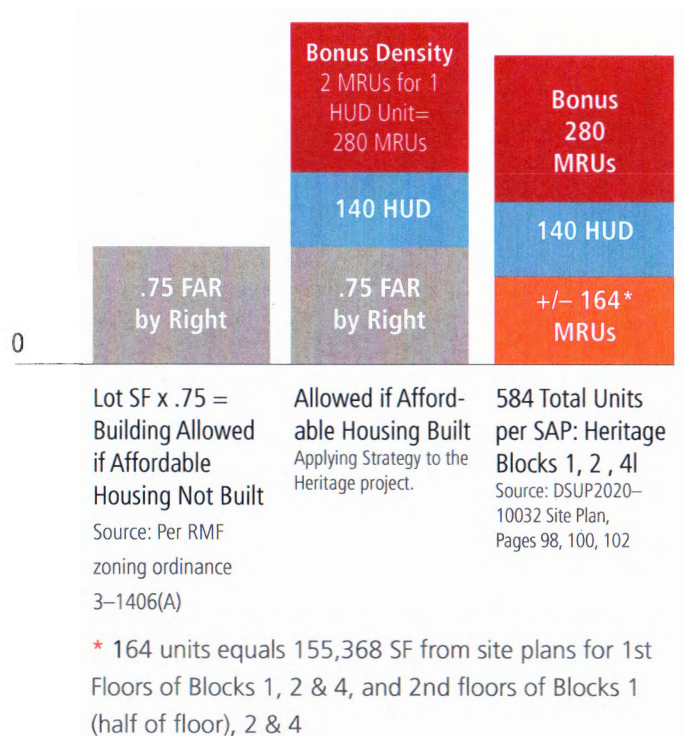


Heritage Development

Per Ordinance 5165:
South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy

OBJECTIVE: Preserve 140 HUD units and comply with Strategy Recommendations

HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT PER SOUTH PATRICK STREET HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ZONING ORDINANCE



Heritage Development

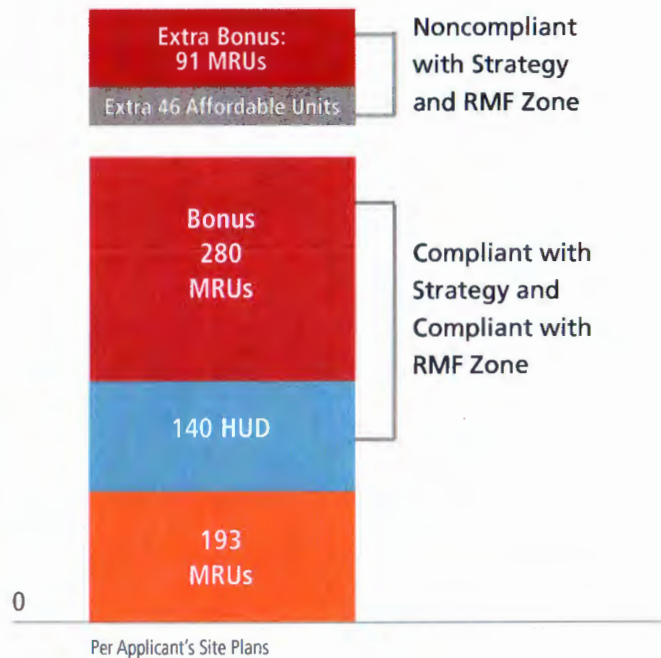
Per Zoning Ordinance 3-1400: Residential MultiFamily (RMF) Zone

3-1401 Purpose: The RMF zone is established to provide land areas for multifamily residential development and to enhance or preserve longterm affordability of housing.

3-1407—Height. The maximum permitted of buildings shall be the height as depicted in the governing small area plan.

HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT PER APPLICANT

Height of +/- 80 ft does not comply
with RMF Zone Limit or Strategy Limit



PER APPLICANT

Increase of 46 affordable units with 91 extra bonus density units **does not** comply with RMF Zone. RMF Zone is to **preserve** affordable units.

HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT PER SOUTH PATRICK STREET HOUSING AFFORDABILITY SUMMARY

Per Zoning Ordinance 5165:
South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy

OBJECTIVE: Preserve 140 HUD units and comply with Strategy Recommendations

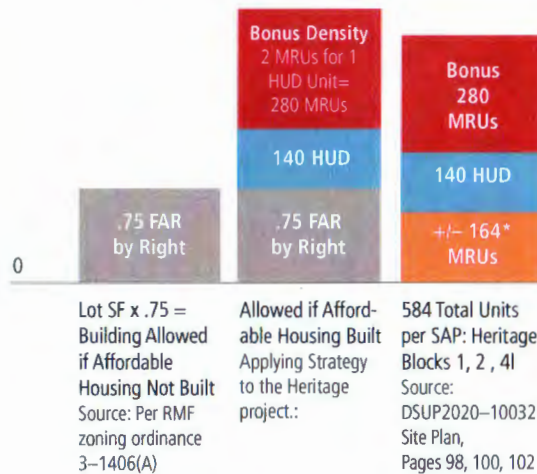
HEIGHT: Per Table 1:
Maximum height 45ft – 55ft



Per Zoning Ordinance 3-1400:
Residential MultiFamily (RMF) Zone

3-1401 PURPOSE: The RMF zone is established to provide land areas for multifamily residential development and to enhance or preserve longterm affordability of housing.

3-1407 – HEIGHT. The maximum permitted of buildings shall be the height as depicted in the governing small area plan.

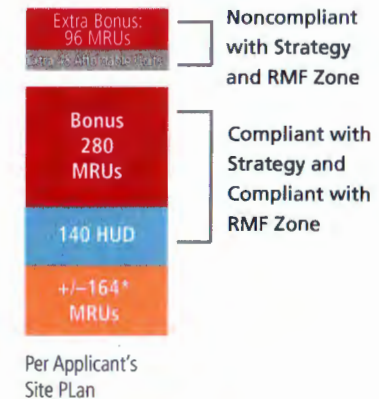


Per Applicant

Increase of 46 affordable units with 91 extra bonus density units does not comply with RMF Zone.

- RMF Zone is to preserve affordable units.
- Strategy objective is to preserve 140 HUD Units

HEIGHT of +/- 80 feet site plans exhibit noncompliance with RMF zone ordinance and Strategy ordinance.



[illegible]

PARKING REQUIRED 696 Spaces (min)
937 Spaces (max)

MARKET RATE Bedrooms = 690
Ratio: $1.0 - (1.0 \times (0.10^* + 0.05^{**})) = 0.85$ per bedroom
Spaces = 587 Excluding walkability credit = 656

AFFORDABLE AT 40% Units = 193
Ratio: $0.65 - (0.65 \times (0.10^* + 0.05^{**})) = 0.5525$ per unit
Spaces = 107 Excluding walkability credit = 120

AFFORDABLE AT 60% Units = 2
Ratio: $0.75 - (0.75 \times (0.10^* + 0.05^{**})) = 0.6375$ per unit
Spaces = 2 Excluding walkability credit = 2

*Credit for Walkscore of 90–100 (10%)
NOTE: Applicant does not qualify for a
walkscore credit per Walkability Worksheet

**Credit for four active bus routes within 1/4 mile (5%)

13

HERITAGE WALKABILITY DISTANCE CREDITS, PART 2

Project Name: Heritage

Address: 450 S Patrick Street

DSUP/SUP #: DSUP2020-10032

DOCUMENT PROVIDED BY APPLICANT. REVIEW NOTES BOXED IN RED IN FAR RIGHTHAND COLUMN AND POINT ADJUSTMENT SUMMARY ON BOTTOM OF PAGE:

Per city code, only max points for each category are used so point reductions are listed below.

Max points = 20 so reduce by 1 points

Max points = 20 so reduce by 5 points

Per the Campagna Center the adult education is held at Christ Church not the Campagna Center. Max points = 35 so reduce by 5 points.

79 points = not between 80 - 100 points so does not qualify for parking reduction

Category	Use or Service Type	0.25 mile or less	0.25 - 0.5 mile	Score	Details (business name, address, etc.)	Max Points	Total Points
Food Retail	Supermarket or grocery with produce section (min 5,000 gross sf)	15	5	5	Balduccis	15	5
Community-serving retail	Convenience Store	7	3	7	Speedway	20	21
	Farmers Market (min. 9 months per year)	5					
	Hardware Store	5					
	Pharmacy	5		5	CVS		
	Other Retail	3		9	Bloom Fresh Flowers, Global Bridal, West Marine		
Services	Bank (not ATM)	5		5	Capital One	20	25
	Family entertainment venue (e.g. theater, sports)	5		5	Little Theater of Alexandria		
	Gym, health club, exercise studio	5		5	Barne3		
	Hair care	5		5	Claude Marcel Salon		
	Laundry, dry cleaner	5		5	Aurora Hills		
	Restaurant, cafe, diner (excluding those with only drive-thru only service)	5	5				
Civic and community facilities	Adult or senior care (licensed)	3				35	36
	Child care (licensed)	3		3	Tinyville Academy		
	Cultural arts facility (museum, performing arts)	5					
	Education facility (e.g. K-12 school)	10	5	10	Lyles Crouch		
	Education facility (e.g. university, adult education center, vocational school, community college)	5		5	The Campagna Center		
	Government office that serves public on-site	3					
	Medical clinic or office that treats patients	3		3	Inova Primary Care Old Town		
	Place of worship	5		5	Alfred Street Baptist		
	Police or fire station	3					
	Post Office	5					
	Public library	5					
	Public park	10	5	10	Wilkes St Park		
	Community recreation center	3					
	Social services center	3					
Community anchor uses	Business office (100 or more FTE)	10	5	10	Alexandria Gateway	10	10
		Total		100		90	

80-89 points = 5% credit
90-100 points = 10% credit

POINT ADJUSTMENT SUMMARY:

Total per applicant:	90
ADJ: Community serving retail pt. overage	-1
ADJ: Services pt. overage	-5
ADJ: Civic & community facilities pt. overage	-5
Revised total points:	79

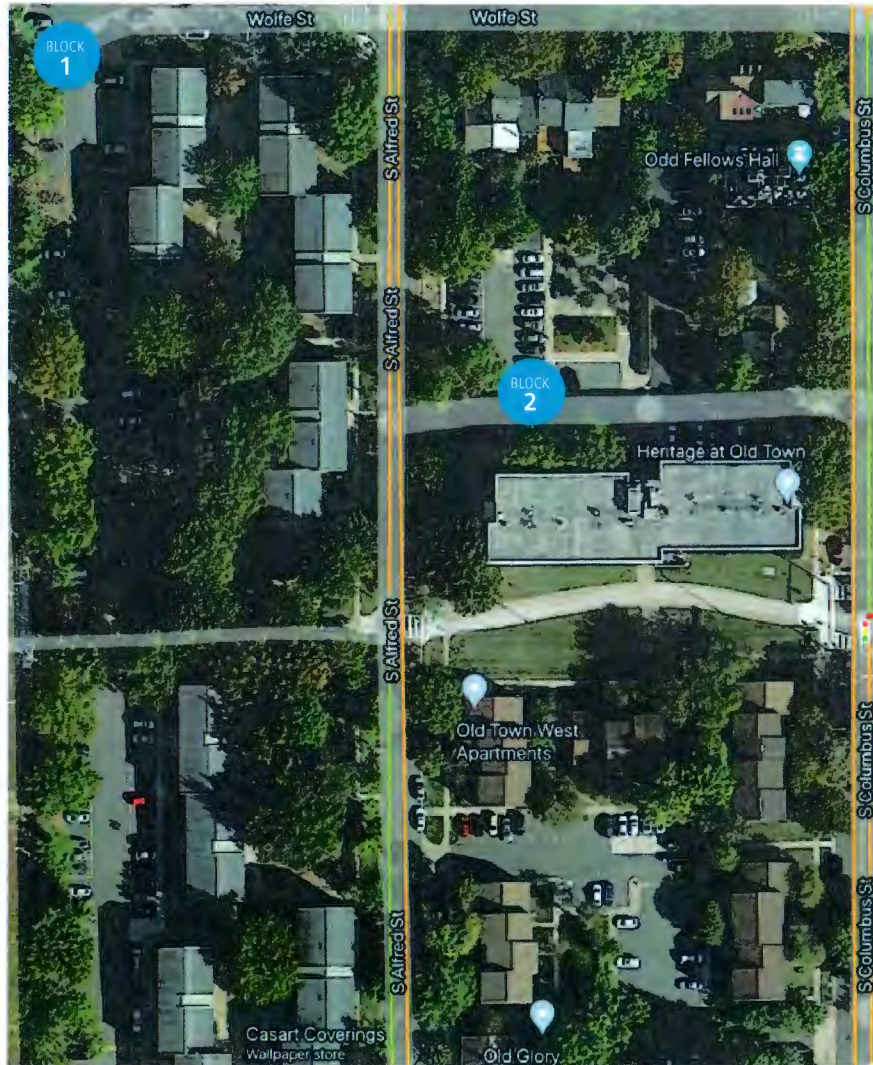
Required Documentation

The applicant shall provide a scaled area plan or map showing the location of the project site, applicable building entrance(s), each identified contributing use, and the walking routes as well as distance to each identified use. Per the Walking Distance definition, **qualifying uses are based on walking distance (i.e. walkshed) and not a radius.**

Source: Parking Standards for Multi-Family Residential Development Projects Guiding Document Page | 12 GUIDING DOCUMENT February 24, 2016

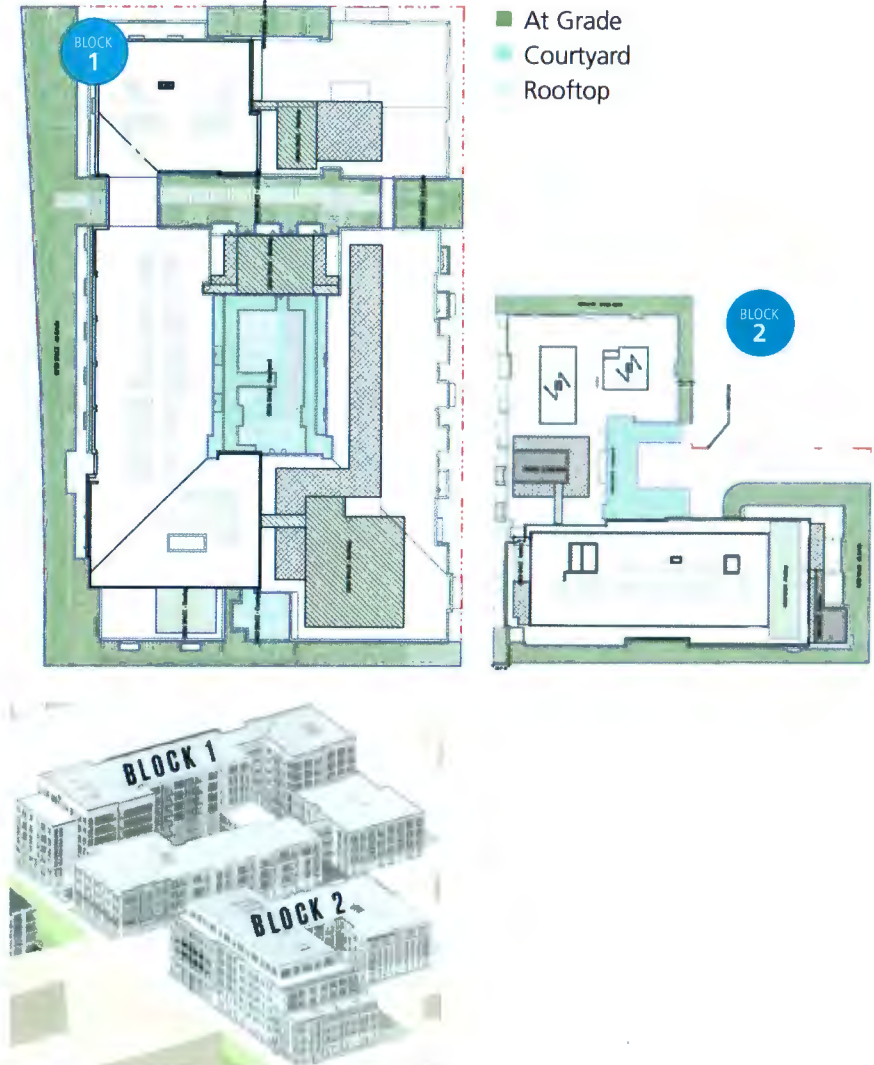
HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT: BLOCKS 1 AND 2 OPEN SPACE

Current Open Space



Source: Google Maps

Proposed Open Space Plan



Source: Developer Application Materials

BUILDING HEIGHT



HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT: BLOCK 2 BUILDING HEIGHT

Alexandria Virginia City Height District Map
No.1 Old and Historic Alexandria Height District



Source: City of Alexandria GIS Open Data Hub

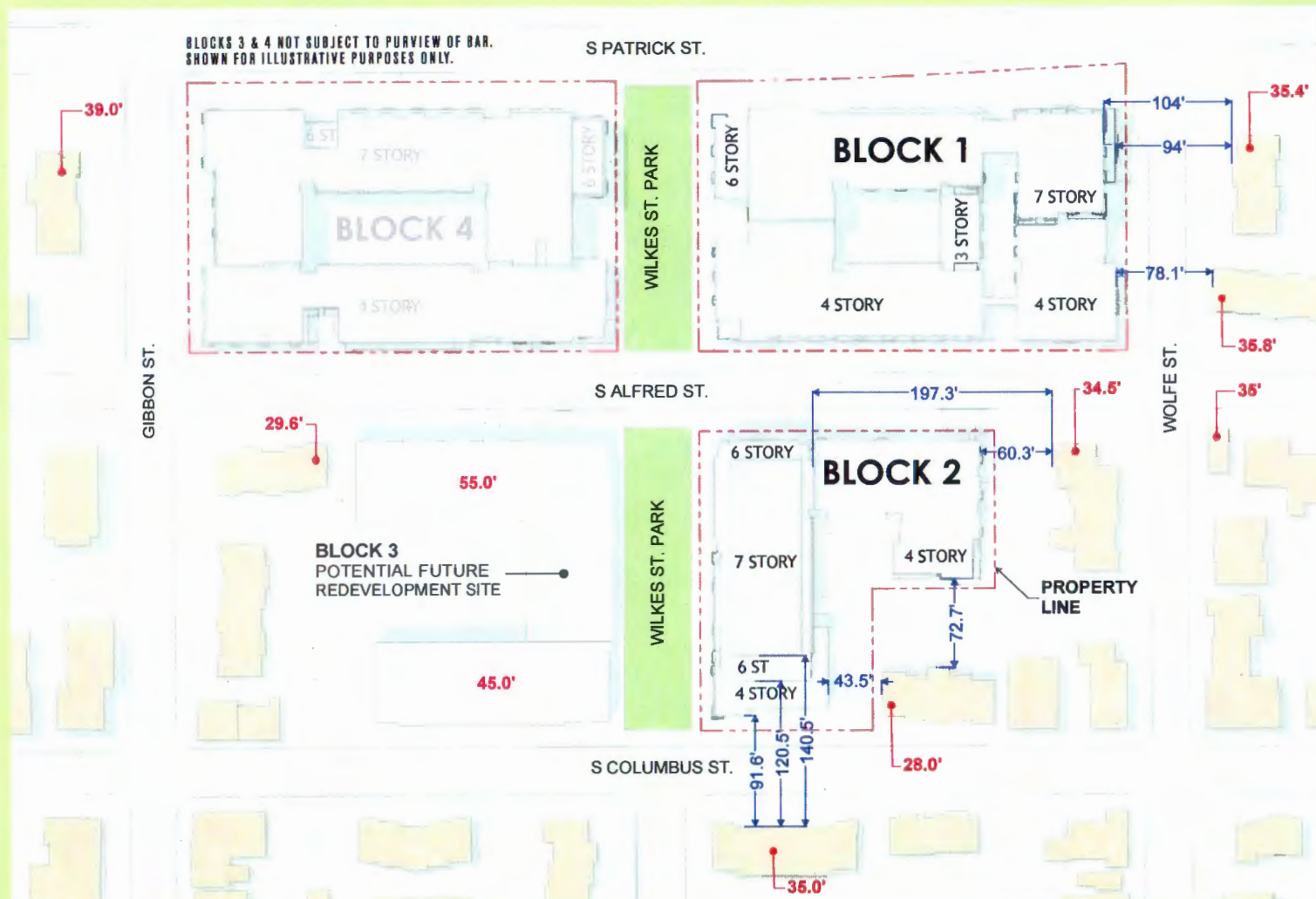


Source: City of Alexandria GIS Open Data Hub

- HD1 = Old and Historic District
- HD1 Height Limit = 50 feet
- Block 2 is in HD1 Height District Map
- Block 2 Height per City Old Town Height Limit is 50 feet

- HD4
- HD6
- HD1 50 ft / OAHD
- HD2
- HD3
- HD5

HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT: OAHD HEIGHT LIMIT 50 FEET



BLOCK 1 HEIGHTS

4 STORY: 43'
6 STORY: 64' **Height exceeds 50 feet**
7 STORY: 76'

BLOCK 2 HEIGHTS

4 STORY: 45'
6 STORY: 66' **Height exceeds 50 feet**
7 STORY: 79'

Source: City of Alexandria GIS Open Data Hub

(BLOCK 1 & 2 HEIGHTS ARE FROM AVERAGE GRADE)

■ DISTANCE BETWEEN PROPERTIES

■ HEIGHT OF ADJACENT PROPERTIES

14

THE BLOCK 2 PROPOSED BUILDING HEIGHT LIMIT

Table 1: Development Summary Table

SITE				EXISTING CONDITIONS			RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT		
BLOCK	SITE (1)	ADDRESS	PARCEL SIZE (2)	EXISTING ZONE	EXISTING BUILDING HEIGHT LIMIT	EXISTING LAND USE	RECOMMENDED FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR) (3)(5)	RECOMMENDED BUILDING HEIGHT LIMIT (4)(5)	RECOMMENDED LAND USE
2	The Heritage at Old Town	431 S Columbus	SF 48,243	RC	FT 62'	Residential	3.0	FT 45'-55'	Predominantly Residential

Should be 45 feet per Strategy and 50 feet to comply with Height District Map



The Block 2 proposed building **DOES NOT** comply with 12-102 (B) Reconstruction. The new building must comply with the 50 FT Old Town Building Height Limit.

The Block 2 existing building height of 62 feet is noncomplying within the historic district 50 foot height limit.

This proposed increase to 77-78 feet from 62 feet non complying height violates Zoning Ordinance Section 12-102 (B). Per City Zoning Ordinance Section 12-102 (B) which states: "12-102 (B) Reconstruction. **If a noncomplying structure is destroyed, demolished or otherwise removed, it may be reconstructed provided that there is no increase in the floor area ratio, density, height or degree of noncompliance which existed prior to such destruction.**"



Per the City Code Section 1-400 B-4 states:

"In the case of a conflict among various zone requirements, such as density, lot size, height and floor area ratio, permitted development shall comply with the most restrictive of such requirements."

ARCHITECTURAL
CHARACTER



SOUTH PATRICK STREET HOUSING AFFORDABILITY STRATEGY ARCHITECTURE CONCEPT vs PROPOSED HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Concepts Presented in the Adopted South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy

BAR message on architectural style: "Singular buildings in the latest architectural vocabulary are generally discouraged. It is not the intention of the Board to dilute design creativity in residential buildings"

Source: BAR 2020-00196 (D) Staff Report, Page 24



Source: South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy , page 16



Source: South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy , page 24

Current Concepts Presented to Planning and Zoning by Asland Capital Partners LLC



HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT PLANS: BLOCK 1

OLD & HISTORIC DISTRICT BLOCK.

- Not compatible with existing neighborhood character.
- Building height, mass & scale is dominating the neighborhood of 2–3 story townhouses.



HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT PLANS: BLOCK 2

OLD & HISTORIC DISTRICT HEIGHT LIMIT IS 50 FEET NOT 80 FEET.

- Not compatible with existing neighborhood character.
- Building height, mass & scale is dominating the neighborhood of 2–3 story townhouses.



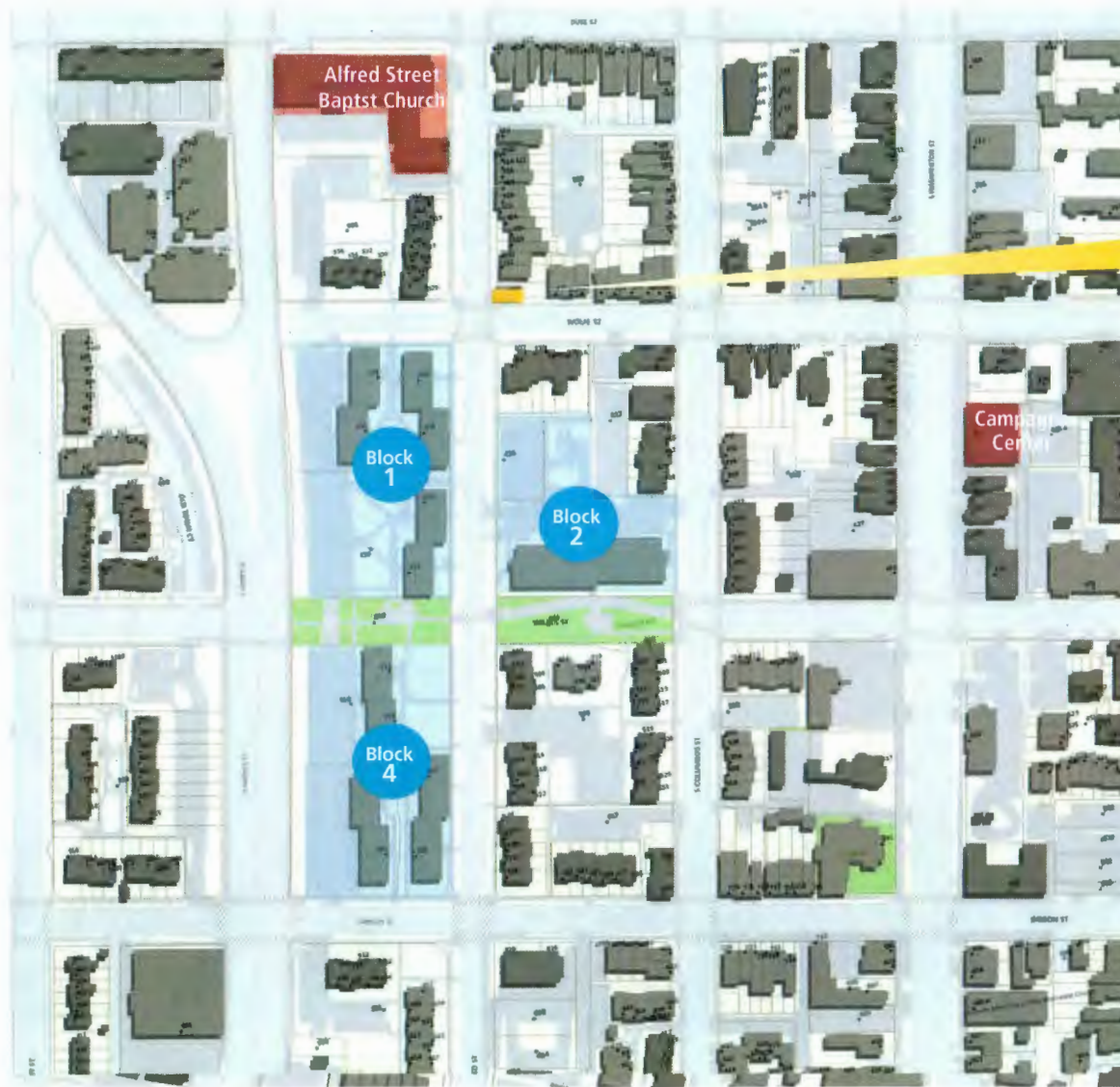
Source: Developer Application Materials

HERITAGE DEVELOPMENT PLANS: BLOCK 4

- Building height, mass & scale is dominating the neighborhood of 2–3 story townhouses.
- Not compatible with existing neighborhood character.



THE HERITAGE DOMINATES AND IS INCOMPATIBLE WITH NEIGHBORHOOD



- The Heritage Project building mass, scale and +/- 80 feet height dominates and is incompatible with the existing neighborhood.
- The Heritage Project combined site is larger than 3 football fields.
Total Lot: 207,158 SF
Football field: 57,600 SF
- Noncompliant with Ordinance 5165 recommendations 3.1, Table 1, Notes 4 & 5 regarding maximum height and ensuring that the building scale is compatible with the neighborhood.

OLD & HISTORIC DISTRICT TOWNHOUSES ON BLOCK 2 AND WITHIN ONE BLOCK OF THE HERITAGE PROJECT



INCOMPATIBLE
WITH
ALEXANDRIA'S
OLD AND
HISTORIC
DISTRICT



Heritage Block 1 OAHD

Hord | Coplan | Macht
Projects



Heritage Block 2 OAHD



Heritage Block 2 OAHD



Old Town North



Baltimore



National Harbor



Colorado



Arlington



Rockville

EXAMPLE OF DEVELOPMENT COMPATIBLE WITH THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Sunrise Project
400 North Washington Street
Old Town—Northwest Quadrant



EXAMPLE OF DEVELOPMENT COMPATIBLE WITH THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Abingdon Row Project
1023 North Royal Street
Old Town—Northeast Quadrant



Gloria Sitton

From: D F <fattmad@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 10:58 PM
To: Gloria Sitton
Subject: [EXTERNAL]DENY - BAR APPEAL #2021-00341 OHAD, item #16

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Hello Gloria - I wish to record a DENY for the BAR Appeal for item #16 for Saturday's docket, 13 Nov 2021. This is a follow up from my previous rejections regarding the Heritage Redevelopment plan.

Thank you for your support recording my position.

-Don Fattman

900 Block S.Patrick Street

From: Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>
Sent: Saturday, February 20, 2021 12:52 PM
To: D F <fattmad@hotmail.com>
Subject: RE: Fattman: AGAINST-Docket #10 (DSUP #2020-10032): Heritage Redevelopment Plan

Yes. Your statement can be part of the record and I will share it with Council.

I am happy to explain the process from the Council perspective. Just let me know when.

Have a good day.

Gloria

From: D F <fattmad@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, February 20, 2021 12:48 PM
To: Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: Re: Last name: AGAINST-Docket #10 (DSUP #2020-10032): Heritage Redevelopment Plan

Hello Gloria. I would love to sit with you to understand how this process works. As if the issues themselves are challenging enough, I've sat for hours waiting and now I must move on. I hope my entry against the proposal as presented is able to be documented. BTW, its Fattman. :) Thank you very much. -Don

If I may, can this be entered?

Good morning. I continue to be against the Heritage Project as proposed. I am against all the rezoning and special permits.

This area of Alexandria is a cut through for points south of Alexandria and into Maryland. Franklin street is a drag strip in the morning as vehicles come off the beltway as they race for Washington St. In the evening, they pack Gibbon street as they attempt to make the next light onto South Rt 1. Often the intersections of Duke

and S.Alfred and Duke and Gibbon are difficult to pass through with cars stopped in the middle. This is today's problem without all the additional vehicles from the higher density of the Heritage proposal.

Today's parking configuration for the complex has multiple exits; onto Gibbon, Wolfe, and S.Columbus and S.Alfred street. The proposed design has all parking exits exiting S.Alfred. S.Alfred becomes a single point for all this traffic.

During the hours of 3-6pm, S.Alfred and S.Columbus have no right turns onto Gibbon to get to Rt 1. This will force any traffic from this complex to move north flooding the northern intersections (Wolfe and S.Alfred, Duke and S.Alfred). After 6pm, when right turns are allowed, cars get stuck blocking southbound traffic from heading south.

More and more traffic is pushing into the SE quadrant neighborhoods as it fights to get around the traffic jams resulting on Gibbons.

Related, what considerations are being made for future growth of MD and points south of Alexandria and its impact this area?

As an example of trying traffic moments, just last night, during the days of Covid, a car sat in the middle of the intersection blocking me from heading home.

The proposal appears to offer one parking spot for each unit. With roommates and families, I expect a number of households to have more than one vehicle. I expect the residence of the 750 units will have visitors whom will drive to the area. Where will people park?

Please seek a right size solution without rezoning and special permits.

-Don

From: Gloria Sitton <Gloria.Sitton@alexandriava.gov>

Sent: Saturday, February 20, 2021 9:17 AM

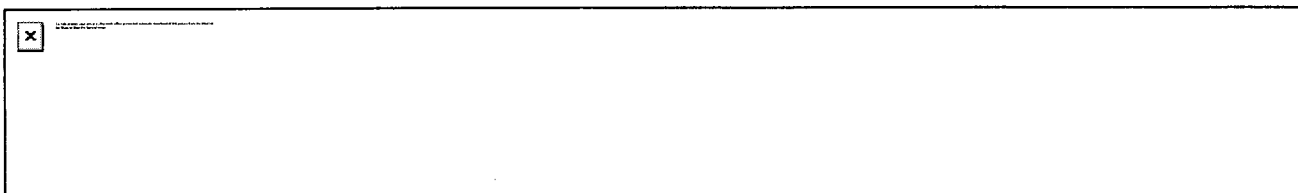
To: D F <fattmad@hotmail.com>

Subject: Last name

Hi Don,

Please send me your last name so that I can update my speakers list. Thanks!

Gloria Sitton



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Gloria Sitton

From: JD Valk <jdvalk2@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 10:42 PM
To: Gloria Sitton
Subject: Re: BAR APPEAL #2021-00341 OHAD, item #16

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Flag Status: Completed

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I would like to submit some comments supporting the rationale of the BAR decision on the Heritage project. I would like to first refer to the City's recent receipt of the Urban Land Institute's Housing Policy Leadership Award and some sections of the press release:

"Alexandria was recognized for its 2019 amendment to its Zoning Ordinance to include a residential multifamily (RMF) zone, which allows substantial density to create an incentive for either producing or preserving deeply affordable housing. The RMF zone was developed to support the 2018 South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy, a community planning process undertaken to identify potential tools, strategies and resources to be used to preserve 215 existing units of deeply affordable housing at risk of being lost to market pressures."

"By using the RMF zone, The Heritage will be able to preserve all 140 existing deeply affordable units as well as provide an additional net-new 60 committed units affordable to households with incomes ranging from 40 to 60% of the area median income (\$51,600–77,400 for a family of 4). Regular engagement with tenants is ongoing to mitigate effects of their temporary relocation. To maximize affordable housing development, RMF zoning has been recommended for two additional projects as part of Alexandria's development review process."

In addition to different quarters in the city into which adequate transportation infrastructure and stylistic appropriateness would allow for such projects to occur, let's look at the very real issue unveiled the past two years concerning retail and office property that is currently vacant in the city of Alexandria. If one is looking truly at the issue of affordable housing in Alexandria as a whole — rather than the narrow interest of one developer, we would see that there are numerous spaces throughout the city into which affordable housing options could be worse via repurposing. In fact, there are examples in the city — specifically in Old Town — as well as neighboring jurisdictions that are actively considering these high-rise properties for such conversions:

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Falexandrialivingmagazine.com%2Fnews%2Fold-town-north-alexandria-office-building-residential-conversion-801-n-fairfax%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cgloria.sitton%40alexandriava.gov%7C97c83117bfce4c02201908d9a58e5ca7%7Cfea9b3143754aeeadccc76ad32a890b%7C0%7C0%7C637722854169925564%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IklhaWw%7CJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000&data=Gsm7CuXz2XPTXa6u9%2FQ%2Bmu%2Fa1EmyElp8lxuolc%2Fxpq%3D&reserved=0>

"Staff supports the residential conversion, including the building height SUP, as it will bring a vacant property back into use while reusing an existing concrete structure," according to the City staff report."

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.arlnow.com%2F2020%2F10%2F13%2Fcounty-considering-making-office-to-apartment-conversions-easier%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cgloria.sitton%40alexandriava.gov%7C97c83117bfce4c02201908d9a58e5ca7%7Cfea9b3143754aeeadccc76ad32a890b%7C0%7C0%7C637722854169925564%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=wqLWrb6v2hFS8ZLQJmWQF0QaVemV30%2BwbcF4F%2B6E4a8%3D&reserved=0>

““Neighboring jurisdictions are actively addressing issues around use flexibility,” the presentation notes. “Alexandria and Fairfax County have adopted policies related to this issue and have approved projects implementing them whereas Arlington County has approved projects with no guiding policy to date.””

<https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.connectionnewspapers.com%2Fnews%2F2018%2Ffeb%2F01%2Ffairfax-county-buildings-repurposing-debated%2F&data=04%7C01%7Cgloria.sitton%40alexandriava.gov%7C97c83117bfce4c02201908d9a58e5ca7%7Cfeaa9b3143754aeeadccc76ad32a890b%7C0%7C0%7C637722854169925564%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWljoIMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzliLCJBTiI6IjEhaWwiLCJXVCi6Mn0%3D%7C3000&sdata=wcJn1CF0cNP5s47xTTu7aaiojLXr21pLUqJ1y6F9S2w%3D&reserved=0>

““Proposals would be reviewed for factors such as compatibility with the surrounding existing or planned development,” said Klibaner. Transportation needs and impacts would also be considered, as well as the site design, impacts on schools, parks, public facilities, historic preservation and environmental considerations. “Those requirements stay the same.””

The above paragraph seems to be exactly what we’re talking about here and why this development appears to be so problematic from practical community perspectives. In fact, the aims of the award for creative methods for affordable housing remain eminently attainable for the City elsewhere, specifically in ways and locations that can provide minimal disruption to existing community building practices in the Old and Historic area.

I personally welcome the creative reworkings of the growing post-pandemic amount of commercial / retail / office spots that otherwise may appear doomed to lag in usefulness but instead may be repurposed much more readily than what has been proposed in the case of the Heritage project. However, that is with the understanding that every stakeholder will be able to have a proper place and voice in the collaboration.

I will also like to take issue with some parts of the tone of the response of the developer that appear incompatible with a potential City partner. When one sees the word “illegal” as was evidently leveled at the BAR in conjunction with the voiced issues with impacts on Old and Historic area footprints, is it any wonder that many of us do not trust this development concern to be properly amenable to the City’s established checks and balance systems, but fear that they might see them and us as mere impediments to be overcome?

Gloria Sitton

From: cwdoying@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 9:13 PM
To: Gloria Sitton
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Letter of comment re Item 16 on the Council Agenda for November 13, 2021

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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RESPONDING TO MS. PUSKAR'S APPEAL OF BAR DECISION

The appellant relies on a combination of technical arguments suggesting that the various buildings and building portions can only be considered where entirely within the Old and Historic District, but may not be considered where styled integrally as part of the project and relying on their integration for the viability of the whole concept.

We would urge that Council be guided by the overarching policy embodied in our longstanding architectural controls, designed to preserve Old Town's unique atmosphere and historic character, valued by visitors from far and wide. The lamentable inroads that have already been made in the city by the hulking condo structures at the north end of town hardly commend themselves to imitation. Yet the spread of this sort of thing is precisely what the bland indifference of the Heritage project points toward. The proliferation of cheap housing cannot be a goal that sweeps all other considerations before it.

Of course Northern Virginia should encourage an economically diverse range of housing. But does it make sense to select some of the most expensive land within our boundaries? Shouldn't we choose a more economical land component if the object is to produce as much affordable housing as we as a community can afford?

As fifty year residents of Old Town, we respectfully request that the subject appeal be denied and the action of BAR be supported. BAR has devoted a great deal of time to the study of this matter, and its performance of its delegated duty should be respected.

Carolyn and William Doying
817 Duke Street

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Gloria Sitton

From: Puskar, M. Catharine <cpuskar@thelandlawyers.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 8:43 PM
To: Justin Wilson; Elizabeth Bennett-Parker; John Chapman; Canek Aguirre; Amy Jackson; Mo Seifeldin; Del Pepper
Cc: Gloria Sitton
Subject: FW: The Heritage at Old Town affordable housing hearing

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Please see the email below in support of the project from a resident at the Heritage of Old Town.

Best,

Cathy

From: Judith Bishop <jubishop1958@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 11, 2021 3:03 PM
To: Latrese Thompson <lthompson@rossmgtservices.com>; Puskar, M. Catharine <cpuskar@thelandlawyers.com>
Subject: The Heritage at Old Town affordable housing hearing

External Sender. Be aware of links, attachments and requests.

Judith Bishop
Company Address

410-322-8811
Email; [ju crane@icloud.com](mailto:jucrane@icloud.com)

November 11, 2021
M. Catherine Puskar
The Land Lawyers
cpuskar@thelandlawyers.com

CC/BCC Block: Latrese Thompson
lthompson@rossmgtservices.com

Hello

I am a resident of the community of Old Town and live at the Heritage at Old Town.

In reference to the Alexandria City Board of Architectural Review's decision to deny The Heritage at Old Town affordable housing preservation project. The plan would raise the number of units from 149 to 188. You can look at the numbers and specifications but there are people to consider.

Affordable housing in the Old Town area is direly needed. It is extremely limited to the point where one cannot have any hope of getting to the top of the wait lists.

As far as to density of traffic, these persons needing the units are mostly residents of Old Town and The Heritage already. They are our neighbors, our friends. They are voters and taxpayers and consumers, our grandparents and parents. They are a wonderful part of what makes Old Town what it is.

Many if not most use public transport and do not have vehicles or do not use them because of the costs of gasoline. Metro access being so readily available is a necessity for people with disabilities, the elderly and those who get to work that way. They would lose amenities such as having a bus stop at almost every corner and close access to metro trains.

This decision would force them to vacate from their homes and their communities. Their churches, grocery stores and doctors are in the neighborhood.

The development of more affordable housing would also increase the quality of life for so many of us. It would be so wonderful to have dishwashers, washers and dryers in unit, central air and heat. Which they do not have currently. They deserve this. It is imperative both reasonably and morally that this Board approve the affordable housing preservation project at The Heritage at Old Town.

Truly, sincerely

Judith A. Bishop

Sincerely,

jucrane@icloud.com

grassroots alexandria

November 12, 2021

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and City Council,

Grassroots Alexandria supports making affordable housing available to all citizens and the Heritage project does that. Therefore, we urge City Council to overturn the decision of the BAR to deny a Certificate of Appropriateness to The Heritage. It is a known fact that the city faces an affordable housing crisis: there are not enough viable options for current Alexandria residents. Alexandria recently took a step toward addressing this issue by adopting the Residential Multifamily (RMF) zoning policy. This was important in acknowledging the affordable housing crisis and standing for the values that Council asserts they represent. It is such an achievement that this policy was recently recognized with a national award for the innovative way in which the City of Alexandria is addressing our national affordable housing crisis.

By denying the Certificate of Appropriateness, the BAR overstepped its authority in what they can consider a Certificate of Appropriateness. The discussion about height and density at the BAR meeting failed to recognize the RMF policy that is already approved and allows for the height and density proposed in this project. While we may hear and understand the voices of residents who want to keep Alexandria exactly as it is forever, we know that is not possible. There will never be a perfect building design that pleases all residents when it comes to adding affordable housing to our city. Instead, we need to focus on current and future needs of our city, which is additional opportunities for all residents to live and thrive in Alexandria. We support continued progress at the Heritage, as this will allow such opportunities. We support the staff report referenced in this meeting which also urges City Council to overturn the BAR decision.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Krall
Steering Committee
Grassroots Alexandria

**Please overturn the decision of the BAR
That denied a Certificate of Appropriateness to the
Heritage Oldtown Redevelopment Project.**

To the Honorable Mayor Justin Wilson and Alexandria City Councilors,

I am writing to you to express my continued support for the Heritage Oldtown Redevelopment and to ask you to overturn the decision of the BAR that denied a certificate of appropriateness to this project.

As you may know, previously several aspects of the redevelopment project have been supported by various Alexandria City Departments and by the City Council as well. Currently housing advocacy is needed because the design aspect of the redevelopment project is opposed by the Board of Architecture (BAR). However, the BAR's decision can put more than 200 newly proposed affordable housing units at risk which our city cannot really afford to lose specially after witnessing how affordable housing became more crucial in our city during the pandemic. In addition, if we consider the affordable housing issues that our city was experiencing before the pandemic, my understanding is that large development projects in Alexandria were dedicating only 5-10 affordable housing units per project. However, if our city continues with this very slow pace of creation, it will take our city probably another 20-40 large development projects just to replace the affordable housing units that are currently at risk at the Heritage Old town. This also means it would take many many years well beyond any reasonable time frame to accommodate residents who may need affordable housing urgently.

While attending the BAR's review sessions I learned that some of the board's biggest concerns were related to height, mass and scale but I think the building should be analyzed within the context and the objective of the project. The fact remains that this is an affordable housing project which is designed for residents whose highest priority is probably being able to afford the costs of living in Alexandria specially in oldtown area , which is the most expensive part of town. I think it is also important to focus the discussions related to the new buildings in respect to the end-users because most of the concerns that have been raised didn't seem to account for who the end users will be, how the end users may live in the buildings and what the end users may prefer the buildings to look like etc ...

Some of the BAR's additional concerns were related to the design of the buildings however; in my view the comments provided by the board were not as articulated and seemed too abstract most of the time. Issues related to the appearance of the building including: how rectangle or arched the windows should be or how flat or gabled the roofs should be or how much the solid void ratio should be were continuously raised during the review sessions. However, after listening to the board's many deliberations, I still don't think the public were able to hear clear and cohesive suggestions regarding how to improve the design of the buildings.

In my opinion, the main reason we have been convening as a community was to help solve critical housing issues that are occurring in our city and these issues which are affecting low-income residents are not as abstract at all. If we want to learn more about the issue, currently many families in Alexandria are experiencing very long waiting time and with many years of

11/12/2021

pending applications to get to access affordable housing. In some instances, there are residents who have been on the affordable housing waiting list for more than 10 years and there are more still waiting. However, we have to ask ourselves questions such as why do residents who need affordable housing urgently have to wait for more than 10 years? And why do some senior citizens in our city continue to work fulltime after retirement well beyond 67 years of age? Why do some residents work multiple jobs just to keep up with living costs? This is probably because our city didn't have powerful zoning tools such as the RMF (Residential Multifamily) policy to help address affordable housing issues that are urgent and very real. Now that our city is able to develop these kind of zoning tools, I think that's why as a community we need to support the implementation of projects that incorporate the RMF zoning tool so that the tool can be tested and improved to develop a much better affordable housing solution for future developments.

In conclusion, I believe that solving current affordable housing issues with smart zoning tools has the potential to create better opportunities for our city's future. I am optimistic about this because most residents that I met through affordable housing projects are raising very smart, talented and dedicated kids who are inspired to grow and work at large enterprises in our region including Amazon, Boeing, U.S. Patent Office ... or start small businesses which will allow them to contribute more tax dollars back to our local economy. That's why we should not take our support for affordable housing projects such as the Heritage development lightly because it can establish a path that can help create a rapid progress not only for our city, also for our region and hopefully for our nation.

Thanks so much for your considerations.

Sincerely,
Marta Ali