



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** FEBRUARY 17, 2016

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Consideration of an Update on the North Potomac Yard Small Area Planning Process and Consideration of a Resolution to Establish an Ad Hoc North Potomac Yard Advisory Group. [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

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**ISSUE:** Update on the North Potomac Yard Small Area planning process and consideration of a resolution to establish an Ad Hoc North Potomac Yard Advisory Group.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council:

- (1) Receive this update on the proposed planning process for the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update;
- (2) Approve the attached resolution establishing an Ad Hoc North Potomac Yard Advisory Group ("Advisory Group");
- (3) Request that the Chairs of the Planning Commission, Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee, Park and Recreation Commission, Transportation Commission, and Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC) nominate a representative to serve on the Advisory Group, and request that the Planning Commission member serve as Chair of the Advisory Group;
- (4) Request that each of the two civic associations listed in the attached resolution nominate a member from their group to serve on the Advisory Group; and
- (5) Authorize the City Manager to appoint the five at-large representatives through a nominations process.

**NORTH POTOMAC YARD SMALL AREA PLAN UPDATE PROCESS:** The North Potomac Yard developer representative, JBG, has indicated the desire to begin the planning process for redevelopment, which may necessitate amendments to the 2010 North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan and Design Standards. JBG has indicated to City staff that they intend to adhere very closely to the existing North Potomac Yard Plan specified mix of office, residential, retail and other permitted uses. By undertaking this redevelopment planning starting this spring, it is likely that the first phase of North Potomac Yard redevelopment can be delivered at the same time that the planned Potomac Yard Metrorail Station opens. It should be noted that the redevelopment of North Potomac Yard is key to the success of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station financing plans. JBG has volunteered to pay for consultant services so that the City can begin the planning effort this spring to review technical studies and potential amendments within the constraints of the current departmental work program.

The scope of the planning process will include a review of potential amendments to the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan, CDD requirements, conditions, Design Standards, corresponding technical studies and associated regulatory submissions. The process is planned for launch in April 2016 with a North Potomac Yard Advisory Group serving as the public forum for community engagement. Similar to other small area plans, work sessions will be scheduled with City Council to provide policy guidance at key points in the process. It is anticipated that the process will last approximately 12 to 14 months.

## **NORTH POTOMAC YARD AD HOC ADVISORY GROUP**

### **Mission:**

Provide advice to City staff on the potential small area plan amendments for the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update.

### **Ad Hoc Advisory Group Composition:**

The Advisory Group will consist of twelve members, including a Chair. The Planning Commission member will serve as the Chair of the Advisory Group. The Advisory Group will include the following representation:

#### **Resident Representatives (6)**

Del Ray Citizens Association	1
Lynhaven Civic Association	1
At-Large, Resident of Potomac Yard (East or West)	1
At-Large, other	3

#### **City Commissions and Committees Representatives (5)**

Planning Commission	1
Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee	1
Park & Recreation Commission	1
Transportation Commission	1
Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC)	1

#### **Business Representative (1)**

At-Large, Business	1
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**TOTAL: 12**

The Chair of the above named commissions, committees, and associations will be asked to nominate someone to represent each of their respective groups to serve on the Advisory Group. The nominees can be a member of the respective City Commission or Committee, or an individual who is not a member but someone the Chair appoints, with the expectation that this designee will both appropriately represent the interests of the Commission or Committee and keep the Commission or Committee informed of the progress of the group. Due to the large number of ad hoc groups being established and the desire to have appropriate representation from many of the same City Commissions and Committees, staff believes that this flexibility will help ensure appropriate participation. Staff has received feedback from some Commission members that they are having trouble finding members to fill these spots. In addition, the ability to appoint non-member representatives may provide community members with experience and interest in applying for future vacancies on City Commissions. The decision of whether to appoint a member or other representative rests with the Chair of the respective Commission or Committee. Based on how well this flexibility works within this and other ad hoc groups, staff can re-evaluate whether or not to continue this practice.

The remaining five at-large members (one business representative, one resident of Potomac Yard (East or West), three general at-large) will be appointed by the City Manager based on a nominations process publicized through the City's eNews service, notices to civic and community associations, and the City's website. The City Manager will make selections for the at-large member positions based on the applicant's stated areas of expertise.

### **Advisory Group Tasks:**

1. Review, discuss, and develop advice to City staff with regard to potential amendments to the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan related to topics such as land uses, open space, transportation and connectivity as part of the Small Area Plan Update process; and
2. Forward a letter(s) to the Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning on the Advisory Group's comments on the

potential amendments. The Advisory Group comments will be transmitted to the Planning Commission and City Council as part of the staff report for the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan.

**Responsibilities of Members:**

The Advisory Group is an advisory body that will hold approximately monthly public meetings (or as needed) for the duration of the planning process and complete the tasks outlined herein. Members are expected to:

1. Support the City's community engagement and outreach efforts by 1) providing updates on the status and progress of the planning activities and tasks to their respective commissions, boards, and organizations, in addition to community residents at-large; 2) Speaking on behalf of those groups and communicating their interests in this process.
2. Attend and participate fully in all Advisory Group meetings, in addition to attending work sessions and public hearings of the Planning Commission and City Council. Attend meetings prepared by reading assigned materials and information. If unable to attend, members are encouraged to notify staff in advance and provide comments on meeting materials in a timely manner.

**Responsibilities of Chair:**

1. Serve as a spokesperson for the Advisory Group;
2. Serve as a meeting facilitator;
3. Work with City staff to set Advisory Group meeting agendas; and
4. Draft final letter(s) on behalf of the Advisory Group to the Director of Planning and Zoning referenced above.

**Civic Engagement, Communication and Outreach:** Advisory Group meetings will be open to the public, with ample public comment and participation opportunities, in addition to advisory group discussion. Consistent with the principles of *What's Next Alexandria*, City staff will keep the public informed of the schedule, topics, materials and progress of the Advisory Group through the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan project webpage, as well as eNews, social media, flyers and other means of outreach as appropriate. AlexEngage, the City's online town hall forum, will be used to enable online participation in the process for those who are unable to participate in person.

**Staff Support:** The Advisory Group will be staffed by representatives of the Department of Planning and Zoning, with an interdepartmental team assigned to ensure adequate coverage of all relevant topic areas.

**Sunset:** Pursuant to City Code Section 2-4-8, the Advisory Group shall meet on an ad hoc basis for a period of 12 months, and up to an additional 12 months if needed for completion of their stated tasks as defined herein.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Update planning and development review process is intended to be revenue neutral, as JBG has volunteered to provide funding for technical consultants. At this time that amount is estimated at approximately \$240,000 for the anticipated 12 month planning effort. This will enable the City to maintain the work program for the Department of Planning and Zoning as reviewed by City Council.

**ATTACHMENT:** Draft Resolution

**STAFF:**

Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager

Karl Moritz, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning

Jeffrey Farner, Deputy Director, Department of Planning and Zoning

Carrie Beach, Division Chief, Department of Planning and Zoning