



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: NOVEMBER 6, 2019

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

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

DOCKET TITLE:

Joint Worksession with the Planning Commission to discuss (1) North Potomac Yard /Virginia Tech Innovation Campus submissions, and (2) City Council Expectations for Planning Commission Actions, Roles and Advisory Activities.

ISSUE: The Planning Commission and City Council will hold a joint work session at the City Council Legislative meeting on November 12. There are two items on the agenda for the worksession.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council and the Planning Commission:

- 1) Receive and discuss a summary of the Proposal for the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus and North Potomac Yard Phase 1 Redevelopment, including next steps and schedule for public engagement; and
- 2) Discuss City Council expectations for Planning Commission actions, roles, and advisory activities.

BABKCROUND: Attached is the June 22, 2017 staff presentation to City Council for adoption of the 2017 North Potomac Yard (NPY) Small Area Plan (SAP) update (Attachment 1). This presentation is intended to provide City Council and the Planning Commission with an overview of the current North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan. To supplement the presentation, staff offers the following points for reference:

- The 2017 NPY SAP is an update to the original NPY SAP approved by City Council in 2010. The purpose of the 2017 update was to bring the Plan into alignment with the phasing challenges posed by existing leases on the retail shopping center for redevelopment.
- The 2017 NPY SAP enabled redevelopment of the existing 25-acre theater site as Phase 1, which is envisioned to coincide with the Metrorail Station opening and maintain a mix of uses. The remaining 45 acres located between Potomac Avenue and Route 1/Richmond Highway (bordered by Four Mile Run to

the north and Glebe Road to the south) is envisioned by the Plan as Phase 2.

- Topics of significant discussion during the community planning process for the 2017 Plan update included:
 - Street Framework
 - Metrorail Station Funding
 - (Environmental) Sustainability
 - Land Uses
 - Building Heights
 - Affordable Housing
 - Transportation (Neighborhood Impacts)
 - Schools
- At the time of the NPY SAP's approval in 2017, it was known that the 2010 CDD Concept Plan and 2010 North Potomac Yard Urban Design Guidelines and Standards would need to be updated in the future to bring both documents into compliance with the 2017 NPY SAP. Updates to these documents will be addressed with the Phase 1 redevelopment associated with the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus and JBG Smith/Lionstone proposals.

DISCUSSION:

1. Virginia Tech Innovation Campus/North Potomac Yard

On Friday, November 1, the Virginia Tech Foundation submitted its first concept plan to the City for development of the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus in North Potomac Yard. Accompanying the concept plan are related proposals for JBG SMITH/Lionstone's development proposal for Phase 1 of the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan infrastructure, office, retail and residential uses. The plans are intended to implement the vision for North Potomac Yard as a mixed-use urban community around the new Potomac Yard Metrorail station.

Staff will provide a brief introduction and present an overview of the submitted concept plan and how the plan fits in to the vision of the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan.

2. City Council Expectations for Planning Commission Actions, Roles, and Advisory Activities

Attached is a summary of the Planning Commission's current roles and responsibilities. Below is a set of potential questions that may provide inspiration for a fruitful discussion:

- Does the City Council have guidance for the Planning Commission as to how it could conduct its work to be even more helpful to the City Council?
- Are the existing mechanisms or opportunities for communication between the Council and Commission adequate? Should communication occur more frequently or in different ways?
- When the Planning Commission recommendation is different than that of the staff, has the rationale for the Planning Commission recommendation been clear?

- Does the Council believe that the Planning Commission has been appropriately focused on the right issues? Are there subjects or topic areas the Planning Commission has not been involved in, that the Council suggests would benefit from Planning Commission involvement?

ATTACHMENTS:

1. June 2017 North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan Presentation
2. Summary of Planning Commission Current Roles
3. Powerpoint Presentation

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