



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item Meeting of December 12, 2009

DATE: November 19, 2009

SUBJECT: Request to advertise public hearings on proposed amendments to the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance, Section 20. (Appendix A), "CP-FBC" Columbia Pike - Form Based Code Districts, Section II. Definitions, Section III. The Regulating Plans, Section V. Streetscape Standards and Section VI. Architectural Standards to modify the quantity and placement regulations for streetscape elements including bicycle parking, benches, street tree alignment line, and street trees.

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt the attached resolution to authorize advertisement of public hearings to consider amending, reenacting, and recodifying the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance, Section 20. (Appendix A), "CP-FBC" Columbia Pike - Form Based Code Districts, Section II. Definitions, Section III. The Regulating Plans, Section V. Streetscape Standards and Section VI. Architectural Standards by the Planning Commission on January 11, 2010, and the County Board on January 23, 2010 (or adjusted date pending final approval of the County Board meeting schedule).

ISSUES: This is a request to advertise amendments to the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Form Based Code (FBC) to modify existing streetscape regulations pertaining to the amount and location of street furniture in order to reduce clutter and improve the overall streetscape appearance. No issues have been identified.

SUMMARY: As development occurred along Columbia Pike, staff has evaluated the streetscape conditions in response to developer's feedback and has found that the FBC regulations require too many streetscape elements in most situations to achieve the County goals. The Halstead, Siena Park and 55 Hundred projects have produced a large quantity of street furniture that has created pedestrian obstacles between the clear sidewalk and the street curb. This situation proves especially problematic for people exiting their vehicles from on-street parking spaces. This prompted staff to evaluate the minimum standards that apply to street furniture, some of which apply a single standard to all sites, regardless of scale, location or land use.

Further research conducted by staff found that the FBC streetscape standards are much more restrictive than any of the conditions found in similar environments throughout the

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Staff: Matt Mattauszek, DCPHD, Planning Division

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Metropolitan Washington Area. As a result of this analysis and feedback from the Form Based Code Advisory Working Group (FBC AWG) and ZOCO, staff concludes that the current streetscape standards should be amended to reduce the amount of street furniture required in new projects, to improve their placement and security and improve the overall streetscape conditions along the Columbia Pike corridor.

BACKGROUND: In March 2002, the Columbia Pike Initiative, A Revitalization Plan was adopted by the County Board. A major recommendation of this plan was to develop a new administrative review process to evaluate redevelopment proposals on Columbia Pike, which became the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Form Based Code. In February 2003, the County adopted the FBC, which applies to a special revitalization district encompassing four development nodes along the Pike corridor. Since that time, the County Board has approved several amendments to improve the overall use and clarity of the FBC.

DISCUSSION: After careful review of submitted landscape plans for both approved projects and those that are already built or under construction, staff and the development community raised concerns with overcrowding of streetscapes and the excessive quantities of street furniture. Both staff and developers called for a more practical approach to streetscape standards that did not result in pedestrian obstacles and streetscape clutter as neither was intended by the FBC when originally adopted.

The proposed amendments to the streetscape standards in the Form Based Code are described below. Additionally, several sections addressing benches and bike racks have been relocated to more appropriate sections of the FBC. A number of the proposed changes to the language are minor editorial clarifications which do not change the intent of the language.

Bicycle Parking

- *Bike Rack versus Bike Space:* FBC bicycle parking regulations currently use the terminology “bike rack” in their specific requirements for each land use category to determine the quantity required by each development. Comparatively, Site Plan conditions use the term “bicycle space” for the same requirements. This difference in terminology results in FBC requirements that are twice the quantity required by standard Site Plan conditions since a single “bike rack” actually contains two “bike spaces”. Staff recommends that the language used to identify bicycle parking in the FBC be revised to match what is currently used in Site Plan conditions. This will lower the bicycle parking ratios in each land use category and match the FBC requirements to those found in Site Plan conditions, which will be appropriate for the medium density levels permitted along Columbia Pike. This recommendation has been supported by the Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC) and the FBC AWG who agree that it would provide an appropriate amount of bike parking quantities for the Columbia Pike corridor.
- *Bike Storage:* Tenant and employee bicycle parking regulations currently do not include requirements related to proper storage or safety. Staff recommends that the FBC be amended to require that tenant and employee bicycle parking spaces meet Class 1 secure storage standards by requiring bike racks to be located in an enclosed and locked facility.

- *Guest/Visitor Bike Parking Locations:* Guest and visitor bicycle parking, located along the streetscape, is regulated by a frequency of one bike rack for every 60 feet of building frontage. Staff recommends eliminating the frequency ratio and instead requiring that at least 50% of the required guest/visitor bicycle spaces be located near primary building entrances. This grouping near entrances will increase the visibility and the security of bike parking spaces. The remaining bicycle spaces can be placed in the furniture zone as needed based on the layout of the secondary entrances to proposed ground floor uses.

Benches

- *Ratio per Frontage Type:* Currently, FBC regulations apply a “one-size-fits-all” approach to determine the minimum quantity of benches each development project is required to provide (1 bench per 30 feet of building frontage). After analyzing proposed landscape plans and being challenged to identify an appropriate layout for the resulting number of required benches combined with other street furniture, staff researched several nearby communities in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area such as Bethesda Row, Crystal City and King Farm to determine their respective bench requirements. Based on this research and combined with community feedback, staff concluded that the current ratios are too high and should be adjusted. Staff recommends that Main and Avenue sites be grouped together with a similar bench ratio, while Local sites that meet the Live-Work standard should have their own, lower ratio. Additionally, sites located on Local or Neighborhood frontages should be exempt from any bench requirements as they typically include a townhouse-style development or single-family detached dwelling. Additionally, smaller development projects that may occur on these sites will not contain any commercial activity and experience much lower volumes of pedestrian traffic compared to the other frontage types. Therefore, the demand for public seating will be much lower. Staff proposes to lower the current ratio to the following:
 - Main Street/Avenue: 1 bench per 50 feet
 - Local Live/Work: 1 bench per 100 feet
 - Local/Neighborhood: No requirement
- *Bench Size:* To minimize potential clutter in the furniture zone (the area between the clear sidewalk and the curb) staff also recommends that benches placed in this area, and oriented perpendicular to the street, be 4 feet in width. This will ensure that the benches do not extend beyond the furniture zone into the clear sidewalk and may also encourage the grouping of benches facing one another.

Street Tree Alignment Line

- The FBC designates a street tree alignment line in order to align street trees along a block frontage for consistency. The street tree alignment line, per its definition, must be located within the tree pit and four feet from the back of the curb. When the FBC was originally drafted, the tree pits were envisioned to be eight feet deep which would have put the tree alignment line in the center of the tree pit. However, the FBC was revised to set the typical tree pit depth at five feet, but the street tree alignment line definition was not adjusted accordingly. After further evaluation, staff recommends eliminating the four foot reference and simply requiring this line to be in

the center of the tree pit, regardless of the distance from the curb. This will enable a better design, no matter what the project.

FBC Street Tree List

- The FBC specifically lists certain tree species to be used for FBC projects. Concerns were raised over the use of several tree species that may be susceptible to certain diseases and pests. Staff therefore recommends an amendment to replace some permitted species with healthier alternatives. Staff consulted with the County’s urban forester and recommends revising the list to remove four tree species that may be at risk and, in an effort to maintain tree species diversity, adding three new species.

The following table summarizes the main changes to the streetscape standards in the Code:

BICYCLE PARKING	Land Use	Current Regulation *		Proposed Amendment	
		Resident/Employee	Guest/Visitor	Resident/Employee	Guest/Visitor
	Office	1 space / 3,750 SF	1 space / 10,000 SF	1 space / 7,500 SF	1 space / 20,000 SF
	Residential	1 space / 1.5 Units	1 space / 25 Units	1 space / 3 Units	1 space / 50 Units
	Retail	1 space / 2,500 SF	1 space / 6,250 SF	1 space / 25,000 SF	1 space / 5,000 SF
	Hotel	n/a	n/a	1 space / 10 Rooms	n/a

BENCHES	Site Type	Current Regulation	Proposed Amendment
		Main Street	1 bench/30' of street frontage
Avenue	1 bench/30' of street frontage	1 bench/50' of street frontage	
Local (Live-Work)	1 bench/30' of street frontage	1 bench/100' of street frontage	
Local	1 bench/30' of street frontage	n/a	
Neighborhood	1 bench/30' of street frontage	n/a	

STREET TREE ALIGNMENT LINE	Standard	Current Regulation	Proposed Amendment
	Location of Line	4' from the Back Of the Curb (BOC)	Centered Within the Tree Pit

FBC TREE LIST	Site Category	Current Regulation	Proposed Amendment
		Trees to be removed from the list	Trees to be added to the list
		Black Maple Shagbark Hickory White Ash Hophornbeam	Kentucky Coffeetree 'Stately Manor' or 'Espresso' Bald Cypress Lacebark Elm

** Adjusted to reflect "space" versus "rack"*

Community Process: The proposed amendments to the streetscape standards were preliminarily discussed with the FBC AWG at its April 15, 2009 meeting. Staff received initial feedback and comments from this group and presented the updated amendments at the September 9, 2009, meeting. At that meeting, members expressed general support for the proposed amendments, including support from the Bicycle Advisory Committee, represented by their chairman and member of the FBC AWG. The proposed amendments were then introduced as an informational item at the October 29, 2009 Transportation Commission meeting where they also received general support. Staff discussed the proposed amendments with the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission (ZOCO) at their November 10, 2009, meeting. ZOCO members recommended a few additional minor changes to the Request to Advertise

proposed language which staff has incorporated. These changes include the deletion of the reference to the Master Transportation Plan (MTP) from the streetscape standards since the MTP does not guide street tree placement, the inclusion of further clarification on size restrictions for benches in the furniture zone and the inclusion of a County standard when addressing minimum tree pit dimensions.

In addition, ZOCO members raised concerns over line of sight issues related to unique topography on Columbia Pike and how tree heights might impact pedestrian and traffic safety. Staff concludes that the current standards are sufficient to apply to all sites within the Revitalization District and the FBC administrative review process ensures that such issues can be identified and addressed on a case by case basis. ZOCO members were also interested in how rental bike racks could potentially be implemented in the proposed language as well as how existing street furniture could be removed from built FBC projects. These issues will continue to be analyzed internally by staff and in the case of the rental bike racks, could possibly be addressed at a later time on a County-wide level rather than solely on Columbia Pike.

CONCLUSION: Staff recommends that the County Board authorize advertisement of public hearings on the proposed amendments to amend, reenact and recodify Section II. Definitions, Section III. The Regulating Plans, Section V. Streetscape Standards and Section VI. Architectural Standards of the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Form Based Code by the Planning Commission on January 11, 2010, and the County Board on January 23, 2010.

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE THE ADVERTISEMENT OF PUBLIC HEARINGS TO CONSIDER AMENDING, REENACTING AND RECODIFYING THE PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE ARLINGTON COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE PROVISIONS IN SECTION 20. (APPENDIX A), “CP-FBC” COLUMBIA PIKE SPECIAL REVITALIZATION DISTRICTS, SECTION II. DEFINITIONS, SECTION III. THE REGULATING PLANS, SECTION V. STREETScape STANDARDS AND SECTION VI. ARCHITECTURAL STANDARDS AT THE JANUARY 11, 2010, PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AND THE JANUARY 23, 2010, COUNTY BOARD MEETING TO MODIFY QUANTITY AND PLACEMENT REGULATIONS FOR STREETScape ELEMENTS INCLUDING BICYCLE PARKING, BENCHES, THE STREET TREE ALIGNMENT LINE, AND STREET TREES.

The County Board of Arlington County hereby resolves to advertise the following amendments to consider amending, reenacting and recodifying the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance provisions in Section 20. (Appendix A), “CP-FBC” Columbia Pike Special Revitalization Districts, Section II. Definitions, Section III. The Regulating Plans, Section V. Streetscape Standards and Section VI. Architectural Standards for public hearings at the January 11, 2010, Planning Commission meeting and the January 23, 2010, County Board meeting to modify quantity and placement regulations for streetscape elements including bicycle parking, benches, the street tree alignment line and street trees to facilitate the creation of a convenient, attractive and harmonious community; and for other reasons required by the public necessity, convenience and general welfare, and good zoning practice:

Language to be added is shown underlined and language to be deleted shown struck-through. Language shown with a double underline indicates existing language to remain but in a new location.

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1 **Section II. Definitions**

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Street Tree Alignment Line
A line along which Street Trees are to be planted. The Street Tree Alignment Line is parallel with the Street or Square right of way and, unless otherwise specified in the appropriate Regulating Plan, is ~~4 feet from the back of the curb~~ centered within the tree pit. (Existing trees are not required to be relocated by this requirement).

17 **Section III. The Regulating Plan**

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22 **B. Rules for the Regulating Plan and New Development Plans**

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25 **4. PARKING**

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27 **E. Bicycle Parking:**

- 28 1. For office development uses, the developer ~~must~~ shall provide 1 employee
29 bicycle parking space rack or bicycle locker (2-bike capacity) per 7,500
30 square feet of GFA and 1 visitor/customer bicycle parking space rack (2-
31 bike capacity) per 20,000 square feet of GFA.
- 32 2. For residential development uses, the developer ~~must~~ shall provide 1
33 tenant bicycle parking space rack or bicycle locker (2-bike capacity) per 3
34 units and 1 visitor bicycle parking space rack (2-bike capacity) per 50
35 units.
- 36 3. For retail development uses, the developer ~~must~~ shall provide 1 employee
37 bicycle parking space rack or bicycle locker (2-bike capacity) per 5,000
38 square feet of GFA and 1 visitor/customer bicycle parking space rack (2-
39 bike capacity) per 12,500 square feet of GFA.
- 40 4. For hotel uses, the developer shall provide 1 employee bicycle parking
41 space per 10 guest rooms.
- 42 5. All tenant and employee bicycle parking facilities are to be highly visible to
43 intended users and shall be protected from rain and snow within a secure
44 structure. Where tenant and employee bicycle parking cannot be
45 accommodated within structured parking located on site, the design of the
46 independent bicycle parking facility, also to be located on site, shall
47 ensure that it is screened from view of pedestrians along a STREET. The
48 bicycle parking facilities shall not encroach on any area in the public right

49 of way intended for use by pedestrians, nor shall they encroach on any
50 required fire egress.

51 6. On-street bicycle parking spaces (as defined in Section V.B. Minimum
52 Standards VI. G. Lighting and Mechanical Equipment) may be counted
53 toward the minimum customer/visitor bicycle parking requirement.

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56 **Section V. Streetscape Standards**

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58 **p. 36**

60 **B. Minimum Standards**

62 **THE STREETScape**

- 63 ▪ Each STREET shall have canopy shade trees (STREET TREES). Wherever the
64 REGULATING PLAN does not show specific STREET TREE placement, STREET TREES shall
65 be planted along the STREET TREE ALIGNMENT LINE at an average spacing not
66 greater than 25 to 30 feet on center (measured per BLOCK face). Required tree
67 planting area widths are specified on the typical street cross sections in the
68 Master Transportation Plan – Part I. However, open soil surface area shall be
69 not less than 60 square feet (~~with a minimum of 5 feet in any direction~~) per
70 isolated tree, and connected (tree strip) planting areas are encouraged. The
71 planting area’s minimum dimension shall be ~~not less than 5 feet~~ or as indicated
72 in Arlington County Landscape Standards, Section II.B. Tree Pit Size/Planting
73 Strip Size. At planting, trees shall be at least 4 to 4.5 inches in diameter (4 feet
74 above grade) and at least 12 feet in overall height. Species shall be selected
75 from the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Street Tree List. Consult
76 the ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM for the designated tree species for a particular
77 STREET.

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83 **ON-STREET PARKING**

- 84 ▪ On-street parking nubs shall be incorporated into the sidewalk in a pattern
85 consistent with the Master Transportation Plan.
- 86 ○ The parking space/tree planting pattern may be interrupted by existing or
87 proposed new driveways, STREETS, ALLEYS, and transit stops/stations.
- 88 ○ Parking spaces shall be constructed in a manner that allows proper
89 drainage (toward a valley gutter at the curb line)
- 90 ○ Parking spaces shall be constructed according to County standards to
91 ensure accessibility for street cleaning vehicles.

93 **STREET FURNITURE**

- 94 ▪ Benches - Benches will shall have backs and arm rests.
- 95 ○ The current standard bench purchased with County funds for Columbia
96 Pike is standard bBenches for in the Columbia Pike corridor shall be is the
97 Victor Stanley "Steelsites Streetsites" model # R-B 28 or equivalent.
- 98 ○ Benches located in the furniture zone and oriented perpendicular to the
99 street shall be 4 feet in length.
- 100 ○ Bench ratios provided below shall be used to calculate only the total
101 number of required benches and may not necessarily determine the
102 bench locations.
- 103 ○ Where present, the amount of frontage dedicated to transit stops as
104 determined by the Department of Environmental Service, transit may be
105 subtracted from the overall building frontage when calculating the total
106 number of required benches.
- 107 ○ For each MAIN STREET or AVENUE site project, one (1) bench will shall be
108 provided for every 30 50 feet of STREET FRONTAGE on a project.
- 109 ○ For each LOCAL site that is built to a LIVE/WORK standard, one bench shall
110 be provided for every 100 feet of street frontage. LOCAL sites and
111 NEIGHBORHOOD sites are exempt from the bench requirement.
- 112 ▪ Waste Bins - The standard waste bin for the Columbia Pike corridor is the Victor
113 Stanley "Bethesda Series" model # S-42 or equivalent. At a minimum, one (1)
114 waste bin will shall be provided at each BLOCK CORNER or BUILDING CORNER.

147 **p. 39**

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149 **C. Squares and Civic Greens**

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151 **MATERIALS AND CONFIGURATIONS**

- 152 ▪ ~~Wherever the REGULATING PLAN or the Master Transportation Plan does not show~~
153 ~~specific STREET TREE placement, STREET TREES shall be planted along the STREET~~
154 ~~TREE ALIGNMENT LINE at an average spacing not greater than 25 to 30 feet on~~
155 ~~center.~~

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157 **STREET FURNITURE**

- 158 ▪ ~~Benches — Benches will have backs and arm rests.~~
- 159 ▪ ~~The current standard bench purchased with County funds for Columbia Pike is~~
160 ~~the Victor Stanley “Steelsites” model # R-B-28 or equivalent.~~
- 161 ▪ ~~For each project, one (1) bench will be provided for every 30 feet of STREET~~
162 ~~FRONTAGE on a project.~~
- 163 ▪ ~~Waste Bins — The standard waste bin for the Columbia Pike corridor is the Victor~~
164 ~~Stanley “Bethesda Series” model # S-42 or equivalent. At a minimum, one (1)~~
165 ~~waste bin will be provided at each BLOCK CORNER or BUILDING CORNER.~~
- 166 ▪ ~~Bike Racks — The standard bike rack for the Columbia Pike corridor is an~~
167 ~~inverted “U” ingalvanized steel with a baked-on black paint finish~~
- 168 ▪ ~~Placement and model/type of all street furniture and fixtures, if different than~~
169 ~~the current standard, will be reviewed by the ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM.~~

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171 **p. 40**

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173 **D. Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Street Tree List**

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175 The following list contains all species approved for use in the Columbia Pike Special
176 Revitalization District. It contains native and acceptable adapted species. Other
177 species may be used for planting within a LOT. Invasive exotic species may not be used
178 anywhere on LOTS or other areas within the Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District.

179 Species in **bold type** are specified (first preference) for placement along the STREET
 180 TREE ALIGNMENT LINE, as specified in the REGULATING PLAN. Species marked with an
 181 asterisk shall be used in limited areas such as larger open landscaped areas, rather than
 182 for street tree use. At the recommendation of the ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW TEAM in
 183 coordination with the County's urban forester, modifications to this list may be made at
 184 a future date.

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 186 **Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District**
 187 **STREET TREE LIST**

- 188 ▪ ~~Acer nigrum~~ ————— Black Maple
- 189 ▪ **Acer rubrum** **Red Maple (Town and Village Centers)**
- 190 ▪ ~~Carya ovata~~ ————— Shagbark Hickory
- 191 ▪ Celtis laevigata Sugar Hackberry *
- 192 ▪ ~~Fraxinus americana~~ ——— White Ash
- 193 ▪ Ginko Biloba Ginko (male only)
- 194 ▪ Gleditsia triacanthos inermis Thornless Honey Locust *
- 195 ▪ Gymnocladus dioicus Kentucky Coffeetree 'Stately Manor' or
- 196 'Espresso' (male only)
- 197 ▪ Liquidambar styraciflua Sweetgum *
- 198 ▪ Nyssa sylvatica Tupelo Black Gum *
- 199 ▪ ~~Ostrya virginiana~~ ——— Hophornbeam
- 200 ▪ **Platanus x acerifolia** **London Planetree (Neighborhood**
- 201 **Center)**
- 202 ▪ Platanus occidentalis Sycamore
- 203 ▪ **Quercus phellos** **Willow Oak (Western Gateway)**
- 204 ▪ Quercus rubra Red Oak *
- 205 ▪ Quercus velutina Black Oak
- 206 ▪ Taxodium disticum Bald Cypress
- 207 ▪ Tilia americana American Basswood (American Linden)*
- 208 ▪ Tilia tomentosa Silver Linden
- 209 ▪ Ulmus americana American Elm (Valley Forge)
- 210 ▪ Ulmus parvifolia Lacebark Elm
- 211 ▪ Zelkova serrata Japanese Zelkova
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213 **Section VI. Architectural Standards**

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215 **p. 56**

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217 **G. Lighting and Mechanical Equipment**

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219 **STANDARDS FOR LIGHTING AND MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT**

220 (WHERE CLEARLY VISIBLE FROM THE STREET)

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223 On-Street Bicycle Parking:

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226 ~~Bicycle racks (2-bike capacity) shall be installed on both sides of the STREET, along the~~

227 ~~STREET TREE ALIGNMENT LINE or within the furniture zone at no more than 60-foot intervals~~

228 ~~(not to interfere with the placement of STREET TREES or STREET LIGHTS) measured parallel~~

229 ~~to the STREET. At the time of development, the developer is only responsible for the~~

230 ~~installation of bicycle racks on the side(s) of the STREET being developed.~~