

Angela Brackett

FA

From: Michael Dowell <ahcapresident@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2011 10:12 PM
To: Christopher Zimmerman; CountyBoard
Cc: Sampson, Timothy S.; Natalie Sun; Nick & Cory Giacobbe
Subject: SP#105 Pentagon Row Plaza Redesign
Attachments: AHCA Re Pentagon Row Plaza Redesign.pdf

Dear Chairman Zimmerman and members of the County Board,

Federal Realty, the owners of Pentagon Row, have been working with us regarding SP #105, which proposes a redesign of the Pentagon Row Plaza, a designated public space in the Pentagon Row development. A main feature of the proposed redesign is to accommodate a larger ice rink. After we expressed some reservations about an early sketch of the proposed project, Federal Realty contacted us to discuss our concerns. We provided some input to Federal Realty and after an initial review with a small group of AHCA folks, Federal Realty came to our civic association meeting last week to present a design concept for our review.

Attached is the letter documenting our comments on the design concept.

We look forward to continuing to work with Federal Realty in meeting our joint objective to update and improve an excellent public space.

Sincerely,

Michael Dowell
AHCA President

HHR/CB 378274 1



November 16, 2011

Timothy S. Sampson
Walsh, Colucci, Emrich, Lubeley & Walsh, P.C.
2200 Clarendon Boulevard – Suite 1300
Arlington, Virginia 22201

RE: Site Plan #105 Pentagon Row Plaza

Dear Mr. Sampson,

Thank you for the excellent presentation at the November meeting of the Aurora Highlands Civic Association on Federal Realty's proposal to refresh the plaza at Pentagon Row. We appreciate that you engaged the association early in the design process and considered our input as you prepared the design concept. As you heard from the community, we all view the existing plaza at Pentagon Row as a very successful amenity and share your view that any changes that are made should only improve the plaza.

During the course of the discussion several points emerged as the consensus of the community:

- There is a concern about the footprint of the two proposed retail spaces on either end of the plaza. Even if the construction is light and airy, at 900 square feet each, the footprint of each building is still the size of a small house. One of the features that the community really appreciates is the openness of the existing plaza, so the feeling is that these structures are simply too large. The community observed that there is a lot of dead space in the lobbies of DSW and Hudson Trail Outfitters, perhaps some of that space could be used for the new proposed retail spaces.
- While the group appreciates the increase in "turf" when comparing the current condition with the proposed design, the consensus was that the preference was for real turf and that efforts should be made to maintain the current amount of natural grass.
- The plan should address the heat island effect, since both concrete and artificial turf will maintain the current heat island effect. If natural turf is not a viable option, other materials should be considered for the plaza rather than artificial turf.
- While some folks did like the design concept, overall, the community really likes the current feel of a European-style open air piazza and would like to retain that style. (Note: It appears that there may have been a misconception that the walkway through the center of the turf was not at the same grade as the turf.)

As discussed, during your internal assessment of the overall Pentagon Row property, we encourage Federal Realty to review the pedestrian circulation throughout the site. There are

many sidewalks that lead into walls and end in the middle of loading docks. Pedestrian safety does not appear to have been addressed adequately in the original design.

Thank you again for working with the community to make an existing asset even better. We look forward to working with you closely as this project moves through the design process.

Sincerely,



Michael Dowell
AHCA President
ahcapresident@gmail.com

Copy to –
Arlington County Board
Natalie Sun, Arlington County Planning Division