



## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

### ARLINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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December 2, 2011

Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
Suite 300  
Arlington, Virginia 22201

**SUBJECT: 3. ZOA-11-03** Amendments to the ACZO, to adopt §25C. “C-O Crystal City” Commercial Office Building, Retail, Hotel, and Multiple-Family Dwelling Districts, and to amend §1 Definitions, §2 General Regulations, §25B. “C-O Rosslyn” Commercial Office Building, Retail, Hotel, and Multiple-Family Dwelling Districts, and §36 Administration and Procedures to implement the vision of the Crystal City Sector Plan for the area within the “Crystal City Coordinated Redevelopment District” (CCCRD). The CCCRD is generally bounded by the George Washington Memorial Parkway and Crystal Drive (south of 26<sup>th</sup> Street South) on the east, 10<sup>th</sup> Street South and Army Navy Drive on the north, South Fern Street and South Eads Street on the west, and 32<sup>nd</sup> Street South on the south. All properties within the CCCRD would be eligible for rezoning to “C-O Crystal City” Districts when the County Board finds a development proposal furthers the goals, policies, and recommendations in the Crystal City Sector Plan and other plans and policies it has established for the area. The ordinance provides the opportunity by Special Exception Site Plan to achieve development consistent with the form-based parameters recommended in the Sector Plan and codified in §25C. when development is consistent with the concept and vision for the district, as established in the Crystal City Sector Plan. Additional amendments are proposed to: §1 Definitions to add definitions for the terms “Crystal City Block Plan”, “Building Tower Separation”, “Building Tower Coverage”, and “Bulk Plane Angle”; §2 General Regulations to update the list of districts in the County to include “C-O Rosslyn”, “C-O Crystal City”, “MU-VS”, and “CP-FBC” Districts; §25B. “C-O Crystal City” Commercial Office Building, Retail, Hotel, and Multiple-Family Dwelling Districts to remove reference to §36.H.7; and §36H. Administration and Procedures to insert references to the “C-O Rosslyn” and “C-O Crystal City” Districts in §36.H.7.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** Adopt the attached ordinance to amend the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance to adopt a new Section 25C and to amend, reenact, and recodify provisions in Sections 1, 2, 25B, and 36 in

**P.C. #18.**

**order to ensure consistency with the policies set forth in the 2010  
Crystal City Sector Plan for the Crystal City Metro Station area.**

Dear County Board Members:

The Planning Commission heard this item at its November 28, 2011 meeting. Anthony Fusarelli, CPHD Planning staff, described the proposed ordinance for the new “C-O-Crystal City” zoning district. Also present was Claude Williamson, CPHD Planning.

**Public Speakers**

Mr. Mitch Bonanno, representing Vornado/CES, thanked Commissioner Cole for allowing stakeholders to participate in the ZOCO discussions, which resulted in a very collaborative process. He also thanked Commissioner Savela and Mr. Fusarelli for their five years of tireless efforts on behalf of Crystal City. He believes the new zoning ordinance is good, and has two issues:

- 1) Line 132, Use Mix Regulations. The land use mix map does not address retail, but the block plan prototype acknowledges retail as a separate category with a percentage attached to it. In most zoning ordinances ancillary retail is considered the major use of the building and not a separate category and Mr. Bonanno hoped that it would be considered the same way in the proposed ordinance. Breaking out the retail may be counter to some of the other objectives of the sector plan.
- 2) Line 141, Height Regulations. The regulations state that under no circumstances can the County Board amend the height regulations. Mr. Bonanno stated that everything else in the ordinance is presented as guidance except this one provision that recommends that height not be amended. He believes the County Board should be allowed the discretion to amend this provision, similar to other parts of the ordinance, as long as it furthers the objectives of the sector plan.

**Planning Commission Report**

Commissioner Cole reported on the extraordinary efforts of the ZOCO, which included seven meetings over a nine-month period. He thanked Mr. Fusarelli for his support for this effort. He thanked Commissioner Savela for her leadership. He acknowledged and read the supportive emails submitted by Mr. Christer Ahl and Ms. Judy Freshman, Co-Chairs of the Crystal City Citizen Review Council (CCCRC). He thanked all that participated in the process, which provided the best solution for achieving the visions of the Crystal City Sector Plan. For discussion purposes, he asked the Commission to consider the following question: Does the proposed zoning ordinance and accompanied administrative regulations best address the goal of achieving the vision of the Sector Plan, or are enhancements needed to improve their ability to achieve the Sector Plan’s vision?

**Planning Commission Discussion**

Commissioner Malis suggested that the discussion include the two issues raised by Mr. Bonanno.

Commissioner Savela responded to Commissioner Cole’s question, that yes the proposed ordinance and administrative regulations best address the vision of the Sector Plan. In response to Mr. Bonanno’s issues, Commissioner Savela asked if the uses permitted by site plan, as shown and identified in Lines 111 through 113 (retail uses, doctors and physicians offices, medical clinics,

dentist clinics, and veterinary clinics), be included in the list of uses permitted by-right (starting with Line 31). She noted that these uses might be particularly useful to a neighborhood until a site plan is accomplished. Mr. Fusarelli responded that staff would evaluate whether those uses should be permitted by right.

Commissioner Savela also asked for clarification regarding language in Line 36 and if it should read “Uses customarily incidental (rather than incident) to permitted uses”. Mr. Fusarelli responded that he would confirm with the County Attorney on the appropriate language.

Referring to Mr. Bonanno’s issue regarding the use mix regulations, Commissioner Savela asked about the treatment of retail and whether it was limited to the use mix calculations for floors two and above. Mr. Fusarelli responded that the land use mix map refers to building uses above the ground floor and that retail would be permitted on the ground floor throughout the district. For consistency with the intent of the Sector Plan, the zoning ordinance language in Line 132 should be revised to apply to the mix of uses above the ground floor.

Referring to Mr. Bonanno’s issue regarding building height, Commissioner Savela referred to the Height Regulations in Line 141.ii, where it states “Where dimensions of height zones are shown on Map 25C.3 such dimensions may be modified by site plan approval...” She asked for confirmation that the boundaries for the heights may be modified and not the heights of the buildings. Mr. Fusarelli confirmed her understanding that the regulations would allow the depth of the height boundaries to be modified but not the maximum cap on overall building heights. Commissioner Savela believes that the regulations are sufficient and to change the heights map at this late date would violate community expectations.

Commissioner Fallon inquired about the block plan for the center park area and whether it is presumed that there is one or multiple owners. Mr. Fusarelli responded that block plans will likely vary between those having one owner or multiple owners, and it is presumed that if block plans have multiple owners they would hopefully collaborate on a single block plan to achieve the objectives of the Sector Plan. Commissioner Fallon commented that with a PDSP there is a starting point, with approved parameters for density, uses, and heights. He inquired about how much is actually nailed down with a block plan. Mr. Fusarelli responded that a PDSP has a different level of entitlement. With the block plan, entitlements are achieved only through the site plan process, so the block plan involves no additional entitlement beyond those approved through the site plan. Commissioner Fallon followed with a question about proposed changes to a block plan and how they are monitored. Mr. Fusarelli responded that one of the objectives of the block plan is to allow multiple scenarios that would achieve the objectives of the sector plan. Changes would be monitored and recorded as each site plan is approved. Ideally, both the block plan and final site plan should be consistent with the sector plan objectives. Commissioner Fallon inquired about the CCCRC’s participation in the site plan process. Mr. Fusarelli responded that while the charge of CCCRC did not establish it as an additional step in the process, representatives of CCCRC would be invited to participate in the SPRC process.

Commissioner Fallon asked if the approved sector plan permits above grade, multi-level parking garages. Mr. Fusarelli responded that below grade garages are preferred, but that there may be cases whereby above grade garages are necessary, such as due to the water table. At the hearing for

advertisement, the County Board requested staff revisit the proposed zoning text to see if it could more accurately convey the intent and expectations of the treatment of above-grade parking included in the sector plan.

Commissioner Forinash, in referring to Lines 191 through 211, Parking and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plans, asked for clarification about the TDM Plan requirements vis-à-vis the proposed reduced parking. Mr. Fusarelli confirmed that the regulations for the TDM Plan have to be met in order to permit the parking proposed in the regulations. The parking identified in the regulations reflects the minimum requirements; however, the County Board has the flexibility to modify the requirements through the site plan process.

Commissioner Harner asked if there is a density cap of 10 FAR or is it unlimited. Mr. Fusarelli responded that density is limited by building form parameters proposed in the zoning, supported by guidelines in the sector plan, and that there is no density cap of 10 FAR as there is in “C-O Rosslyn”. Commissioner Harner asked Mr. Fusarelli to explain the reasoning for not acknowledging the base densities. Mr. Fusarelli explained that, similar to “C-O Rosslyn”, the level of community benefits is calculated based on the delta between the base and proposed densities. Commissioner Harner asked if the underlying planning reason for this approach is to accommodate the larger densities of 10 or 11 FAR. Mr. Fusarelli responded that the parameters for building form and the design guidelines would be applied to each site and the resultant density would vary on a site-by-site basis. The average gross FAR in Crystal City under the sector plan would be approximately 3.6 FAR. Commissioner Harner asked Mr. Fusarelli to identify streets that would not require active screening of parking, to which he responded non-arterial streets such as 10<sup>th</sup> Street, alleys, and urban center local roads.

### **Planning Commission Motion**

Commissioner Cole moved that the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to amend the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance to adopt a new Section 25C and to amend, reenact, and recodify provisions in Sections 1, 2, 25B, and 36 in order to ensure consistency with the policies set forth in the 2010 Crystal City Sector Plan for the Crystal City Metro Station area. Commissioner Savela seconded the motion.

Commissioner Savela thanked Commissioner Cole for guiding this proposal through ZOCO and being very diligent throughout the process. She is very impressed with material that staff developed. A whole new process was developed and Mr. Fusarelli deserves a huge amount of credit for this work. He did a marvelous job. The fact that the CCCRC Co-Chairs each sent supporting emails is indicative of the good job that was done by the ZOCO chair and staff.

Commissioner Cole noted that the effort was an example of excellent collaboration between Planning staff and Commissioners and the product reflects this. The process was successful in part because of the unusual and valuable collaboration.

Commissioner Harner indicated that he supports the motion and commended the chairs and staff on the collaborative process and excellent work. However, he remained concerned about the lack of limits on density and the overall density that may be permitted by the plan. Form-based design parameters may not be strong enough to achieve the desired goals.

The Planning Commission voted 9-0 to support the motion. Commissioners Cole, Fallon, Forinash, Harner, Kumm, Malis, Monfort, Savela, and Sockwell supported the motion.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Arlington County Planning Commission

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rosemary Ciotti".

Rosemary Ciotti  
Planning Commission Chair

## Gizele Johnson

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**From:** Anthony Fusarelli  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 06, 2011 5:27 PM  
**To:** Gizele Johnson  
**Subject:** FW: PC meeting on C-O-Crystal City

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**From:** judy freshman [<mailto:judyfreshman@yahoo.com>]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 23, 2011 8:55 AM  
**To:** Christer.Ahl; [rosemary.ciotti@gmail.com](mailto:rosemary.ciotti@gmail.com)  
**Cc:** 'Steve Cole'; 'Terry Savela'; 'James Whitaker'; Gizele Johnson  
**Subject:** Re: PC meeting on C-O-Crystal City

All,

I echo Christer's comments about the proposed zoning amendment for Crystal City.

We have great expectations for the Crystal City Plan and the Board-appointed review council (CCRC) is now developing tools to help guide the Plan's progress and to keep watch on individual and cumulative efforts. Nevertheless, the zoning ordinance is the legal framework within which redevelopment of Crystal City will take place so the lengthy process to craft the ordinance has been time well spent.

I too have another commitment on the 28th so I won't be able to present my comments of support in person but please consider them as part of your deliberations.

Happy holidays!

Judy Freshman

**From:** Christer.Ahl <[christer.ahl@comcast.net](mailto:christer.ahl@comcast.net)>  
**To:** [rosemary.ciotti@gmail.com](mailto:rosemary.ciotti@gmail.com)  
**Cc:** 'Steve Cole' <[cole.arl@gmail.com](mailto:cole.arl@gmail.com)>; 'Terry Savela' <[tsavela@comcast.net](mailto:tsavela@comcast.net)>; 'judy freshman' <[judyfreshman@yahoo.com](mailto:judyfreshman@yahoo.com)>; 'James Whitaker' <[jamesbw238@aol.com](mailto:jamesbw238@aol.com)>; 'Gizele Johnson' <[Gjohnson@arlingtonva.us](mailto:Gjohnson@arlingtonva.us)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 22, 2011 12:26 PM  
**Subject:** PC meeting on C-O-Crystal City

Dear friends:

It has become apparent that I will not be able to attend the PC meeting on November 28, as I have another County meeting where I am needed, so I just wanted to send you the following comments:

Together with my CC colleagues Judy Freshman and Jim Whittaker, I have followed closely the ZOCO deliberations on this important topic. I have become convinced that the approach emerging from the collaboration between ZOCO and staff amounts to as good an approach as could realistically be found, regarding the adherence to the goals, directives and prescriptions in the CC Plan during the future implementation process.

Of course, there are many CC residents who are anxious to see these goals, directives and prescriptions respected, and to have the County processes protect the interests of the existing CC community. In this regard, some of them may 'misoverestimate' the prerogatives of the County in ensuring compliance. Nevertheless, it is very important that the processes now established for the future work of the PC/LRPC/SPRC and the Board

have a solid foundation. I believe the approach and the methods based on the new concept of 'Block Plans' and the framework that this creates for the development of individual sites and entire blocks will be most helpful. It does not provide any guarantees, but it should facilitate a process where stakeholders who have the interests of a successful Plan implementation in mind could collaborate with each other, with the local community, and with the County. I am also particularly appreciative of the initiative to establish a formal 'Community Benefits Inventory' for Crystal City.

Accordingly, when originally planning to attend your meeting, my intention had been to express support along these lines.

Thank you and 'Happy Thanksgiving'!

Christer Ahl