



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of November 13, 2007**

DATE: October 26, 2007

SUBJECT: Request to Advertise Public Hearings by the Planning Commission and the County Board on the following:

- A. General Land Use Plan Amendments to redraw the “Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District” boundary to include the northern portion of the County-owned Arlington Mill Community Center property (RPC# 22001004), west of Arlington Mill Drive; and
- B. An ordinance to amend, reenact, and recodify Section 20 (Appendix A) “CP-FBC,” Columbia Pike – Form Based Code Districts, Section III. Regulating Plans, of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance to: 1) Redraw the Columbia Pike Revitalization District boundary to include the northern portion of the County-owned Arlington Mill Community Center property, west of Arlington Mill Drive; 2) Designate a portion of the remaining street frontage along the east side of South Dinwiddie Street, to a point to be determined between 150’ and 300’ from the Columbia Pike centerline, within the Revitalization District as Avenue Site; and 3) modify the distance between the Dinwiddie Street Required Building Lines from 91’ to a dimension, to be determined, but between 65’ and 88’.

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Authorize advertisement of public hearings by the Planning Commission on December 3, 2007, and the County Board on December 15, 2007, to consider:

- A. A General Land Use Plan amendment to redraw the “Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District” boundary to include the northern portion of the County-owned Arlington Mill Community Center property (RPC# 22001004), west of Arlington Mill Drive (see Attachment 1); and
- B. An ordinance to amend, reenact, and recodify Section 20(Appendix A) “CP-FBC,” Columbia Pike – Form Based Code Districts, Section III. Regulating Plans of the

County Manager: _____

County Attorney: _____

Staff: Jennifer Smith, CPHD, Planning

PLA-4819

Arlington County Zoning Ordinance to: 1) Redraw the “Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District” boundary to include the northern portion of the Arlington Mill property; 2) Designate a portion of the remaining Dinwiddie Street frontage, to a point to be determined between 150’ and 300’ from the Columbia Pike centerline, within the Revitalization District as Avenue Site; and 3) Modify the distance between the Dinwiddie Street Required Building Lines from 91’ to a dimension to be determined but between 65’ and 88’ (see Attachment 2b); in order to facilitate the creation of a convenient, attractive and harmonious community; to facilitate the provision of adequate recreational facilities and other public requirements; to promote the creation and preservation of affordable housing suitable for meeting the current and future needs; and for other reasons required by the public necessity, convenience and general welfare and good zoning practice.

ISSUE: None.

SUMMARY: In coordination with the ongoing initiative to prepare a joint public/private redevelopment proposal for rebuilding the Arlington Mill Community Center following the Form Based Code, staff has determined that some technical adjustments to Form Based Code (FBC) and the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) are needed. Staff recommends that the County Board advertise amending the GLUP and FBC to include the entire subject property within the respective revitalization district boundary shown on each document. Properties are eligible to use the FBC when they are located within the Columbia Pike Revitalization District and currently this property is only partially included within the district. Staff further recommends that the County Board advertise the designation of a new street frontage type (Avenue Site frontage) for a portion of Dinwiddie Street and modification of the distance between the Dinwiddie Street Required Building Lines in order to implement the FBC for this property.

BACKGROUND: In March 2002, the *Columbia Pike Initiative-A Revitalization Plan* was adopted by the County Board. A major recommendation of the plan was to develop a new review process to evaluate redevelopment proposals in the corridor, which became the Columbia Pike Form Based Code. In February 2003, the County Board adopted the FBC, including the Regulating Plan for the Neighborhood Center development node. The Arlington Mill Community Center property is shown partially within the Revitalization District boundary and therefore only a portion of the site is eligible for use of the FBC. When the FBC was adopted and the Revitalization District boundary established, the boundary was intended to apply to areas approximately one block north and one block south of Columbia Pike. In this case, the Arlington Mill parcel size is more slender across and deeper from Columbia Pike than adjacent parcels. Therefore, when the boundary line was drawn, it was drawn in a manner that continued from the rear lot lines of adjacent parcels and bisected the subject property rather than turning along Dinwiddie Street and following the Arlington Mill property lines.

DISCUSSION: In coordination with the ongoing initiative to prepare a joint public/private redevelopment proposal for rebuilding the Arlington Mill Community Center following the Form Based Code, staff has determined that some technical adjustments to Form Based Code (FBC) are needed. The County-owned property, totaling 82,902 square feet, is partially located within

the Columbia Pike Revitalization District boundary as shown on the Neighborhood Center Regulating Plan of the FBC (see Attachment 2a). The Zoning Ordinance stipulates that only properties within the Revitalization District are eligible to use the FBC. This means that only a portion of the site is eligible to use the FBC. Staff did not intend to preclude the usage of the FBC tool for the entire Arlington Mill property when it was originally adopted in 2003. Therefore, staff recommends that the County Board authorize the advertisement of public hearings to amend the Regulating Plan by redrawing the district boundary around the northern portion of the property (see Attachment 2b). A small portion of the Arlington Mill property is located on the east side of Arlington Mill Drive. This steeply-sloping area is within the Glen Carlyn park area which is traversed by Four Mile Run, and is not intended to be redeveloped. Therefore, it is not recommended that this area be included within the Revitalization District. The eastern edge of the Arlington Mill Drive right-of-way would continue to serve as the eastern boundary line of the Revitalization District north of Columbia Pike in this area. In order to maintain consistency between the General Land Use Plan and the Zoning Ordinance, it is recommended that the County Board authorize the advertisement of a proposed General Land Use Plan amendment to change the “Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District” boundary to include the remaining portion of the Arlington Mill Community Center property consistent with the proposed FBC amendment described above (see Attachment 1).

Once the Revitalization District is extended on the FBC Regulating Plan, designating the remaining Dinwiddie Street frontage as a particular development type would be necessary in order to implement the FBC. The Regulating Plan, among other things, locates Required Building Lines (RBLs) for new development along existing or proposed new streets and designates one of four possible frontage types for most street frontages. The frontage types, Main Street, Avenue, Local, and Neighborhood, each have Building Envelope Standards (regulations) that outline the required building form and use prescriptions. Currently, the Main Street frontage type is indicated along Dinwiddie Street south of 9th Street and along Columbia Pike, which allows for building heights of three to six stories and requires ground-floor retail. Staff recommends that the Main Street frontage type generally remain as currently designated, and a portion, generally north of 9th Street, be designated as Avenue Site frontage, in order to provide a downward transition in building form away from Columbia Pike where new development would be adjacent to or across the street from lower density residential uses. Staff is, however, still analyzing where the appropriate transition would occur from Main Street frontage to Avenue Site frontage along Dinwiddie Street as part of the ongoing planning and design work underway for the redevelopment of the community center. In addition, the developer can also use a FBC provision that permits a dividing line of two frontage types to be shifted up to 50 feet along a property frontage. Therefore, staff recommends that the County Board advertise a range of possible locations where the Main Street frontage type may change to the Avenue frontage type along Dinwiddie Street between Columbia Pike and 9th Street (see Attachment 2b). Staff anticipates that the transition line would occur at a point between 150’ and 300’ from the Columbia Pike centerline. The Main Street frontage currently ends at the Revitalization District boundary, which is approximately 300’ from the centerline of Columbia Pike and opposite 9th Street South. The Avenue Site frontage type allows residential uses and building heights of two to five stories. This use and building form is consistent with the

surrounding “Low Medium” GLUP designation and the “RA 14-26” zoned property with existing garden apartment buildings.

In collaboration with the Columbia Pike Street Space Task Force, staff examined the full length of Columbia Pike and the secondary streets located within the Town Center node to determine the preferred street cross sections and resulting locations of Required Building Lines. The County Board approved the cross sections for Columbia Pike in 2004 and for the secondary streets in the Town Center in 2006. Analysis of the secondary streets in the remaining development nodes is still needed. As staff has begun studying the Arlington Mill Community Center property for redevelopment, staff has examined the cross section adopted for Dinwiddie Street and resulting Required Building Line locations more closely. The 91’ cross section shown on the Neighborhood Center Regulating Plan was approved when the FBC was originally adopted in 2003. This dimension is wider than what is now considered the typical cross section for side streets, which is 75’. Staff recommends that the cross section be narrowed in a manner consistent with the direction already provided by the Columbia Pike Street Space Task Force and County Board. However, in this location, an additional travel lane exists for left-turn movements which staff anticipates will continue to be needed in the future with redevelopment. In light of the continued need for three travel lanes and a desire to maintain on-street parking lanes particularly near ground-floor retail, deviation from the typical 75’ cross section may be needed. Staff is continuing to analyze several alternative cross sections in connection with the ongoing conceptual review of the Arlington Mill Community Center redevelopment plans. In any event, however, staff recommends narrowing the distance between the Dinwiddie Street RBLs to narrow the crossing distances and locate building walls closer to the street in a manner consistent with the direction of prior planning studies. Therefore, staff recommends that the County Board authorize advertisement of a proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment to modify the distance between the Dinwiddie Street RBLs from 91’ to a dimension to be determined but that is between 65’ and 88’ (see Attachment 2b). Staff will continue to study this issue and based on community input will make a final recommendation to the County Board.

Community Process: Staff reviewed the proposed amendments with the Zoning Committee of the Planning Commission (ZOCO) on October 16, 2007, the Form Based Code Advisory Working Group, a new citizen advisory group to assist staff with proposed amendments to the FBC, on October 17, 2007, and the full Planning Commission on October 29, 2007. Staff will be meeting again with the FBC Advisory Working Group on November 7, 2007.

The Planning Commission and community members understood the need for technical adjustments to the FBC in order to facilitate development in this area using the FBC tool. Preliminary comments were raised regarding the appropriateness of extending the boundary to include the Arlington Mill property east of Arlington Mill Drive. Staff modified the proposed amendment to exclude this area because it is part of the Glen Carlyn park and not planned for redevelopment. Additionally, some questioned staff’s recommendation to apply the Avenue Site frontage designation, rather than the Local Site frontage, along Dinwiddie Street. In response, the Avenue Site frontage would provide a form of development more compatible to the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) designation surrounding this site, “Low Medium” Residential; the surrounding zoning, “RA 14-26;” and the primary building type, which is 3- to 6-story garden

apartment buildings. Existing 2-1/2 story duplex residential units are located across Dinwiddie Street from the subject area however, the zoning there allows for residential development ranging in height from 3-1/2 stories to six stories (maximum height of 60'). The Avenue Site frontage type allows residential uses in buildings with heights ranging from two to five stories. In addition, the Avenue Site frontage is used elsewhere in the Neighborhood Center development node where a transition from Main Street Site frontage is desired. The Local Site frontage type only allows townhouse-style buildings with heights of up to 3-1/2 stories.

CONCLUSION: Staff recommends that the County Board authorize public hearings by the Planning Commission on December 3, 2007, and the County Board on December 15, 2007, to consider the proposed amendment to the General Land Use Plan and amendments to Section 20 of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance to modify the respective Revitalization District boundaries around the northern portion of the Arlington Mill Community Center property, to designate a portion of the Dinwiddie Street frontage as an Avenue Site, and to modify the distance between the Dinwiddie Street Required Building Lines from 91' to a dimension, to be determined, but that is between 65' and 88' in order to facilitate the creation of a convenient, attractive and harmonious community; to facilitate the provision of adequate recreational facilities and other public requirements; to promote the creation and preservation of affordable housing suitable for meeting the current and future needs; and for other reasons required by the public necessity, convenience and general welfare and good zoning practice.

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE ADVERTISEMENT OF PUBLIC HEARINGS AT THE DECEMBER 3, 2007 PLANNING COMMISSION AND THE DECEMBER 15, 2007 COUNTY BOARD MEETING TO CONSIDER AMENDING THE GENERAL LAND USE PLAN TO REDRAW THE “COLUMBIA PIKE SPECIAL REVITALIZATION DISTRICT” BOUNDARY TO INCLUDE THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE COUNTY-OWNED ARLINGTON MILL COMMUNITY CENTER PROPERTY AND AMENDING, REENACTING, AND RECODIFYING SECTION 20. “CP-FBC” COLUMBIA PIKE FORM BASED CODE DISTRICTS [APPENDIX A.] SECTION III, REGULATING PLANS, OF THE ARLINGTON COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE, TO 1) REDRAW THE “COLUMBIA PIKE REVITALIZATION DISTRICT” BOUNDARY TO INCLUDE THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE COUNTY-OWNED ARLINGTON MILL COMMUNITY CENTER PROPERTY WEST OF ARLINGTON MILL DRIVE; 2) DESIGNATE A PORTION OF THE DINWIDDIE STREET FRONTAGE WITHIN THE REVITALIZATION DISTRICT AS AVENUE SITE; AND 3) MODIFY THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE DINWIDDIE STREET REQUIRED BUILDING LINES FROM 91’ TO A DIMENSION, TO BE DETERMINED, BUT BETWEEN 65’ AND 88’.

The County Board of Arlington hereby resolves that the following items shall be advertised for public hearings by the Planning Commission on December 3, 2007 and the County Board on December 15, 2007 to facilitate the creation of a convenient, attractive and harmonious community; to facilitate the provision of adequate recreational facilities and other public requirements; to promote the creation and preservation of affordable housing suitable for meeting the current and future needs; and for other reasons required by the public necessity, convenience and general welfare and good zoning practice:

- A. A General Land Use Plan amendment to redraw the “Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District” boundary to include the northern portion of the County-owned Arlington Mill Community Center property (RPC# 22001004), west of Arlington Mill Drive (see Attachment 1); and*
- B. An ordinance to amend, reenact, and recodify Section 20(Appendix A) “CP-FBC,” Columbia Pike – Form Based Code Districts, Section III. Regulating Plans of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance to: 1) Redraw the “Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District” boundary to include the northern portion of the Arlington Mill property; 2) Designate a portion of the remaining Dinwiddie Street frontage, to a point to be determined between 150’ and 300’ from the Columbia Pike centerline, within the Revitalization District as Avenue Site; and 3) Modify the distance between the Dinwiddie Street Required Building Lines from 91’ to a dimension to be determined but between 65’ and 88’ (see Attachment 2b).*