



ARLINGTON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 900, Arlington, VA 22201  
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February 20, 2018

Ms. Katie Cristol, Chair  
Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Crystal Square Central District Retail Site Plan Amendment

Dear Chair Cristol,

I am writing to express the view of the Transportation Commission regarding the proposed Crystal Square Central District Retail Site Plan Amendment.

**The Transportation Commission, by a vote of 11-0-1 recommends that the County Board approve the subject site plan amendment to construct approximately 84,000 square feet of retail and commercial space, with modifications to the required parking ratio, parking space and drive aisle size, and percentage of compact parking, and 9,432 square feet of additional requested exclusions from gross floor area; and other modifications as necessary to achieve the proposed development plan; located at 1550 Crystal Drive and 251 18th Street South.**

The Commission heard this item at its February 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. The commission heard a presentation from the applicant and from staff. There were no public speakers though the Commission received written comments from the Crystal City Civic Association which are generally supportive of the development but express the associations desire that Crystal Drive bike facilities be retained and concerns about double-parking and drop-offs in front of the grocery store and theater.

The commission discussed the updated Street cross sections for Crystal Drive and appreciation for the retention of the north-bound bike lane. **Several commissioners expressed support for converting the south-bound bike lane to a curb-protected bike lane (also known as a cycletrack) since it would both prevent double-parking from blocking the bike lane (a concern expressed by the Crystal City Civic Association) as well as shortening the crossing distance for pedestrians crossing Crystal Drive.**

The Commission briefly discussed pedestrian lighting in the area given the higher expected volume of pedestrian activity around the grocery and the movie theater with one commissioner urging the County to make more frequent use of lights that are strong across the width of the street allowing light to be placed directly above the streets where light is most needed.

The Commission then had a long discussion about the applicant's requested exclusion from gross floor area of the replacement Crystal City Underground corridors. While normally Transportation

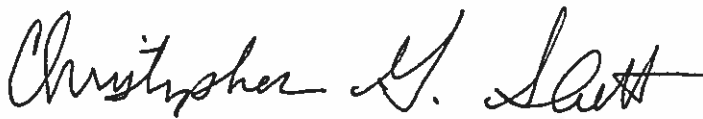
Commission would leave these zoning matters to the Planning Commission, many commissioners felt that its potential impact on retaining the Crystal City Underground made it an important transportation-related concern.

Overall the Commission supported the applicant's requested exclusion for two reasons. First, the commission is concerned that if replacement corridors for the Underground do not merit a density exclusion then applicants have strong incentives to either a) leave the corridors alone, even if moving them would make for a better site design b) remove them entirely, destroying important connectivity through Crystal City's large super blocks or c) narrow any replacement corridors to reduce their square footage resulting in an unpleasantly narrow and crowded walking environment. Second, staff were unable to provide a satisfactory answer for why this particular exclusion differs from other granted exclusions and why the county's policy has changed over time on this issue.

Present and voting were commissioners Bushue, Warren, Calkins, Weinstein, Weir, Yarie, Perkins, Slatt, Wadsworth, Hester, Price. Commissioner Weir abstained because, procedurally, he would have preferred to consider supporting the density exclusion as a separate motion.

I am happy to answer any questions at 571-482-8454 or [chris@dodgersden.com](mailto:chris@dodgersden.com).

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Christopher G. Slatt". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christopher Slatt, Chairman