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# ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

## ARLINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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COORDINATOR

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CLERK

October 17, 2018

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

**SUBJECT: 3. Request to Authorize Advertisement of the Four Mile Run Valley Area Plan**

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 1) of the staff report to the Planning Commission dated October 1, 2018 to authorize advertisement of public hearings at the November Planning Commission meeting and November 17, 2018 County Board meeting to consider the adoption of the draft Four Mile Run Policy Framework.**

### **BACKGROUND**

The Planning Commission heard this item at its October 10, 2018 public hearing Richard Tucker, Department of Community Planning, Housing, and Development (DCPHD) – Planning Division gave a presentation on the Request to Advertise. Additional staff present included Richard Best, Department of Environmental Services (DES), Bethany Heim, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), and Jennifer Smith, Comprehensive Planning Supervisor, DCPHD-Planning.

### **PUBLIC SPEAKERS**

There was 1 public speaker on the item.

1. Portia Clark, President of the Nauck Civic Association, brought up one specific matter regarding the Request to Advertise (RTA) for the Four Mile Run Valley (4MRV) initiative. The RTA report notes that certain organizations including the Nauck Civic Association will be informed of the transportation plans for the area in early November. The County is scheduled to provide its transportation briefing to the Nauck Civic Association on November 5<sup>th</sup> at regularly scheduled meeting. Unfortunately, according to the RTA report, the Planning Commission is scheduled to hear and vote on the area plan for the community on the same date and time. Ms. Clark stated the Nauck Civic

PC. #24.

Association would appreciate the Planning Commission's consideration and working with them to resolve the conflict.

Ms. Clark also noted on Page 4.7 of the September 14, 2018 draft of the 4MRV Area Plan, the document notes support for urban design, community planning, open space goals for the 4MRV, Nauck and Shirlington – Ms. Clark noted to be clear the 4MRV is in Nauck, and the community does not want identity to be lost or glossed over. Ms. Clark suggested stating, "*Four Mile Run Valley and the rest of Nauck, and Shirlington*" as a necessary correction.

## **COMMISSION REPORTS**

### *Transportation Commission (TC)*

Commissioner Lantelme stated that the Transportation Commission considered the RTA last week and voted to approve. The road diet for Four Mile Run Drive was discussed and a few questioned whether the narrowing would be an issue in the future as the population grows. There was additional discussion that the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the County has been stable, so the narrowing would not be an issue. Commissioner Lantelme further noted that bicycle paths were discussed and one commissioner noted the concern of potential loss in number of parking spaces but the Area Plan does not have a loss in parking so the concern was resolved.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

As the representative from the Planning Commission to the 4MRV Working Group, Commissioner McSweeney discussed the 4MRV Working Group report. She noted that the major issues identified were to improve Four Mile Run stream, pedestrian access to stream, Jennie Dean park, questions about the Shirlington dog park, balancing other uses, and defining the character of the area. The Long-Range Planning Committee (LRPC) discussed the 4MRV Area Plan on July 30, 2018. The final 4MRV Working Group meeting was held on September 20, 2018 to discuss changes since the LRPC meeting in July.

The Planning Commission discussed and asked questions about the following topics with County staff:

- **Land Use and Zoning – Special Overlay District**
  - Mr. Tucker discussed the proposal for the Special Overlay District in the 4MRV Area Plan and the flexibility and incentives. Commissioner McSweeney noted that committee members asked questions about patios, murals, and windows on existing buildings. Commission Siegel noted that this district sets up a framework to have future discussions. Mr. Tucker added that the primary output of an area plan is to set a vision both short-term and long-term. Commissioner Ricks asked if the guidelines in Chapter 4 are anticipated in the future as a form-based code or done like proffers and incentives. Mr. Tucker responded that this is not likely the case and the vision is for incentives for creativity that might add to the theme of

arts and are geared around reuse and limited redevelopment of existing buildings in the area.

- **Concept of Arts District**

- Commissioner Schroll thanked staff for revising language following LRPC regarding the composition of group that would ultimately guide the creation of arts and industrial district. He added that the language is clearer. Commissioner Morton asked staff about whether or not the Virginia specific enabling legislation that provides for certain incentives that local governments can adopt was fully exploited in the plan. Mr. Tucker responded that throughout the planning process there was a strong interest in creating an arts district in this area. The SNAIQ report that was developed is a report of the committee within the working group that outlines the two-step process where various groups lead a process to review the various options that are available in terms of the set up an arts district.
- Commissioner McSweeney noted there were extensive conversations during working group meetings about the arts district. The report from the 4MRV Arts subcommittee may be found online on the 4MRV webpage.

- **Build-To Lines, Fenestration, and Design Guidelines**

- Commissioner Schroll asked if building fenestration requirements would apply to alleys. Mr. Tucker responded that streets, plazas, and public spaces typically have a different requirement than alleys because it is private space. Commissioner Lantelme noted that there should be more flexibility about mandating trees along Four Mile Run Drive. He added that he objects to having mandated trees along Four Mile Run Drive and would rather leave that to the individual design for each individual property.
- Commissioner Morton noted that she likes interim improvements and asked what kind of review would be done before permanent improvements and how the success would be evaluated. Mr. Best noted that operational tests would be conducted.
- Commissioner Lantelme added stormwater facilities should be incorporated instead of tree pits. He noted we should think more about how to use freed up spaces.

- **Transportation and Parking**

- The Commission discussed various transportation and parking aspects of the 4MRV Area Plan. Commissioners noted parking concerns in Shirlington and inefficiencies related to the existing parking garages. In addition, the Commission discussed the notion of any acquired land being used for parking, per the letter received from the Shirlington Civic Association. Commissioner Weir noted that any acquired space should be multi-use and used for co-location of uses and several Commissioners agreed.

- **Conflict with Planning Commission and Nauck Civic Association Meeting Dates**

- The Commission discussed the upcoming November agenda and conflict with Nauck Civic Association meeting, at which the County's Transportation staff will be presenting to Nauck. Commissioners noted that since two dates are set aside for meetings in November, and there will only be enough agenda items for one evening, it is possible to avoid the conflict by having the Planning Commission meet on the Wednesday instead of the Monday date. The Planning staff noted they would look into the upcoming schedule.
- **Dog Park and Encroachment of the Car Business on County Land**
  - Mr. Tucker noted that the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), Department of Environmental Services (DES), and County Attorney's Office (CAO) is working on this.
- **Implementation Actions**
  - Commissioner Schroll mentioned that most implementation actions have "CIP" listed next to them. He added that the plan is going to take a long time to implement. He noted it would be useful to have an idea of how much each action costs and to categorize based on this measure. Commissioner Hughes noted the importance of placemaking and community ideas.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION**

Commissioner McSweeney made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 1) of the staff report to the Planning Commission dated October 1, 2018 to authorize advertisement of public hearings at the November Planning Commission meeting and November 17, 2018 County Board meeting to consider the adoption of the draft Four Mile Run Policy Framework.

Commissioner Gearin seconded.

Commissioner McSweeney mentioned that this was a long process where many of the members came in to the work with specific ideas and a vision for the area. It was clear that everybody cared very deeply about the 4MRV, and as is the case with most public processes, the wisdom of the group was tapped and the final result is a good one. She noted that at the end of the day, what has been produced is a good report and there are certainly a lot of implementation actions to propel the group forward to transform the area and honor the history of this site.

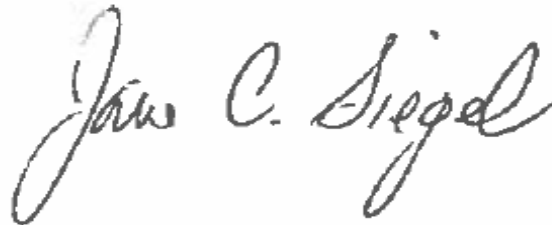
Commissioner McSweeney thanked staff because the report has gone through tremendous changes in the past couple of months and a great job was done at responding to comments via the comment matrix. Commissioner McSweeney also thanked the chair and the two co-chairs that lead the process for their work. As a result of this process, there is now a group of businesses that now meet regularly that is led by a business owner in the area and New District Brewing has just coordinated the second ValleyFest.

She added that the effort is taking on a life of its own and the best arts districts grow organically and this one certainly is. Finally, Commissioner McSweeney noted she is excited to see what happens as the Valley continues to develop.

Commissioner Siegel associated herself with the comments made by Commissioner McSweeney. She added the importance of looking for organic growth in the area based on what is there now. She noted she is encouraged by the number of incremental steps that have been taken here.

The Planning Commission unanimously supported the motion 9-0 with Commissioners McSweeney, Gearin, Siegel, Schroll, Lantelme, Ricks, Hughes, and Weir in support.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Arlington County Planning Commission  
Jane C. Siegel

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Jane C. Siegel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Jane" is written with a large, looped capital 'J'. The middle initial "C." is written in a smaller, simpler script. The last name "Siegel" is written with a large, looped capital 'S' and a trailing flourish.