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## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

### ARLINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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CLERK

December 10, 2019

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

### **SUBJECTS: Metropolitan Park Phases 6, 7, 8**

- A. An amendment to the Master Transportation Plan Map to remove a planned section of 14<sup>th</sup> Road South, east of South Elm Street.
- B. SP #105 PHASED DEVELOPMENT SITE PLAN AMENDMENT to amend Conditions #2 & #54 of the Pentagon City Phased Development Site Plan with regard to Parcel 3 (Metropolitan Park), located at 1201-1429 S. Fern Street; 1232-1450 S. Eads Street, 520 12<sup>th</sup> Street S.; and 501 and 525 15<sup>th</sup> Street S. (RPC# 35-003-001 through -008, -015 through -021, -023; -840; and -PCA).
- C. SP #105; SP-9 SITE PLAN AMENDMENT for Metropolitan Park Phases 6, 7, & 8; to construct two 22-story office buildings of approximately 2.152 million square feet of gross floor area including ground floor retail and retail equivalent uses, with a shared underground parking garage, and modifications of use regulations including required parking, additional density, exclusions from gross floor area, penthouse height and other modifications as necessary to achieve the proposed development plan, located at 1232-1450 S. Eads Street and 501 and 525 15<sup>th</sup> Street S. (RPC #35-003-001 and -002; -015 through -021, and -023).
- D. SP #105; SP-9 SITE PLAN AMENDMENTS for Met Park Phases 1, 2, & 3, to amend site plan conditions requiring the developers/owners to convey in fee simple to the County certain internal streets in Metropolitan Park, located at 1201-1429 S. Fern Street (RPC #35-003-003 through -008; and -PCA).

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 1) to approve an amendment of the Master Transportation Plan (MTP) Map to remove a section of 14<sup>th</sup> Road South, east of South Elm Street.

PC. #40.A-D.

2. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance for a Phased Development Site Plan (PDSP) Amendment (SP #105) to the Pentagon City Phased Development Site Plan to revise conditions #2 and 54 to convert the remaining allocation of residential dwelling units for Parcel 3 of the PDSP to office and commercial gross floor area, and to permit two (2) office buildings of 22 stories in height each, for the parcels of real property known as 1201-1429 S. Fern Street; 1232-1450 S. Eads Street, 520 12<sup>th</sup> Street S.; and 501 and 525 15<sup>th</sup> Street S. (RPC# 35-003-001 through -08, -015 through -021, -023; and -834 through -840) subject to all previously approved conditions and the amended conditions of the attached ordinance.
3. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to approve an amendment to SP #105; SP-9 for Metropolitan Park Phases 6, 7, & 8 to construct two (2) 22-story office building of approximately 2.152 million square feet of gross floor area including ground floor retail and retail equivalent uses, with a shared underground parking garage, and modifications of use regulations including required parking, additional density exclusions from gross floor area, penthouse height, and other use modifications as necessary to achieve the proposed development plan, located at 1232-1450 S. Eads Street and 501 and 525 15<sup>th</sup> Street S. (RPC #35-003-001 and -002; -015 through -021, and -023), subject to the conditions of the attached ordinance.
4. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board include a site plan condition that codifies the Met Park park master planning (PMP) process, including developer contribution of at least \$14 million for planning and construction; and park construction concurrent with office building construction; and park maintenance in perpetuity.
5. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board add a site plan condition that memorializes the parameters of public access to the meeting space (either directly or by incorporating an agreement between the county and the applicant); the condition should confirm the number of annual County uses and annual community uses, as well as communicate to the public what access the public will have to utilize the meeting space, under what conditions and parameters, how access will be scheduled and coordinated, whether the meeting space will be available for election polling, and how the public might utilize the meeting space for smaller events that do not require the whole space.
6. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board add a site plan condition that memorializes the intent of the staff report with regard to affordable housing, off-site transportation, day care and open space requirements as set forth in its December 2nd Staff Report.
7. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to approve an amendment to SP #105; SP-9 to approve a site plan amendment to SP #105; SP-9 to Metropolitan Park Phases 1, 2, and 3, to eliminate the requirement to convey certain streets to the County in fee simple, located at 1201-1429 S. Fern Street (RPC #35-003-003 through -008; and -834 through -839), subject to all previous conditions and the amended conditions in the attached ordinance.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Planning Commission heard this item at its December 2, 2019 public hearing. Peter Schulz, Community Planning Housing and Development Department, Planning Division gave a presentation on the proposal. Additional staff present included:

- Joanne Gabor, Department of Environmental Services, Development Services Division;
- Marco Rivero, Department of Parks and Recreation, Park Development Division;
- Matt Mattauszek, Community Planning Housing and Development Department, Planning Division; and
- Aaron Shriber, Community Planning Housing and Development Department, Planning Division.

John Schoettler, representative from Amazon, introduced the teams working on the project, gave an overview of the public outreach, briefly described the site design, and discussed the other developments in the future. Mr. Schoettler discussed the community benefits that Amazon will be providing in coordination with this proposal.

Brian Earle, architect for the project, discussed the site design in more detail including building tapering, loading accesses, ground floor uses, and other architectural elements. Additionally, Mr. Earle discussed the plans for the public open space, protected bike lanes, parking ratios, construction staging, and building materials. Mr. Earle discussed the sustainability objectives and increased pledge to achieve LEED Platinum instead of the LEED Silver that was originally stated when the plans were submitted.

## **PUBLIC SPEAKERS**

There were 8 public speakers on this item:

1. Christer Ahl, discussed the amount of density being proposed and the stress that it may place on the existing infrastructure in this area. The civic associations in the area have developed a livability framework to guide upcoming projects. Mr. Ahl proposed the idea of providing more information prior to the SPRC process. Additionally, Mr. Ahl discussed the increased use of the Metro stations and the stress that this may place on the existing infrastructure.
2. Jonathan Morgenstein, resident, encouraged Amazon to go further to increase their climate stewardship and reduce the carbon footprint. Mr. Morgenstein suggested ideas that would go further to encourage a more environmentally conscience project.
3. Robert Mandel, Crystal City Business Improvement District, voiced his support for the proposal. Mr. Mandel discussed the proposals ability to meet the County's goals for retail, economic development, pedestrian streetscape, and other goals.
4. John Bloom, Representative from Environment and Energy Conservation Committee (E2C2), discussed the state of the environment and the role that Amazon could do to

contribute to environmental solutions. Mr. Bloom urged Amazon to pursue Carbon Neutrality that would fit Amazon's public environmental commitments and Arlington County's goals. Mr. Bloom would like the Carbon Neutral goal to be included in a Site Plan condition. Additionally, E2C2 looks forward to participating in the open space planning process and encouraging biophilic design principles.

5. James Wise, resident of South Hampton Community, voiced concerns about the approval of a high-rise building and the effect that it may have on the view shed and the noise impacts with proximity to the airport. Mr. Wise does not want the subject area to turn into a Rosslyn-like area. Additionally, Mr. Wise noted that he thinks the street improvements should be extended west to Hayes Street.
6. Sarah Balleeky, resident of South Hampton Community, commented on the amount of density, parking, and traffic that will come with this proposal. Ms. Balleeky voiced concerns about the lack of a dedicated bus lane and the negative role this may play on the Amazon workers commuting to the project.
7. Ben D'Avanzo, resident of South Hampton Community, commented on the design of the project and noted that the architecture is pleasing with the exception of the crowns of the building. Mr. D'Avanzo voiced concerns about not knowing the monetary value of the community benefits and the lack of mitigation for the parking modification. Mr. D'Avanzo would like the mitigation to be applied not only on the site, but also on sites elsewhere. Additionally, he mentioned that childcare spaces should not be reserved for employees and the conference space should be available more than four times a year.
8. Michael Dowell, resident of the Aurora Highlands Civic Association, was pleased with the park, bike lanes, childcare, and affordable housing. Mr. Dowell referenced the letter that was submitted by the surrounding Civic Associations and spoke of the problems that they are experiencing in the area. Mr. Dowell spoke of the need for a forum to discuss the ongoing issues that may arise with the Civic Associations and Amazon.

## **COMMISSION REPORTS**

1. Bill Ross, Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission, gave a report on the SPRC meetings and the November 19<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting. The Commission appreciates the focus on the outdoor spaces and the park extensions. Mr. Ross spoke of the improvement that this proposed layout plays on the public spaces. Additionally, the designing of Eads Street brings further possibility of open space.
2. Commissioner James Lantelme provided a report from the Transportation Commission. The Transportation Commission heard this item on November 25, 2019 and discussed the

parking ratio and the vacations. The Commission supported this proposal and was very happy with the buffered bicycle lane.

3. Commissioner Elizabeth Gearin provided a report from the Site Plan Review Committee. The SPRC found that the proposal met the plans that governed the site and felt that it was in line with the plans. During the process, there was general appreciation for the site design, architecture, and amenities, including the park. There were also concerns raised about the project, including many resolved during the SPRC process. Commissioner Gearin gave an overview of the community benefits associated with this proposal.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

The Planning Commission discussed the following topics with County Staff and the applicant:

- **Architecture & Met Park Design Guidelines**
- **LEED Certification**
- **Open Space**
- **Transportation**
- **Construction & Phasing**
- **Community Benefits**
- **Retail**
- **Easements**
- **Processes & SPRC Meetings**

#### **Architecture/Met Park Design Guidelines:**

- Commissioners stated how pleased they were with the architecture of the buildings.
- There was discussion about the crown of the buildings and whether the design met the intent of the design guidelines. There was a division between commissioners that felt it is in compliance and other commissioners that wished it was more distinctive.

#### **LEED Certification:**

- Commissioner Seigel asked the applicant if they are planning on continuing to pursue environmental designs and further certifications after the LEED Platinum. The applicant responded that they are planning on maintaining Amazon's public commitment for environmental stewardship and will continue to study ways improve their environmental impact. The applicant further described the details of how they plan to do that including studying the retail uses and doing offsets to make up any differences.
- Commissioners asked about Amazon's public statement to be carbon neutral and asked further questions about the renewable energy offsets, the size, location, and implications of those offsets.
- The LEED Certification conditions were discussed, and Staff clarified the intent behind the conditions. Ms. Gabor, DES, described the condition, the role of the Arlington Priority Credits, and the LEED credits. Staff stated that they are comfortable with the

language in the conditions. The applicant further explained the options that they have chosen and discussed the climate pledge that was made by Amazon.

- Commissioner Gearin asked if it was possible to attach the Amazon promise of future carbon neutrality to the LEED Condition. Ms. Gabor responded that it was not standard procedure and may cause problems in the future.
- Commissioners and the applicant discussed the ability of the building to be converted to an electric building (like an electric kitchen) and implement other environmentally friendly components. The applicant said that the retail tenants could be limited if electric kitchen are implemented right now. Additionally, Amazon is working to get retail tenants and design spaces for them.
- The applicant confirmed that this design is a bird-friendly design.

#### **Open Space:**

- Marco Rivero, DPR, provided information on the park master planning process. During the post approval, DPR will be undertaking a site plan visioning process including community engagement and using the data collected to develop concept plans. Staff is aiming for the entire process to last six months. Staff confirmed that the applicant is paying for the entire park (design, construction, and maintenance) and the park plan will not come back to the Planning Commission.
- Commissioner Steinberger asked about the agreements with the owners of the other property owners necessary to maintain the park areas.
- Commissioner Iacomini discussed the benefits of the park and the compliance of the park with the Sector Plan.
- Commissioner Morton raised concerns about the visibility into the park, especially at the intersection of 14<sup>th</sup> and Eads Streets.

#### **Transportation:**

- Commissioners asked about the lack of conditions regarding EV charging parking spaces. Staff discussed why this was not included. Commissioner Schroll encouraged staff to include EV Parking and EV Readiness as a condition in this and future projects, and asked applicants why they are not providing these spaces. Commissioners discussed the concept of EV-Capable and EV-Ready. Commissioner Lantelme shared his thoughts that this issue is probably not a topic to be discussed because the market and building codes are going in this direction. The applicant stated that the electrical infrastructure is onsite and they will respond to the demand.
- Commissioner Steinberger wanted clarification about the difference between wide compact and compact spaces. Staff provided the Zoning Code definitions.
- Commissioner Morton asked about micro-mobility uses and if Amazon had any plans for implementing innovative transportation uses. The applicant responded with examples that they have from Seattle and also spoke to the walkability of Arlington and the metro accessibility.

- Commissioner Schroll asked about the operational differences between charging employees per month versus charging employees per day.
- Commissioner Schroll asked about condition language regarding deliveries. Staff clarified that this language has been used before on other site plan projects and that this language provide slight flexibility in hours.

### **Construction & Phasing:**

- Commissioner Lantelme asked about the deconstruction and the recycling of the materials.
- Commissioner McSweeney and other Commissioners asked about the labor force employed for the construction of the buildings. The applicant responded with more information regarding their hiring and payment process, including their intention to comply with Davis-Bacon requirements.

### **Community Benefits:**

- Staff explained that there are several conditions that are not in the draft staff report because they relate to on-going discussions. These conditions include the community space, the new and updated park delivery, daycare open space, and affordable housing contribution. The specific language was not ready for the report because it was still being reviewed by the County Attorney's office. Commissioners expressed concern about the number and substantive nature of the conditions still in negotiations during the timing of the PC hearing. Commissioners requested that in the future a listing of such site conditions is provided during the staff report.
- Commissioner Morton encouraged the applicant to consider the artist as a member of the design team from the very beginning of the project if they are undertaking an on-site public art project.
- Commissioners are pleased about the child care use proposed and asked about the providers feedback. The applicant said that in Seattle, they included the daycare early on in the process and they anticipate doing the same thing in Arlington. The childcare will be on a first-come first-serve capacity with no priority given to Amazon employees.
- Commissioners asked about the meeting space and about the ability for this to be used more than four times a year and discussed the ability to include that in a condition. Commissioners asked about the definition of "community" and expressed a desire to have that defined. The applicant stated that the four times a year is a minimum and that they are open for having it open more. Additionally, the applicant indicated that the County Attorney's office is working on a condition to memorialize the ability for the county to use that space. Staff added that this condition is not included in the staff report, but it is an ongoing conversation that is still in discussion with the Attorney's office. The space is now able to have large (up to 700 seat) events four times a year. They are also exploring using other smaller spaces to have meetings.
- Commissioner Iacomini expressed the desire to have a community liaison identified to respond to community concerns and civic associations. The applicant responded that the

real estate facilities are the main point of contact for neighbor concerns and civic association relations.

- Commissioner Peterson discussed the community mitigation and encouraged staff to think creatively about the community facilities and the safety measures. Staff agreed and discussed the role that the fire department and other community facility members play in these projects.

#### **Affordable Housing:**

- Commissioner Siegel asked about affordable housing and the rent stability program that was approved by the County Board.
- Commissioner Morton asked questions about the amount of money that was allocated to affordable housing and wanted more information about how that number came to be. Staff responded that the number is a combination of what is required by the zoning code and through negotiations. The \$20 million contribution is the largest contribution to affordable housing that has been received by the County. The money will go toward providing housing within the area. Staff is hoping to find a site for which these funds can be used to build affordable housing, instead of the normal process of distributing these funds among several projects.

#### **Retail:**

- Commissioner Morton discussed the applicant's stated goal and practice of 'curating' retail as an employee amenity and possibly subsidizing rents for small businesses and asked if in Seattle if there is a condition codifying the amount and type of retail; and if there was some way to formalize this approach. The applicant responded that there is a condition requiring retail at the ground floor, however, there is no further condition. The applicant also responded that they want the retail to be successful and they are invested in making that happen.

#### **Easements:**

- Staff clarified the easements and the origin of the street dedication. Staff clarified that when the conditions were originally approved, the streets were required to be dedicated, however, now staff does not want the streets that have garage below them.

#### **Processes & SPRC:**

- Commissioner Gearin noted that the PC has heard other proposals where written site plan conditions have been unavailable as they are being drafted and refined for the County Board public hearing. She noted, further, that the scope and magnitude of the site plan mitigations/ community benefits for this project are much larger than the County typically sees, suggesting this factor may reasonably impact why the conditions are not final at the PC public hearing stage.
- Commissioner Siegel spoke to the number of SPRC meetings held for a given project, noting that we have come a long way from the 20 meetings held for Pen Place. She believes that two SPRC are a minimum; with both efficiency during the meetings and



opportunity for community input as more important than the number of meetings held. Commissioner Siegel wants to have more information about the process prior to the SPRC process.

- Commissioner McSweeney discussed the public transparency aspect of the SPRC process and raised concerns about the number of issues being negotiated after the SPRC process concluded.
- Commissioner Siegel noted that this site for HQ2 lies in an area for which there has not been a fully developed sector plan. Staff responded that there is a plan, [a PDSP], that has been updated many times and that this HQ2 development is still below the density called for in the plan. Staff is reopening the phased development site plan for Pentagon City and will be coming back early next year to discuss the future of the amendments to this plan.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION MOTIONS**

- That the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 1) to approve an amendment of the Master Transportation Plan (MTP) Map to remove a section of 14<sup>th</sup> Road South, east of South Elm Street. (Lantelme/Iacomini, carried 12-0.) Stephen Hughes recused himself from this SPRC process and related discussions based on advice from County Counsel.
- That the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance for a Phased Development Site Plan Amendment (SP #105) to the Pentagon City Phased Development Site Plan to revise conditions #2 and 54 to convert the remaining allocation of residential dwelling units for Parcel 3 of the PDSP to office and commercial gross floor area, and to permit two (2) office buildings of 22 stories in height each, for the parcels of real property known as 1201-1429 S. Fern Street; 1232-1450 S. Eads Street, 520 12<sup>th</sup> Street S.; and 501 and 525 15<sup>th</sup> Street S. (RPC# 35-003-001 through -008, -015 through -021, -023; and -834 through -840) subject to all previously approved conditions and the amended conditions of the attached ordinance. (Gearin/Siegel, carried 12-0)
- That the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to approve an amendment to SP #105; SP-9 for Metropolitan Park Phases 6, 7, & 8 to construct two (2) 22-story office building of approximately 2.152 million square feet of gross floor area including ground floor retail and retail equivalent uses, with a shared underground parking garage, and modifications of use regulations including required parking, additional density exclusions from gross floor area, penthouse height, and other use modifications as necessary to achieve the proposed development plan, located at 1232-1450 S. Eads Street and 501 and 525 15<sup>th</sup> Street S. (RPC #35-003-001 and -002; -015 through -021, and -023), subject to the conditions of the attached ordinance. (Gearin/Lantelme, 11-1 with McSweeney dissenting.)
  - That the Planning Commission further recommend that the County Board include a site plan condition that codifies the Met Park park master planning (PMP) process, including developer contribution of at least \$14 million for planning and construction;

and park construction concurrent with office building construction; and park maintenance in perpetuity. (Gearin/Patel, carried 9-2-1 with Commissioners McSweeney and Lantelme dissenting and Commissioner Siegel abstaining.)

- That the Planning Commission further recommend that the County Board add a site plan condition that memorializes the parameters of public access to the meeting space (either directly or by incorporating an agreement between the county and the applicant); the condition should confirm the number of annual county uses and annual community uses, as well as communicate to the public what access the public will have to utilize the meeting space, under what conditions and parameters, how access will be scheduled and coordinated, whether the meeting space will be available for election polling, and how the public might utilize the meeting space for smaller events that do not require the whole space. (Weir/Steinberger, carried 11-1 with Commissioner McSweeney dissenting.)
- That the Planning Commission further recommend that the County Board add a site plan condition that memorializes the intent of the staff report in regard to affordable housing, off-site transportation, day care and open space requirements set forth in its December 2<sup>nd</sup> Staff Report. (Patel/Siegel, carried 9-2-1 with Commissioners McSweeney and Lantelme dissenting and Commissioner Morton abstaining.)
- That the Planning Commission further recommend that the Planning Commission recommends that the County Board add a site plan condition requiring at least 10 percent of on-site parking spaces be considered “EV-Ready,” consistent with the industry-accepted meaning of the term “EV-Ready.” Such spaces shall be designed and constructed to include a fully-wired circuit (including conduit, wiring and electrical service capacity) sufficient to power or allow for future installation of Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE). (Weir/Iacomini, failed 6-1-5 with Commissioner Lantelme opposing and Commissioners Patel, Steinberger, Bagley, Gearin, and Morton abstaining.)
- That the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to approve an amendment to SP #105; SP-9 to approve a site plan amendment to SP #105; SP-9 to Metropolitan Park Phases 1, 2, and 3, to eliminate the requirement to convey certain streets to the County in fee simple, located at 1201-1429 S. Fern Street (RPC #35-003-003 through -008; and -834 through -839), subject to all previous conditions and the amended conditions in the attached ordinance. (Gearin/Iacomini, carried 12-0.)

Respectfully Submitted,  
Arlington County Planning Commission  
James Schroll, Chair

