



**ARLINGTON COUNTY
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414
Arlington, Virginia 22201**



November 25, 2019

Honorable Christian Dorsey
Chair, Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Crystal Houses Project

Dear Chairman Dorsey:

Park and Recreation Commission members have participated in the SPRC meetings for the Crystal Houses project. We also received two briefings on the project at our commission meetings including one that focused on the newly-proposed corner park. We would like to offer the following thoughts.

First, commissioners appreciate the additions of two publically-accessible open spaces in this part of the county and the associated provision of square footage greater than pictured in existing planning documents. On the newly proposed corner park, the commission is generally laudatory about the proposed design. Its proposed features appear to be suitable to its proximity with the Aurora Highlands neighborhood. We support the proposed casual use and small canine area features, as well as the intent to include, a small orchard, natives, pollinator plants and other biophilic features.

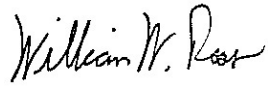
We appreciate the applicant's attempts to improve the view to the exposed garage entrance that faces the corner park. We recommend a more varied set of plantings in front of it, however, as opposed to the proposal's pictured straight line of identical evergreens.

In various recent projects PRC members have expressed concern about the status and permanence of agreed-upon public space easements for such spaces. In addition to tight site plan conditions that will effectively treat these spaces as public parks, we expect that there will be signage installed that directs the public to these parks. We expect the entry areas to the green space to have wide curved inviting entrances to visually encourage local access. This will be particularly important for the "center" park that only has a small frontage along Eads Street.

Finally, members are dismayed by the loss of large mature trees on the project block. Although this super block is filled with non-preferred surface parking, the original openness of the design allowed for a number of beautiful trees to grow here. Even with planned tree replacement, it will take years for the environmental and urban design benefits of larger trees to appear. We agree

with concerns that the surface parking that is proposed to remain does not conform to sector plan requirements. Additional removal of surface parking could provide additional space for tree or other green plantings.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William N. Ross". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small "N" and "R" being prominent.

William Ross
Chair, Park and Recreation Commission

cc: Members, Arlington County Board
Mark Schwartz, Arlington County Manager
Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation
Claude Williamson, Director, CPHD
Members, Planning Commission



ARLINGTON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 900, Arlington, VA 22201
TEL 703-228-3689 FAX 703-228-7548 www.arlingtonva.us

December 11, 2019

Mr. Christian Dorsey, Chair
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Crystal House Site Plan

Dear Chair Dorsey,

I am writing to express the view of the Transportation Commission regarding the Crystal House Site Plan.

The Transportation Commission, by a vote of 9-1-1, recommends that the County Board approve the proposed Site Plan along with the associated rezoning and site plan amendment.

The commission considered this item at its November 25th, 2019 meeting. The Commission heard a presentation from the applicant and County Staff. There were five public speakers, primarily Restaurant Row business owners and landlords. They spoke on a number of issues, but primarily in support of the new plan to convey Crystal House building 5 to the County.

Commission discussion centered around the remaining surface parking, the amount of parking in the Crystal House 5 garage, the design of the alley, and the streetscape improvements, including the protected bike lanes.

Ultimately the Commission is pleased to see the addition of more housing in such a transit-rich environment, transportation improvements such as the new protected bike lanes, and the new park space. While the Commission would have preferred to see all surface parking removed as per the CO-Crystal zoning, we concur with staff that the parallel parking spaces along the internal drives are sufficiently urban as to not materially detract from the urban design of the site and therefore acceptable given the huge amount of surface parking that has been removed for the plan.

Present and voting in favor were Commissioners Buck, Brose, Ratik, Lantelme, Yarie, Calkins, Slatt, Recih and Price. Commissioner Clement abstained as she felt the proposal was not fully formed given the very recent major changes (such as the conveyance of Crystal House 5 to the County). Commissioner Bushue voted in opposition.

I am happy to answer any questions at 571-482-8454 or chris@dodgersden.com.

Best,

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

Christopher Slatt, Chairman



Holly Bray, Chair

CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMISSION ON HOUSING

One Courthouse Plaza 2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 700 Arlington, VA 22201
TEL 703.228.3760 FAX 703.228.3834 www.arlingtonva.us

December 12, 2019

Hon. Christian Dorsey, Chair
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Crystal Houses

Dear Mr. Dorsey:

At its December 5, 2019 public hearing, the Citizens Advisory Commission on Housing considered the affordable housing program for Crystal Houses. The Commission advises the County Board to support the affordable housing program outlined below:

The affordable housing program for the site will consist of the following elements:

1. Affordable Housing Ordinance (ZO §15.5.8.A): Due to the base site plan density, the Applicant has the choice of:
 - a cash contribution = **\$1,653,424;**
 - on-site units; off-site nearby, or off-site anywhere in the County
2. C-O Crystal City Additional Density (ZO §7.16.5): The Applicant has agreed to convey to the County an approximately 38,000 square foot site, which would allow construction of 105,000 square feet (81 units) within a 75-foot tall building.

The Commission is very supportive of this proposal even though the site will still need to be constructed, it will allow for the construction of a significantly greater amount of affordable housing than what the Crystal City Sector Plan recommends for the site.

The Commission vote on the motion was 8-0. Members in favor are Mr. Berkey, Mr. Blank, Ms. Bray, Mr. Browne, Ms. Edwards, Ms. Hogan, Ms. Norris, and Mr. Sims. Thank you for your consideration of this issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Holly Bray
Chair