CLIMATE CHANGE, ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION

c/o Department of Environmental Services
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 705
Arlington, VA 22201

June 20, 2023

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

Re: Bingham Center/Silver Diner (200 Wilson Blvd.)

Dear Chair Dorsey:

The Climate Change, Energy and Environment Commission (C2E2) has reviewed the application for the Bingham Center/Silver Diner (3200 Wilson Blvd). The project is participating in the Green Building Incentive Program for a bonus density of 0.35 FAR but the project still falls short of what is necessary to address the climate crisis and Arlington's own climate goals. **Overall, we score this project's contribution to meeting Arlington County's Community Energy Plan (CEP) targets at 63%, indicating the project falls below what is required to achieve the County's carbon neutrality and other sustainability goals.** Please reference the Appendix for further detail on how C2E2 has assessed this project.

The success of Arlington's CEP depends, in large measure, on the County's resolve in ensuring that all buildings are at least zero carbon-ready. In practical terms, that means four things for every new and renovated building: make it highly efficient; make it electric; make the electricity renewable; and minimize its total carbon footprint through selection of low carbon materials and responsible management of construction debris. In this case, Bingham Center Holdings' application falls short in meeting these criteria. New buildings such as this one lock in use of fossil fuels for decades undermine the County's carbon neutrality goals.

Green Building Certification and Carbon Reduction:

The project is targeting a LEED V.4 Gold rating, but to achieve the County's stated CEP targets, **C2E2 recommends that developers be required to explore options to achieve Zero Carbon Certification**. A Zero Carbon Feasibility study could identify a pathway to zero carbon emissions in operations and reduce embodied carbon in materials and resources used. We recommend that the Applicant seek out expertise from organizations such as the Building Decarbonization Coalition, the International Future Living Institute, or the New Building Institute to explore how to achieve these goals.

Energy Efficiency:

The LEED scorecard for this project indicates a commitment to meet the GBI minimum improvement in energy efficiency of 20 percent over the ASHRAE baseline and to achieve an Energy Star rating of 80, which is required for the bonus density of 0.35 FAR. The energy model indicates that this project could achieve energy efficiency gains of at least 25 percent, and C2E2 encourages the Applicant to incorporate additional measures to achieve these additional energy savings.

Electrification of Systems:

This project plans to utilize fossil gas for HVAC, water heating, and likely a backup generator and retail cooking. The energy models for both buildings identify electric options for these systems and indicate that such systems would reduce overall energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Once Arlington achieves its goal of renewable sources for electricity use by 2035, an all-electric building would operate with zero GHG emissions. The Applicant should continue to pursue options to meet long term electrification objectives.

Electric Vehicle Charging:

The Applicant has indicated that the project will have EV chargers installed in 4% of parking spots with another 10% of parking spots ready for future EV chargers. **The C2E2 strongly recommends that all projects that come to the SPRC for consideration strive for 50% of parking spots to be EV ready.** This will help meet future demand for a full transition to electric vehicles and avoid the need for much more expensive retrofitting later. The Aplicant should consider 'smart charging' technology to maximize the number of vehicles that can be charged while reducing demands on the electrical capacity available at site.

To meet the additional bonus density requirements, the Applicant will conduct envelope and air leakage testing upon completion, demonstrate a 5 percent reduction in lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions, and acquire off-site renewable energy for 3 points under LEED v 4. for 30 percent of total energy use over 10 years.

The latest report released in March by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) emphasizes the dire need for action to save our planet. The world is facing a catastrophic climate crisis that requires immediate action by individuals, governments, and businesses to avoid the worst consequences, and all future development needs to align to these goals. We urge the County to ask the Applicant to move into the forefront with this project by offering an all-electric building.

Sincerely,

Joan McIntyre
Chair, Climate Change, Energy and Environment Commission

CC: Devanshi Patel. Chair, Planning Commission and
Leo Sarli, Chair, SPRC
Anthony Fusarelli, CPHD Director
Courtney Badger, CPHD Staff

C2E2 SPRC CHECKLIST

PROJECT NAME: 3200 Wilson Blvd (Bingham Center/Silver Diner)

Overall Score

COMMISSIONER REVIEWING: Joan McIntyre

63%

Building Component	GBI or C2E2 Baseline (Meets)	Requirements to Meet CEP & Sustainability Goals (Exceeds)	3200 Wilson Blvd (Bingham Center/Silver Diner) (Evaluation)	Recommendation / Comments	Assessment
Green Building Certification and Carbon Reduction					56%
Certification	Commercial: LEED Gold Multi-family: Earthcraft also permissible	Commercial: LEED Platinum Multi-Family: Earthcraft also permissible		Planning for LEED Gold -- GBI .35 FAR	Meets
Zero Carbon*	Evaluate feasibility of Zero Carbon certification (ILFI)	Zero Carbon Certification (ILFI)--(GBI .7 FAR level)		Energy Model includes some initial assessment toward zero carbon on energy efficiency and electrification	Falls short
Building materials	Meet the criteria that would earn the project at least two (2) points for LEED version 4.1 MR credit Building Life Cycle Impact Reduction.	Score at least ten (10) overall for LEED version 4.1 Materials and Resources.		Is considering up to 5 points for lifecycle impact reduction	Meets
Energy Efficiency					75%
Energy Optimization	Commercial: Min. 10% (20%) improvement LEED v 4.1 (v 4) Multi-Family: HERS Index of 65 also permissible	Commercial: Min. 20% improvement from LEED v4.1 Multi-family: HERS Index of 50 also permissible		Targeting a minimum of 20% improvement in energy efficiency	Meets
AIRE GBI required narrative	Provide narrative on Energy Efficiency	Make available on SPRC website		Includes energy model	Meets
Energy Star Certification	Must meet Energy Star 75 within 4 years	Meet highest possible GBI standard (differs by FAR level)		Target of 80 for meeting the .35 FAR requirement	Exceeds

Energy Benchmarking	Install energy meters or monitoring devices	Meet GBI Extra on Advanced Energy Metering		Planning required building level metering	Meets
Electrification					42%
Building's Electrical Capacity	Electrical infrastructure allows for GBI baseline	Electrical infrastructure allows for 100% electrification		Unclear	Falls short
Utilities Electrification	Electric water heating ready and narrative	Fully electric water heating (commercial and residential)		Plans for use of fossil gas for hot water--energy model includes electric options	Falls short
	Electric HVAC ready and narrative	Fully electric HVAC (commercial and residential)		Plans for use of fossil gas for HVAC--energy model includes electric option	Falls short
	Electric cooking ready and narrative	Electric cooking; electric ready for restaurants.		Plans for electric cooking in residential building, no information on restaurants	Meets
Electric Vehicle Infrastructure					67%
Electric Vehicle Charging	4% of parking spots have EV charging	10% of parking spots have EV charging		Will meet the GBI baseline requirements of 4% of spaces with EV chargers	Meets
	15% of parking spots are EV-ready	50% of parking spots are EV-ready		Will meet GBI requirement for 10% spaces EV ready	Meets
Electricity from Renewable Sources					67%
Renewable Energy	2W/ft^2 onsite solar or equivalent	On-site and/or off-site for 50% of annual load		Will procure offsite solar to meet LEED criteria for Tier 2 renewable energy credits	Exceeds
Battery Energy Storage*	Battery Energy Storage ready	Battery Energy Storage as backup generation		No Information	Falls short
Environmental Sustainability					67%
Biophilia / Open Space	Provide narrative addressing listed issues	Create a sense of natural environment, habitats. Keep mature trees, tree canopy, native plants, etc			Meets

Storm Water Management	Meet Virginia building code	Seek use of pervious materials; offset storm water with green roof, bio-retention or manufactured treatment device			Meets
Bird-friendly Material	Must minimize bird strikes by meeting GBI criteria	GBI criteria plus ground floor bird-friendly material			Meets
Light Pollution Reduction	Meet light pollution reduction in GBI	Dark Sky-approved “Friendly Fixture” certification			Meets
Water Use	WaterSense label for all toilets, bathroom faucets, and showerheads installed in residential and hotel units	In addition to Meets, must not use potable water for irrigation.			Meets
Social Equity					67%
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	1. One company on development team with DEI program 2. LEED Social Equity Checklist completed	1. Development team presents and discusses LEED Social Equity Checklist to SPRC and AIRE 2. Develop project specific DEI plan			Meets