



## CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS STAFF REPORT

**TO:** Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB)  
**FROM:** Lorin Farris, Historic Preservation Planner  
**DATE:** June 14, 2023  
**SUBJECT:** CoA 23-12, 2500 Columbia Pike, Columbia Pike Form Based Code Project

### **Background Information**

In March 2002, the County Board adopted the *Columbia Pike Initiative - A Revitalization Plan*. A major recommendation of the plan was to develop a new review process to evaluate redevelopment proposals in the corridor, which became the Form Based Code (FBC). In February 2003, the County Board adopted the FBC, which made commercial development sites within the “Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District” designated on the General Land Use Plan, eligible for development according to the FBC. The Arlington Village Shopping Center, located at 2500 Columbia Pike, is identified in the FBC as a historic building to be fully preserved.

The Arlington Village Shopping Center is contributing to the Arlington Village National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) Historic District, which was designated by the National Park Service in April 2003. Based on the NRHP nomination form, Arlington Village was constructed in 1939 and is sited on approximately fifty-three acres. The planned community incorporates recreational areas, open spaces, a swimming pool, and courtyards, and contains a total of 656 apartment units occupying approximately 12% of the total property. The shopping center complex consists of six stores and serves as the northernmost boundary of the neighborhood. The shopping center continues to support the community and its residents. The nomination form has a brief description of the Arlington Village Shopping Center:

“The Colonial Revival design of the residential buildings in Arlington Village is repeated at the shopping center. The shopping center layout allows for an open floor plan at the interior of the six stores with a combination of roof designs to prevent a symmetrical presentation along Columbia Pike. Projecting show windows, Colonial Revival-style door surrounds, brick facing, and dentiled cornices unite the shopping center design with the residential section of Arlington Village. Access to parking spaces in front of the shopping center is provided by Columbia Pike and the side streets access the parking lot at the rear.”

Additionally, the nomination states the following about the shopping center:

“One-story in height on façade and two-stories at rear; the roof is hipped at each end with a flat roof in the center; Colonial Revival in style.”

Lastly, the Arlington Village Shopping Center is ranked Essential, the top category, in Arlington County's Historic Resources Inventory (HRI).

### **Current Proposal**

The applicant proposes to install a one-story, front gable-roofed vestibule addition near the southeast corner of the rear elevation. The applicant, Celtic House, currently uses a Columbia Pike-facing retail space and wants to connect it to the retail space located at the ground story to the rear of the building. This will be connected by internal stairs. The vestibule will allow for ADA-compliant doors, provide climate control, and prevent taking up interior restaurant space. The vestibule would replace the existing aluminum-frame, glass double doorway that is topped by a transom, all of which is a modern replacement. The double doors and transom will be removed, and in its place, there will be stud framing and a new ADA-compliant wood and glass door on the interior. The vestibule door will also be a new ADA-compliant wood and glass door with sidelights, and adjacent to the door and sidelights are simple pilasters with new exterior lighting. The side elevations of the vestibule will contain pairs of double-hung vinyl windows with decorative trim adjacent and below the windows.

### **Design Review Committee (DRC) Review**

The DRC considered the application at its June 7, 2023, hybrid meeting. Mr. Wenchel acknowledged that the pediment on the proposed vestibule connects with the pediments located on the façade, which he believed were original to the shopping center's design. Mr. Davis asked if the sidewalk would go around the vestibule. The architect confirmed, stating that it also would allow staff to access the adjacent area where the dumpsters are currently. When asked about their signage, the applicant stated that would be submitted at a later date for review. The DRC placed the application on the Consent Agenda for the June 21, 2023, hybrid HALRB public hearing.

### **Recommendation**

The Historic Preservation Program staff recommends approval of the subject application. The proposed materials and overall design of the vestibule are appropriate to the Colonial Revival style of the historic shopping center. The windows and doors on the rear elevation at the ground story already have been replaced. Only the second story windows appear to be original. The proposed changes will allow the commercial space to become ADA compliant. The vestibule conforms with Standards #9 and #10 specified in *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*, as it is an alteration that can be differentiated from the old and new, is a compatible design, and could be reversed without an adverse effect to the historic property.

Standard #9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Standard #10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.