

1840 Wilson Blvd. – NSTA Site

Action – September 5, 2024

Location

1840 Wilson Blvd (a map of the site is located at the end of this document).

Site Plan Application

The applicant, 1840 Wilson LLC, submitted a major site plan amendment to redevelop the National Science Teaching Association (NSTA) building and adjacent retail buildings currently housing Rhodeside Grill and Il Radicchio. The existing buildings will be demolished and replaced with a new eight-story mixed-use building containing 187 residential units and approximately 12,000 square feet of ground floor retail space.

The Rosslyn to Courthouse Urban Design Study (RCUDS), adopted in March 2003, serves as the main policy document for the site. Per the RCUDS, the preferred land use scenario for the site is first-floor retail with office or residential use above. Additionally, the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance allows the County Board to approve bonus density pursuant to §15.5.9 for a variety of community benefits, including affordable housing. On-site affordable units were one of several community benefits negotiated for this bonus density.

Affordable Housing Program

There are three components to the affordable housing contribution. First, the applicant has committed to meet the base affordable housing requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. Prior to the issuance of the Shell and Core Certificate of Occupancy, the Applicant shall choose between a \$364,817 cash contribution to the Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF), or approximately 3 on-site units, 5 off-site nearby units or 6 off-site units. Second, due to the change in GLUP designations the applicant has committed to make a contribution of 3 on-site committed affordable units (CAFs), consisting of 1 1-bedroom units and 2 2-bedroom units, affordable up to 60% Area Median Income (AMI). Lastly, to achieve earned density, the applicant has committed to make a contribution of 7 CAFs, consisting of 3 1-bedroom units, 1 2-bedroom unit, and 3 3-bedroom units.

In total, the affordable housing contribution consists of the base affordable housing requirements and 10 on-site CAFs, consisting of 4 1-bedroom units, 3 2-bedroom units, and 3 3-bedroom units. All CAFs will be affordable for a term of 30 years. The applicant proposes 1 CAF be Type A accessible.

The proposed development meets several of the County's Goals, Objectives and Policies of the County Board-adopted [Affordable Housing Master Plan](#) (AHMP):

- Policy 1.1.1 – Project will create 10 CAFs through zoning requirements.
- Policy 1.1.4 – Project will increase the geographic distribution of CAFs by adding 10 CAFs to the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor.
- Policy 1.1.8 – Project will provide 6 family sized two- and three-bedroom CAF units.

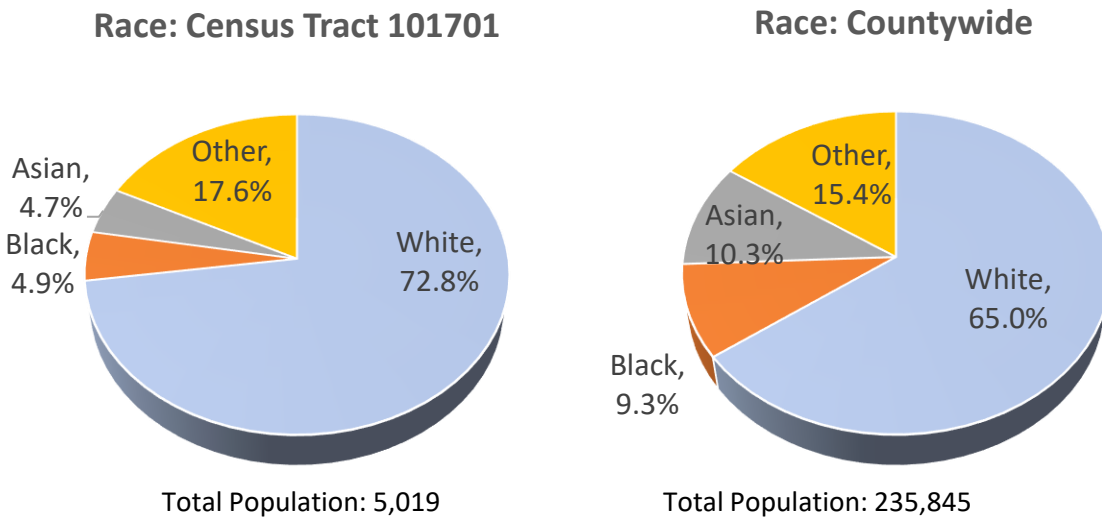
- Policy 2.5.3 – Project helps to maintain a sufficient supply of CAF units that are accessible for persons with physical and sensory disabilities by adding 1 Type A accessible unit that is affordable.
- Policy 1.1.9 and 3.2.2 – Project will create CAFs located close to transit.
- Policy 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 – The multifamily building will be certified LEED Gold which will help to advance the goals of the Community Energy Plan and encourage water conservation.

Racial Equity

The County Board adopted an Equity Resolution in [September 2019](#). The resolution includes, in part, direction to apply a racial equity lens for every project. Specifically staff asks the following questions when considering racial impacts of County projects: 1) Who benefits?, 2) Who is burdened?, 3) Who is missing?, 4) How do we know?, and 5) What do/did we do?

The 2022 American Community Survey 5-year estimate data for racial composition for the census tract where the site plan is located indicates this area is not as diverse as the County as a whole among Black and Asian populations (Figure 1). There is a smaller percentage of black (5% versus 9% Countywide) and Asian races (5% versus 10% Countywide) in the census tract where the site plan is located compared to the County as a whole. However, the data also shows the census tract has a slightly larger percentage of Hispanic or Latino than the County as a whole (17% versus 16%).

Figure 1: Racial Composition of Census Tract where Site Plan is Located and Countywide
US Census Bureau; 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



The proposed 10 on-site CAFs will **benefit** and enable income-eligible families to live in an area of the County nearby metro and other community amenities. Those who benefit may also be those who are burdened, as the [FY 22 Annual Affordable Housing Plan Indicator Report](#)

indicates only 12.3% of Arlington’s rental housing stock is affordable to households earning less than 60% of the AMI.

In terms of who is **burdened**, the proposed units will be affordable up to 60% AMI and may not be affordable to households with very low incomes and who may not be eligible for housing grants or housing choice vouchers. For this reason, one could say that very low-income households are **missing** from this opportunity as well since these households may not have access to live in units if they’re still unaffordable.

We **know** this information based on the census tract information for this geographic area as compared to the rest of the County. In terms of **what do we do**, the County has an opportunity to consider this site plan’s proposed Affordable Housing Program in light of these potential benefits and impacts.

Staff Recommendation

County staff supports the proposed affordable housing program which includes a base ordinance contribution of \$364,817 or approximately 3 on-site units, 5 off-site nearby units or 6 off-site units, and an additional contribution of 10 on-site CAFs for the change in GLUP designation and earned density.

Location of NSTA Site Plan

