

Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC)  
Staff Report for  
**1501 Arlington Blvd. (Red Lion Hotel)**  
**SPLN22-00044 (SP #233)**

There are multiple ways to provide feedback and input on the proposal, County Staff is happy to accept comments in any form. Please use any method listed below.

**Mail-in Comments:**

Arlington County Planning Division  
c/o Adam Watson  
2100 Clarendon Blvd. Suite 700  
Arlington, VA 22201

**Contact Staff:**

*Contact the Arlington County Planning Staff reviewing this project either by phone or email*

Adam Watson  
703-228-7926  
[awatson@arlingtonva.us](mailto:awatson@arlingtonva.us)

**Contact the SPRC Chairs:**

*The SPRC Chair is a member of the Planning Commission and conducts all SPRC meetings*

Nia Bagley, Chair  
[niabagley@yahoo.com](mailto:niabagley@yahoo.com)

Eric Berkey, Co-Chair  
[ericberkeyarlington@gmail.com](mailto:ericberkeyarlington@gmail.com)

**1501 Arlington Blvd. (SPLN22-00044)**

**Red Lion Hotel Site**

(RPC#s 17-003-004, -046, -047, -048, -297, 17-003-003, and 17-003-001)

Public Review and Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) Process:

- Online Engagement Session: July 31 – August 9, 2023
  1. All topics: Land use, building massing, architecture, transportation, landscaping/public space, community benefits, others
- **SPRC Meeting #1 – September 14, 2023**
  1. **Introductions**
  2. **Presentations: staff and applicant**
  3. **SPRC Discussion:**
    - a. **Land use (including ground floor access)**
    - b. **Building massing**
    - c. **Architecture**
  4. **Public Comment**
- SPRC Meeting #2 – October 19, 2023
  1. Topics:
    - a. Housing: SAHPD
    - b. Transportation
    - c. Landscaping/biophilia
    - d. Community benefits and construction

**Glossary of Terms:**

Area Median Income (AMI): The income at which half of the families of a particular household size have incomes higher and half have incomes lower.

By-Right Development: May be approved administratively in the respective zoning district subject to all other applicable requirements of this zoning ordinance. Is not required to seek approval by the County Board.

Density: The ratio of a particular use given the area of land. Density measures the intensity of a given land use.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): The gross floor area of all buildings on a lot divided by the lot area.

General Land Use Plan (GLUP): The GLUP is the primary policy guide for future development in the County. The GLUP establishes the overall character, extent and location of various land uses.

Gross Floor Area (GFA): Gross floor area is the sum of the area of the horizontal surface of the several floors of a building measured from the exterior faces of exterior walls, to include all floor area not defined as gross parking area.

Phased Development Site Plan (PDSP): A type of Site Plan; to permit the coordinated development of sites of more than twenty (20) acres in area, or a smaller area as authorized and accepted by the County Manager, the County Board may approve a Phased Development Site Plan (PDSP) in the form of a general plan for land uses, public facilities, transportation, and utilities.

Zoning Ordinance (ACZO): County adopted ordinance that regulates the use and development standards of all land located within the County. There are various zoning districts within the zoning ordinance and each district sets the standards for development. Examples of such requirements are: maximum heights, required parking, required setbacks, density, etc.

**SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE  
MEETING AGENDA**

**DATE:** September 14, 2023  
**TIME:** 7 – 9 PM  
**PLACE:** Room 311 (Bozman Government Center)  
Microsoft Teams (virtual)

**SPRC STAFF COORDINATOR:** Matthew Pfeiffer

**Item 1. 1501 Arlington Blvd. (SPLN22-00044)**  
Red Lion Hotel Site  
(RPC#s 17-003-004, -046, -047, -048, -297, 17-003-003, and 17-003-001)  
Planning Commission and County Board meetings to be determined.  
*Adam Watson (CPHD Staff)*

The Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) is comprised of Planning Commission members, representatives from other relevant commissions and several appointed citizens. The SPRC reviews all site plans and major site plan amendments requests, which are submitted to the County Board and the Planning Commission for consideration. The major responsibilities of the SPRC are the following:

1. Review site plan or major site plan amendment requests in detail.
2. Advise the Planning Commission by recommending the appropriate action in regard to a specific plan and any conditions, which it might determine to be necessary or appropriate.
3. Provide a forum by which interested citizens, civic associations and neighborhood conservation committees can review and comment on a particular plan, or the effects that the proposed project might have on the neighborhood.

In order to save copying costs, staff has selectively chosen the reduced drawings to be included in this package. The complete full size drawings are available for review in the Arlington County Zoning Office, 10th Floor, Courthouse Plaza, 2100 Clarendon Boulevard and also in the Central Library's Virginia Room, 1015 N. Quincy St., (703) 228-5990.

For more information on the Arlington County Planning Commission, go to their web site  
<http://commissions.arlingtonva.us/planning-commission/>

For more information on the Site Plan public review process, go to the Arlington County Planning Division's web site on Development Proposals/Site Plans  
<https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Private-Development>

To view the current Site Plan Review Committee schedule, go to the web site  
<http://commissions.arlingtonva.us/planning-commission/sprc/>

**PROJECT UPDATES (9/14/23):** The Applicant resubmitted 4.1 Plans addressing some of the technical and substantive comments provided by staff. The Applicant will highlight changes made during its presentation at the first SPRC meeting. Given the timing of the resubmission, staff has not yet completed its review of the plans and this report has not been updated to reflect any changes. However, this report will be updated for the second SPRC meeting, once the review is complete.

**SUMMARY:** 1501 Arlington Blvd., LLC, d/b/a Orr Partners (the “Applicant”), proposes to incorporate the Williamsburg Apartments property into the site plan (SP #233) and rezone the Red Lion hotel property from the “RA-H” to the “RA4.8” zoning district, consistent with the GLUP recommendations for the site. The applicant proposes to redevelop the site with an eight (8) story multi-family residential building with up to 443,947 square feet of residential GFA (4.59 FAR) and 446 dwelling units. This site plan amendment, if approved, would supersede the [previous site plan amendment](#), which was approved in 2019 but never constructed. Additional details include:

- Structured parking with a total of 256 parking spaces at a ratio of 0.57 spaces per unit
- Additional density for LEED Gold construction (0.35 FAR-level) in accordance with the Green Building Incentive Policy
- Compliance with the Special Affordable Housing Protection District (SAHPD)
- Zoning modifications for: additional density, reduced parking and loading requirements, and density exclusions.

**BACKGROUND:** A hotel use, on the site of the existing Red Lion hotel, has existed since the late 1950s. The “Iwo Jima Motor Hotel” was built in 1957 and opened in 1958. A private swimming club (“The Iwo Jima Swimming Club”) also operated under use permit (U-1342-59-1 and U-1381-60-2) on the site beginning circa 1959. In 1985, the County Board approved an addition to the hotel site (then referred to as the “Quality Inn – Iwo Jima”) via special exception site plan (Z-2272-85-3, known as SP #233). The 1985 site plan permitted construction of a new three (3) story, 85-unit hotel addition, for a net total of 150 units. In 1987, the County Board amended the subject site plan to increase the building height by 2.5 feet, and to reduce the parking requirement by four (4) spaces. The existing hotel was not listed in the County’s Historic Resources Inventory (HRI), likely due to the number of exterior alterations over the years, and therefore, has no ranking in the HRI.

Abutting the hotel to the west, at 1523 Fairfax Drive, is the four (4) story, 14-unit Ellis Arms apartments. Ellis Arms was constructed in 1954, concurrently with the Williamsburg Apartments building, located immediately west at 1501 N. Pierce St. The Williamsburg Apartment building is also four (4) stories, with 14 dwelling units.

Most recently, [in April 2019, the County Board approved a site plan amendment](#) to incorporate the Ellis Arms parcel into SP #233 and allow redevelopment with a 4.45 FAR (48-unit) multifamily residential building and new 160-unit hotel. The County Board additionally approved a GLUP amendment to designate a SAHPD over the site (Note 13). However, redevelopment has not occurred under this approval.

The following provides additional information about the site and location:

Site: The site is located at 1501 Arlington Boulevard (RPC#s 17-003-004, -046, -047, -048, -297, 17-003-003, and 17-003-001).

Zoning (Existing): “RA4.8” Multiple-Family Dwelling District; and “RA-H” Hotel District

Zoning (Proposed): “RA4.8” Multiple-Family Dwelling District

GLUP Designation: “High-Medium” Residential; and Note 13: Special Affordable Housing Protection District

Neighborhood: The site is located within the Radnor/Ft. Myer Heights Civic Association (RAFOM) boundary.

Site Location – 1501 Arlington Blvd.



Existing Development:

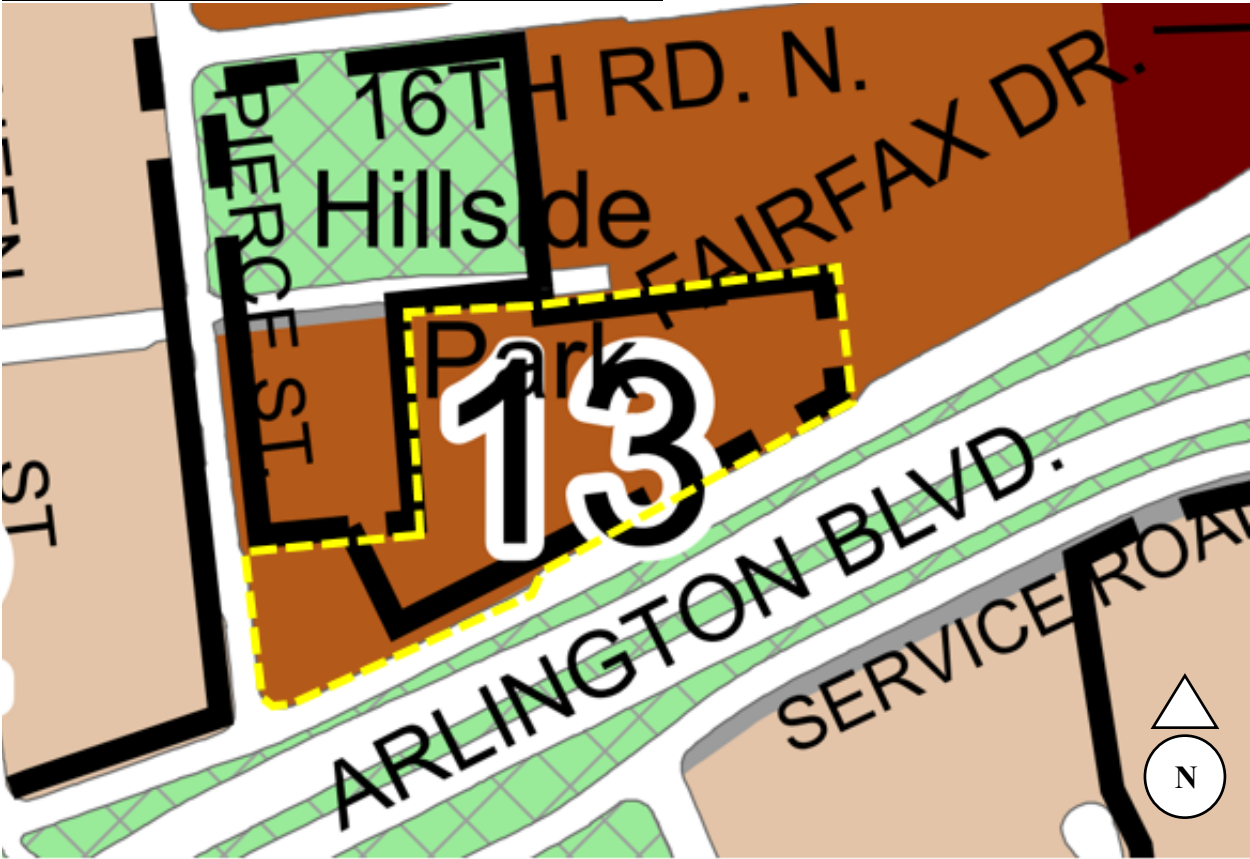


Zoning: Existing and Proposed






Site GLUP Designation: "High-Medium" Residential



**Land Use**

<u>Land Use Designation*</u>	<u>Range of Density/Typical Use</u>	<u>Zoning**</u>
<b>Residential</b>		
 High-Medium	Up to 3.24 F.A.R. (Floor Area Ratio) Residential	RA-4.8

**Existing Development:** As discussed above, the subject site includes the existing Red Lion (formerly Best Western) Hotel, Ellis Arms and Williamsburg apartment buildings. The existing hotel is comprised of three (3) buildings with 150 hotel units. The Ellis Arms and Williamsburg buildings are four (4) story brick apartment buildings, each with 14 dwelling units: seven (7) one-bedroom units, and seven (7) two-bedroom units.

Red Lion hotel from Fairfax Drive



Ellis Arms from Fairfax Drive



Williamsburg Apartments from N. Pierce St.



**Proposed Rezoning:** As shown on the zoning map above, the applicant proposes rezone the hotel parcels from “RA-H” Hotel District to “RA4.8” Multiple-Family Dwelling District. This proposal is consistent with the GLUP designation for the site.

**Development Potential:** The following provides a statistical summary of the development potential for the site under the proposed zoning.

Site Plan Area:	Density Allowed for Proposed Uses	Maximum Development
By-Right: “RA4.8” District		
96,779 sq. ft. / (2.22 ac)	One-family dwelling (6,000 sf per du)	16 dwelling unit
	Two-family dwellings (3,500 sf per du)	27 dwelling units
	Multiple family (1,800 sf per du)	53 dwelling units
	Townhouse (1,800 sf per du)	53 dwelling units
	All other uses	35 ft. max.
Special Exception Site Plan: “RA4.8” District		
96,779 sq. ft. / (2.22 ac)	Two-family dwellings	27 dwelling units
	Low/Moderate Income Housing (24 du/ac + 25% max.)	66 dwelling units
	Townhouse, semidetached and existing one-family (14 du/acre)	31 dwelling units
	Multiple-Family Dwellings/ Eldercare (3.24 FAR)	313,563.96 sq. ft. GFA
	All other uses	35 ft. max.

**Proposed Development:** The following provides a statistical summary of the proposed development:

	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>Site Area (sq. ft.)</b>	
“RA4.8” District	96,779 sq. ft. / (2.22 ac)
<b>Density/Use – Multifamily Residential (GFA)</b>	
Base Density (3.24 FAR)	313,563.96
Proposed Total Density – GFA	443,947.00
<b>Proposed Total Density – FAR</b>	<b>4.59 FAR</b>
Proposed Total Dwelling Units	446 du
Proposed Add. Density – LEED Gold (0.35 FAR)	33,872.65
Proposed Add. Density – Other (TBD)	96,510.39
Total Proposed Add. Density	130,383.04
<b>Density Exclusions (sq. ft. GFA)</b>	1,141
<b>Building Height</b>	
Average Site Elevation (ASE)	107.48 ft.
ACZO Max. Height (from ASE)	136 ft.
<b>Proposed Max. Height (from ASE)</b>	<b>75 ft.</b>
Proposed stories	8 stories

	<b>ACZO Requirement</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>Parking/Loading</b>		
Residential spaces	446 spaces	256 spaces
<b>Residential ratio</b>	<b>1 per du</b>	<b>0.57 per du</b>
Residential visitor spaces (0.05 per du)	N/A	13 spaces
Compact parking	15%	5.47% (14 spaces)
<b>Loading Spaces</b>	3	2

**Site Layout and Building Design:** The applicant proposes to construct a new 8-story multifamily building, with internal below- and at-grade parking accessed from Fairfax Drive. Given the topography of the site – sloping down from north to south, and from west to east – the “ground” floor along Fairfax Drive is split between levels one and two, and parking area on level two is partially below grade when viewed from the Belvedere driveway to the north. The images below illustrate the site layout and building design.

Rendering: Proposed Building (looking west from Arlington Blvd.)



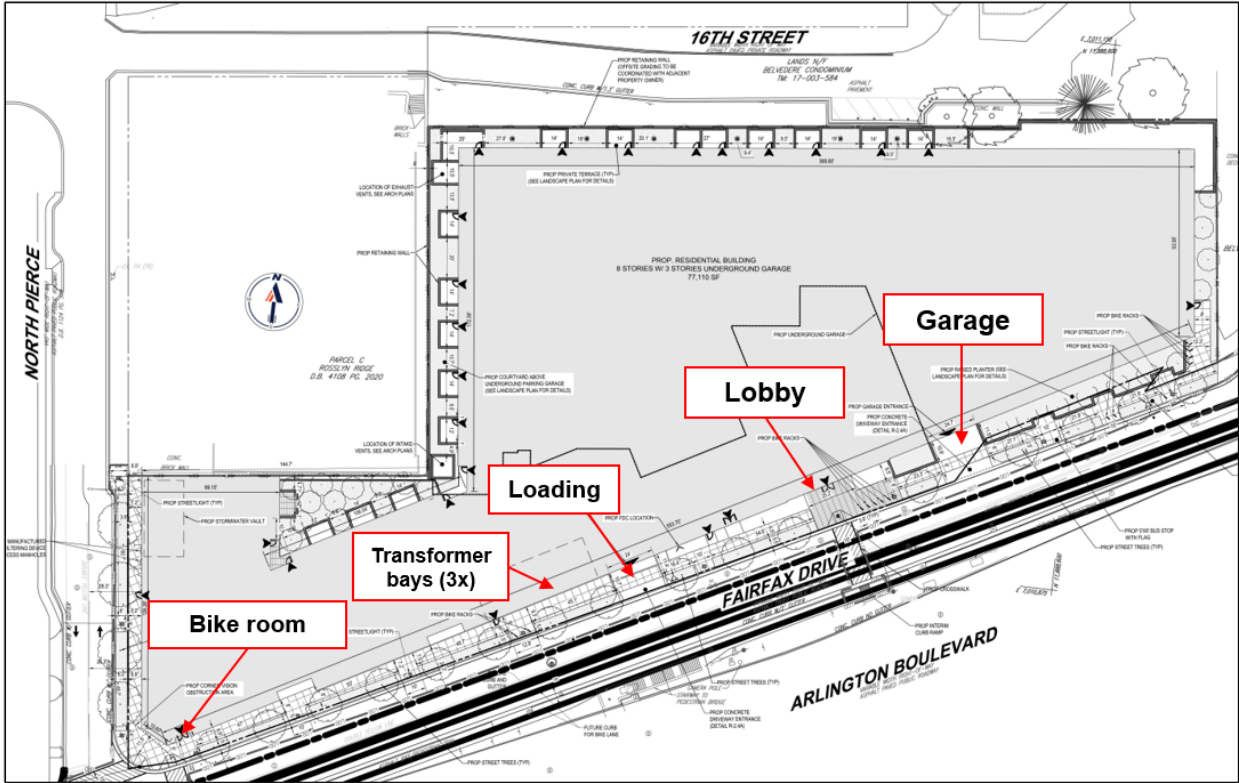
Rendering: Proposed Building Lobby Area Detail



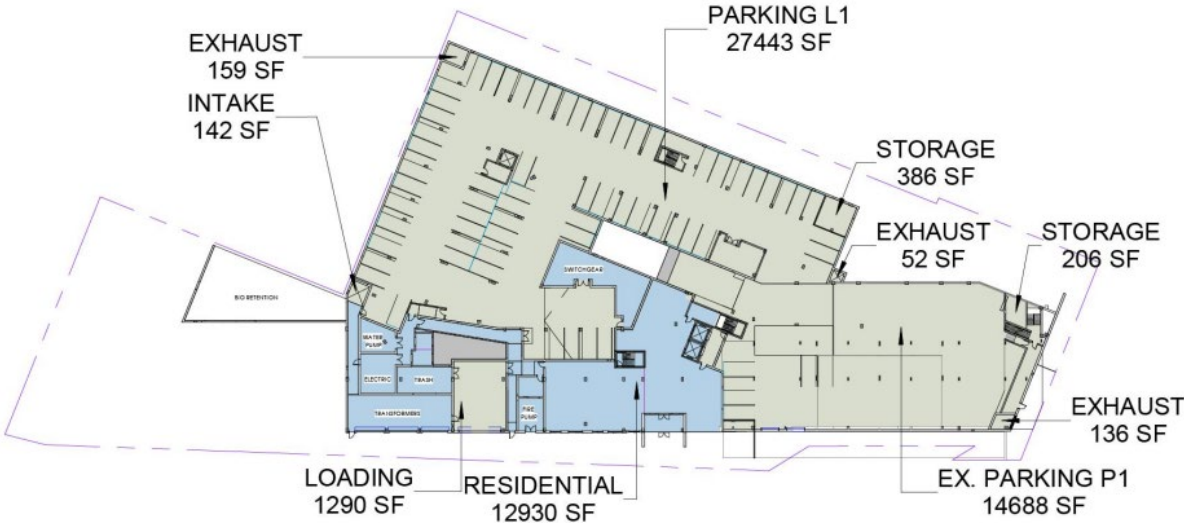
Rendering: Proposed Building (looking east from Arlington Blvd.)



Site Layout

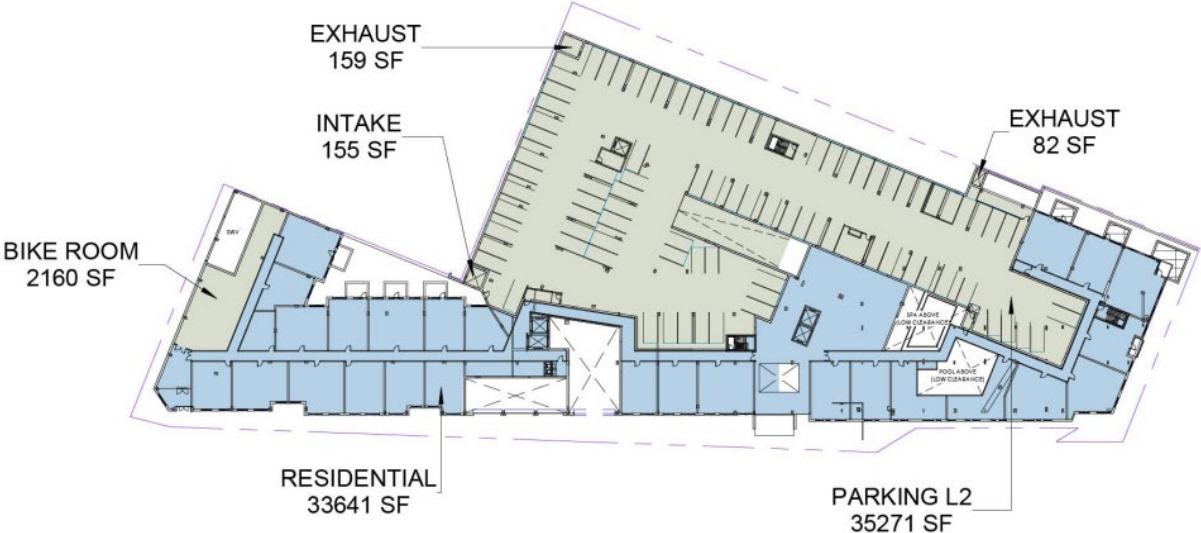


Floor Plan: Level 1



3 LEVEL 1

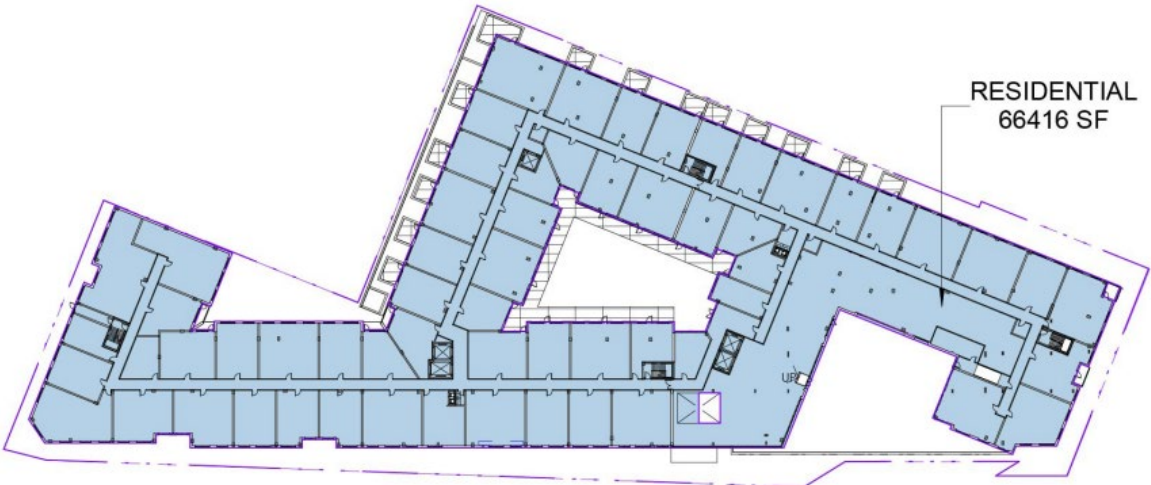
Floor Plan: Level 2



4 LEVEL 2

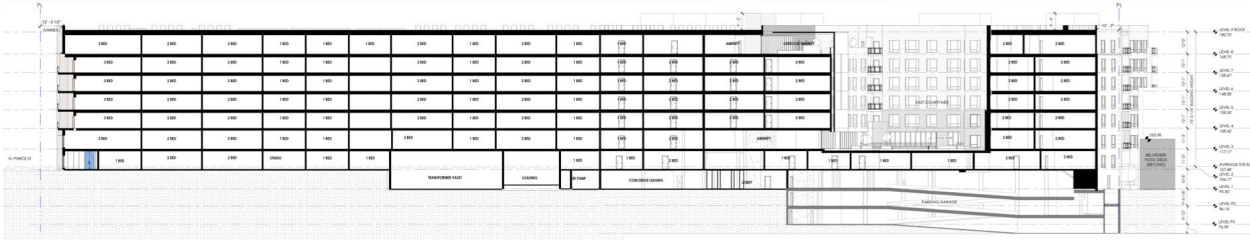


Floor Plan: Level 3 (and above typical)

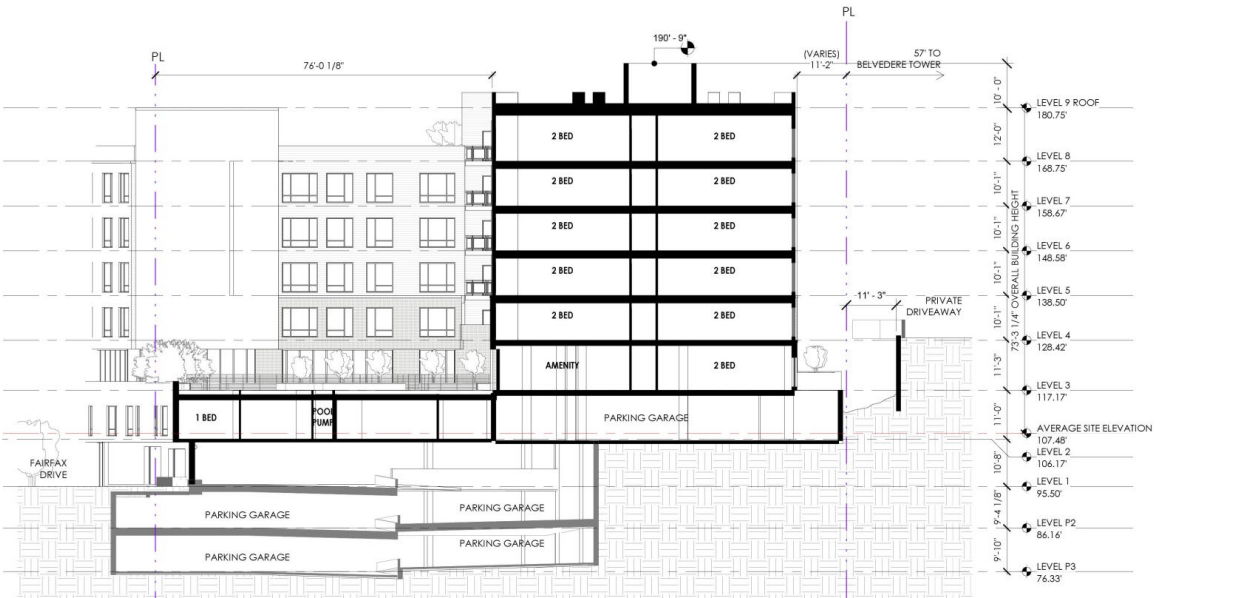


5 LEVEL 3

Longitudinal Building Section (looking north)



Building Section (looking west)



**Sustainable Design:** The new building is proposed to be designed at the LEED Gold (0.35 FAR-level). The applicant is requesting additional density under the current 2020 [Green Building Incentive Policy](#), to align with the goals and objectives of the Community Energy Plan.

**Transportation:** The site is located on the north side of Fairfax Drive, to the east of the intersection with North Pierce Street, parallel to Arlington Boulevard (Route 50).

This segment of Fairfax Drive is classified on the Arlington County's Master Transportation Plan (MTP) map as an Urban Center Local Neighborhood Street.

The existing site is accessed via two (2) curb cuts along Fairfax Drive. The proposed project also includes two (2) curb cuts on Fairfax Drive: one (1) located to the east along Fairfax Drive that will be used to access the parking garage and one(1) located to the west along Fairfax Drive that would serve as the loading entrance for the site.

#### Transit Service

*Metrorail:* The Rosslyn Metrorail Station is the closest Metrorail connection and is located approximately 0.40 miles from the subject site. The station provides access to the Orange, Blue, and Silver lines.

*Bus Service:* The project site and immediate vicinity is served by numerous bus routes operated by Arlington Transit (ART), WMATA, and DC Circulator including:

- ART Routes 43, 45, and 61A/B
- MetroBus routes 4B and 38B
- DC Circulator at Rosslyn Metrorail Station

These buses pick up and drop off passengers at several locations at or near the site, along N. Rhodes Street, Clarendon Boulevard, N. Moore Street, and at the Rosslyn Metrorail Station. There are no bus stops along the site's frontages.

#### Pedestrian Facilities

The existing sidewalks along the site's Fairfax Drive and N. Pierce Street frontages are proposed to be widened to 8' from existing conditions of 6' and 4' respectively. Additional proposed streetscape improvements include landscaping strips with planted trees. Crosswalks and ADA improvements (handicap ramps) will also be provided at the Fairfax Drive and N. Piece Street intersection as well as a mid-block crossing at the existing pedestrian bridge.

#### Bicycle Facilities

Existing nearby bicycle infrastructure include bike lanes or on-street routes along N. Fort Meyer Drive and Lynn Street, providing a north-south connection through Rosslyn. The Custis Trail and Wilson Boulevard/Clarendon Boulevard to the north and the Fairfax Drive/Arlington Boulevard

trail to the south provide major east-west connections. Additionally, there are four (4) Capital Bikeshare stations located within a ½ mile of the site.

The applicant proposes 180 Class I residential bicycle storage spaces in Level 2 of the garage and 28 Class 2 visitor bicycle spaces around the site vicinity.

#### Parking & Loading

There are 256 total underground parking garage spaces proposed for the project to serve 446 residential units for a parking ratio of 0.57 spaces per unit. This number includes 10 visitor parking spaces.

Access to building garage and loading would be provided along Fairfax Drive. Two (2) 40-foot-long loading spaces are proposed to support both trash and loading operations; while the Zoning Ordinance requires three (3) loading bays.

#### Traffic Analysis

The applicant's consultant analyzed existing conditions at nine (9) nearby study intersections including three (3) signalized intersections to determine the existing conditions, prior to performing analysis of proposed future conditions following implementation of the site plan project. The analysis is documented in the Multimodal Traffic Impact or MMTA for the project dated, July 2022, by Wells + Associates. The analysis determined that the proposed development would have minimal impact on the surrounding roadway network when compared with the existing development. At full buildout of the proposed development, the analysis determined that the signalized study intersections would continue to operate at overall acceptable levels of service (LOS "B") during both the AM and PM peak hours.

The analysis projected the total trip generation for the existing development on the site as well as for the proposed residential development. Multimodal trip generation was calculated across vehicle trips, transit riders and active transportation users (pedestrians and cyclists). Approximately 58% of the residential trips are projected to be vehicle trips. The new vehicle trips associated with the proposed development are estimated at 108 AM peak hour trips and 103 PM peak hour trips. When accounting for traffic generated by the existing site, the proposed development is estimated to generate 39 net new AM peak hour trips and 41 net new PM peak hour trips overall.

Staff continues to review the MMTA and this section of the report will be updated should staff comments result in changes to the analysis and/or findings.

### Off-Site Capital Project: Arlington Boulevard Trail

This separate County-led project will reconstruct an existing, narrow segment of the Arlington Boulevard Trail that lies parallel between Fairfax Drive and Arlington Boulevard, extending from Fort Myer Drive to a tie-in point on the existing trail near the Rhodes Street overpass. The project will coincide with construction of a new, full-width road section for Fairfax Drive between Queen St. and Fort Myer Drive, which will allow a reconstructed asphalt multi-use trail with a consistent 10-foot width, landscape plantings, and safety measures such as bollards or barriers to protect trail users from the adjacent traffic lanes. Though the project timeline is still tentative, pending site-plan approvals for adjacent private developments, the County project team is preparing base engineering and site analyses now, with a goal of concluding preliminary design by Winter 2023 and final design by Winter 2024, with construction not anticipated before Spring 2025.

**DISCUSSION:** The following provides staff's preliminary analysis of the proposal:

**GLUP:** The site General Land Use Plan (GLUP) designation is "High" Residential (uniformly) and Note 13: Special Affordable Housing Protection District (Ellis Arms and hotel parcels only). The applicant is not requesting to change the GLUP designation. "High" Residential allows for typical residential base density of up to 3.24 FAR and corresponds with the "RA4.8" zoning district. As discussed above and in the Zoning section below, the applicant is proposing to rezone a portion of the site from "RA-H" to "RA4.8" to align with the existing site GLUP designation. The applicant's proposal is consistent with the GLUP.

**Special Affordable Housing Protection District (SAHPD):** The SAHPD designation (Note 13) was established in 1990 as an overlay district on the GLUP to ensure that existing low- and moderate-income apartment units are kept or replaced on sites planned for densities of 3.24 FAR or higher, when redevelopment is requested. The policy has been applied through replacement of bedrooms or GFA on a one-for-one basis. The proposed site plan amendment triggers the SAHPD, as it would involve the demolition of existing market-rate affordable units in the Ellis Arms and Williamsburg apartment buildings (total: 28 units; 42 bedrooms) and redevelopment at a density above 3.24 FAR. Staff is working with the applicant to determine a specific proposal for fulfilling the SAHPD. Once drafted, the SAHPD proposal will be discussed during SPRC. Ultimately, staff will also recommend that the County Board amend the GLUP Map to designate a new SAHPD, and add Note 13, for the Williamsburg apartments property (note: the County Board added Note 13 to the GLUP Map for the remainder of the site in 2019).

**Zoning:** As discussed above, the subject site is split-zoned "RA-H" Hotel District and "RA4.8" Multiple-Family Dwelling District. The applicant is proposing to rezone the Red Lion hotel parcels from "RA-H" to "RA4.8" to align with the existing GLUP designation of "High" Residential. The applicant's rezoning proposal is consistent with the GLUP.

The "RA4.8" Multiple-Family Dwelling District allows a base residential density of up to 3.24 FAR, a maximum building height of 136 feet, and a parking ratio of one (1) space per dwelling

unit. The County Board may approve additional density (above 3.24 FAR) per ACZO §15.5.9 and may reduce the amount of required off-street parking. The applicant is proposing a total of 4.59 FAR, a maximum building height of ~75 feet, and off-street parking at a ratio of 0.57 spaces per unit. The applicant intends earn the additional density through fulfillment of the Green Building Incentive Policy (LEED Gold, 0.35-FAR level) and the provision of affordable housing.<sup>1</sup> With the requested modifications to allow additional density and reduced parking, the applicant's proposal is consistent with the zoning district requirements.

**Rosslyn Station Area Plan Addendum (“Plan Addendum”) (1992):** [The Plan Addendum](#) is the primary policy document guiding land use and development for the subject site; however, it does not provide site-specific recommendations. The Plan Addendum does provide overall objectives, several of which are relevant to the subject proposal. These objectives include:

- Create a more urban form where buildings relate well to one another and to the street and exemplify good architecture and urban design practice
- Increase opportunities for housing
- Provide an integrated system of transportation which emphasizes a multi-modal approach

Staff will be evaluating the proposed site plan amendment based on these objectives.

**[Off-Street Parking Guidelines \(2017\)](#):** Adopted in 2017, the Guidelines provide a transparent and consistent framework for evaluating requests for parking reductions for site plan multi-family residential projects. For a market-rate building on the subject site, the Guidelines recommend a parking ratio as low as 0.4 spaces per dwelling unit. The Guidelines also recommend projects with parking reductions provide 0.05 spaces per dwelling unit for residential visitor parking. The applicant's request for reducing parking to 0.57 spaces per unit is consistent with the Guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a preliminary proposal, subject to change through the public review process.

**SPRC Members:**

Organization	Name	Email	In Person	Remote
SPRC Chair	Nia Bagley	<a href="mailto:niabagley@yahoo.com">niabagley@yahoo.com</a>		
SPRC Co-Chair	Eric Berkey	<a href="mailto:ericberkeyarlington@gmail.com">ericberkeyarlington@gmail.com</a>		
<b>Planning Commission</b>	Daniel Weir	<a href="mailto:danielweirarlington@gmail.com">danielweirarlington@gmail.com</a>		
	Devanshi Patel	<a href="mailto:devanshi2005@gmail.com">devanshi2005@gmail.com</a>		
	Tenley Peterson	<a href="mailto:tenley.arlington@gmail.com">tenley.arlington@gmail.com</a>		
	Jim Lantelme	<a href="mailto:jatel@me.com">jatel@me.com</a>		
	Sara Steinberger	<a href="mailto:arlpsteinberger@gmail.com">arlpsteinberger@gmail.com</a>		
	Leo Sarli	<a href="mailto:lsarli@me.com">lsarli@me.com</a>		
	Elizabeth Gearin	<a href="mailto:egearin@egearin.com">egearin@egearin.com</a>		
	Jim Lantelme	<a href="mailto:jatel@me.com">jatel@me.com</a>		
	Karen Guevara	<a href="mailto:karenguevarapc@gmail.com">karenguevarapc@gmail.com</a>		
	Peter Robertson			
	Tony Striner			
Transportation Commission	Chris Slatt	<a href="mailto:chris@dodgersden.com">chris@dodgersden.com</a>		
	Thomas Shannon	<a href="mailto:thos.shannon@gmail.com">thos.shannon@gmail.com</a>		
Housing Commission	Kellen Macbeth	<a href="mailto:kellenmacbeth@gmail.com">kellenmacbeth@gmail.com</a>		
Park and Recreation Commission	Shruti Kuppa	<a href="mailto:shruti.kuppa@gmail.com">shruti.kuppa@gmail.com</a>		
	Adam Rasmussen	<a href="mailto:arasmussen@gmail.com">arasmussen@gmail.com</a>		
Climate Change, Energy and Environment Commission	Joan McIntyre	<a href="mailto:jfmcintyre57@gmail.com">jfmcintyre57@gmail.com</a>		
Forestry and Natural Resources Commission	Phil Klingelhofer	<a href="mailto:phil.klingelhofer@gmail.com">phil.klingelhofer@gmail.com</a>		
Pedestrian Advisory Committee	Elizabeth Gallagher	<a href="mailto:erg.gallagher@gmail.com">erg.gallagher@gmail.com</a>		
Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board	Omari Davis	<a href="mailto:omari.a.davis@gmail.com">omari.a.davis@gmail.com</a>		
Economic Development Commission	Bill Dunn	<a href="mailto:Bill.Dunn@wellsfargoadvisors.com">Bill.Dunn@wellsfargoadvisors.com</a>		
Disability Advisory Commission	Elizabeth Priaulx	<a href="mailto:elizabeth.priaulx@ndrn.org">elizabeth.priaulx@ndrn.org</a>		
Radnor/Ft. Myer Heights CA	Stan Karson	<a href="mailto:Dcstan@aol.com">Dcstan@aol.com</a>		
Belvedere Unit Owners Association	Leslie Arminski	<a href="mailto:larminski@gmail.com">larminski@gmail.com</a>		
Parc Rosslyn (property mgmt.				

Roster adopted by the Planning Commission in May 2023.

**Staff Members:**

Adam Watson

CPHD – Planning

[Awatson@arlingtonva.us](mailto:Awatson@arlingtonva.us)

Jane Kim

DES – Transportation

[JSKim@arlingtonva.us](mailto:JSKim@arlingtonva.us)

**Applicant Information:**

**Applicant**

1501 ARLINGTON BLVD., LLC  
D/B/A ORR PARTNERS  
11180 SUNRISE VALLEY DRIVE SUITE 200  
RESTON, VA 20191  
703-289-2112  
TYLER ORR  
[TYLER.ORR@ORRPARTNERS.COM](mailto:TYLER.ORR@ORRPARTNERS.COM)

**Civil Engineer**

BOHLER DC  
1331 PENNSYLVANIA AVE, NW, SUITE 1250 N  
WASHINGTON, DC 20004  
202-524-5700  
TOM MAYS  
[TMAYS@BOHLERDC.COM](mailto:TMAYS@BOHLERDC.COM)

**LEED Consultant**

Sustainable Building Partners  
2701 Prosperity Avenue, Suite 100,  
Fairfax, VA 22031  
Laura Featherstone  
703-970-2890  
[laura.featherstone@sustainbdgs.com](mailto:laura.featherstone@sustainbdgs.com)

**Attorney**

Walsh, Colucci, Lubeley & Walsh, P.C.  
2200 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 1300  
Arlington, VA 22201  
Nicholas Cumings  
703-528-4700  
[ncumings@thelandlawyers.com](mailto:ncumings@thelandlawyers.com)

**Landscape Architect**

OEHME VAN SWEDEN  
800 G STREET SE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20003  
202-546-7575 X110  
SARA DOWNING  
[SDOWNING@OVSLA.COM](mailto:SDOWNING@OVSLA.COM)

**Architect**

KGD ARCHITECTURE  
4040 NORTH FAIRFAX DRIVE, SUITE 1000A  
ARLINGTON, VA 22203  
202-338-3800  
KEVIN PENNINGTON  
[KPENNINGTON@KGDARCHITECTURE.COM](mailto:KPENNINGTON@KGDARCHITECTURE.COM)

**Traffic Engineer**

Wells + Associates  
1420 Spring Hill Road, Suite 610  
Tysons, VA 22102  
Grady Vaughan  
703-917-6620  
[gpvaughan@wellsandassociates.com](mailto:gpvaughan@wellsandassociates.com)