

SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

**4040 Wilson Boulevard (SP #413)
SPRC Meeting #1
May 16, 2016**

**Planning Commissioners in Attendance: Elizabeth Gearin, Jane Siegel, James Schroll,
Steve Cole, Nancy Iacomini, Ginger Brown**

MEETING AGENDA

This was the first SPRC meeting on the 4040 Wilson Boulevard development proposal. The meeting began with an introduction by the SPRC Chair including an overview of the agenda for the meeting and meeting structure and indications with respect to the overall public review schedule proposed to conclude with public hearings in July. Staff provided a presentation that focused on the project background, proposed amendment and technical aspects of the proposal in relation to adopted plans, policies, regulations and approvals. The applicant presented the proposal to the committee including building design and architecture.

After the presentations, the SPRC asked clarifying questions and made general comments and then began discussion on the various elements of the agenda to include: Land Use and Zoning, Site Design, Building Architecture, Transportation, Open Space, Community Benefits and Construction Issues. The meeting concluded with wrap up comments by committee members and a summary of the main points of discussion by the SPRC Chair. She also provided an overview of the next meeting scheduled for May 26, 2016.

SPRC COMMENTS

Clarifying Questions & Comments

- Clarifying questions were asked regarding a cross walk to the mid-block pedestrian path and any proposed active uses in front of the office building, and soil depth indicated for plantings on the roof. In addition there was clarification regarding the depth of the proposed balconies and whether there was opportunity to improve the landscape plan for the DARPA building.
- Clarification was provided by staff regarding the transfer of development rights and associated density approved for the project.
- The Applicant clarified the similarities and differences between the approved building and proposed building in terms of architectural features and discussed the proposed design in terms of the amount of glass considered for the building with the change in use.

- The Applicant clarified the approved parking ratio for Ballston Quarter and the View, the curb cut width previously approved and what is proposed for N. Randolph Street loading and parking access.
- A request was made of the Applicant that all four sides of the building's ground floor elevation be provided without the trees at the next SPRC meeting.
- Clarification was provided by the Applicant that the 10th floor terrace is proposed at approximately 2,700 square feet.
- Staff provided some thoughts on how the committee should consider the request to retain the existing approval for an office building with ground floor retail with the request for the proposed vertical mixed use building.
- The Applicant provided additional information (their justification) regarding the request to exclude from density 11,000 square feet of gross floor area in the garage for retail.
- Comments were provided regarding the requested density exclusion and precedent as well as the request for two site plan approvals for the project. Concern was raised with some indication that consideration be given to the unique circumstance given the garage is existing. It was noted that how below grade retail could be excluded without creating a precedent would need to be clearly and publicly defined. With respect to the two site plans, thoughts were provided that with the request to allow for two site plan approvals although concerning, could include a County Board resolution, or a third action that nullifies one of the approvals with a trigger.
- It was suggested that the \$6.6 million contribution for Mosaic Park not be termed a community benefit but rather a payment.
- Staff was asked to look at how the GFA would translate to fewer units (larger size) and if there would still be a problem with the residential density.
- Staff was asked to look at whether there are any special parking requirements for fitness centers/gyms.
- Clarification was provided by the Applicant that the proposed changes have been discussed shared with DARPA and there are no issues or impacts for the Department of Defense.
- The Applicant provided additional information with respect to how the retail floor to ceiling heights compare to those of the View.
- A request was made that more detail be provided on the MOT in relation to what has been/is being discussed for the Ballston Quarter project.

Construction Phasing:

- The Applicant was asked to discuss more the proposed plans for construction phasing and in particular, pedestrian access during construction. It was noted that N. Randolph Street needs to be maintained for pedestrian access by either the Applicant or the adjacent Ballston Quarter project. The Applicant indicated they would coordinate timing with Forest City.
- The Ballston BID indicated that they would serve as a point of contact for communication to the community, details for construction.
- It was indicated that the pedestrian path should be made known to the community beforehand.
- A member indicated that the bus stop may also need to be relocated.

Land Use and Zoning

- No additional comments or questions were raised by SPRC members.

Site Design & Characteristics

- No additional comments or questions were raised by SPRC members.

Building Architecture

- The Applicant explained the proposed garage doors and façade on N. Randolph Street in relation to the expanded curb cut. It was requested that drawings be provided at the next SPRC meeting.
- Staff was asked about standard language that has been implemented with several site plans regarding rooftop lighting and whether it provided for contacts to address nuisance due to lighting. It was further requested that a management plan for rooftops be provided. Additional comments were made regarding bringing the lights down at night.
- With respect to the retail, it was noted that Wilson Boulevard is intended to be the primary retail corridor for Ballston and the addition of VIDA in its proposed location would help to activate the plaza.
- The Applicant clarified that there are no vents proposed on the building façades.

Transportation

- Clarification was provided regarding the width of the pedestrian refuges.
- Questions were raised about the Applicant's plan for curb space management on Wilson and Randolph. The Applicant indicated there was the possibility for 2, 15-minute short term parking spaces on Wilson and short term parking entrances, as well.
- A question was raised about Arlington Transit Partners and any comments or concerns they have expressed regarding the Transportation Demand management program.
- Clarification was asked regarding the depth of the loading dock and the sidewalk widths at that point. The Applicant noted they would provide dimensions as the next SPRC meeting.
- It was noted that a mid-block crossing was needed at N. Quincy Street for Mosaic Park.
- There was discussion regarding the northwest corner pinch point at Wilson and Randolph. It was indicated that it was required that the sidewalk be a minimum of 16'8".

Open Space

- There was discussion regarding lighting and planting for trees on the roof at the 10th floor proposed terrace facing the mall. There was concern about the vegetation thriving and it was asked whether there would be a landscape plan for this element of the proposal.
- It was noted that a tree was lost on N. Randolph as a result of the expansion of the curb cut and requested that the Applicant look to replace it somewhere on site.
- Clarification was provided by the Applicant regarding how trees on the roof top terrace would be watered. It was asked about whether Stormwater would/could be used.
- It was requested that the landscape plan be provided at the next SPRC meeting for discussion and that this might include how children and dogs would be accommodated and whether or not this would need to be addressed as part of the landscape plan.

Community Benefits

- Staff noted that the nearest polling place would be located at the adjacent Ballston Quarter project. It was therefore noted that one would not be needed for this project.
- The Applicant was asked whether there were any affordable dwelling units proposed in the new building to which they replied no. Further clarification was requested with respect to whether or not the math works out that the current ADU contribution would remain unchanged with the subject amendment. It was also noted that if bonus density were considered for the 11,000 square feet of below grade retail, affordable housing should be considered.

Wrap Up

- There was general agreement that this was a good project and there are no major issues although there is some concern regarding the paper work and a few details to be worked out (density and two site plans); looking forward to staff thinking on how they should both be addressed.
- While there are some issues to resolve it was noted that the project was important and would serve as a model for future development of the like. The project was noted as being ground breaking and welcomed with the T's crossed and the I's dotted as this is the first of its kind for the County.
- The project was noted as a great innovation.

NEXT STEPS

SPRC May 26, 2016