SITE PLAN REVIEW WORKING GROUP
POTENTIAL REVISIONS TO THE SITE PLAN REVIEW PROCESS
July 8, 2014

Big Ideas

- Clarification of the role of other Commissions, Advisory Boards and civic associations in site plan reviews
- Introduction of an optional preliminary review
- Introduction of a streamlined (shorter) review for site plan applications that meet certain criteria
- Revised committee membership to reduce duplication and enhance review efficiency
- Clarification of the role of site plan review chairs
- Restructured review agenda/discussion item list to enhance efficiency and improve the quality of developments
- Clear requirements for submissions for optional preliminary site plan reviews and explicit requirements for material submissions related to site plan review meetings

Role of SPRC, other commissions, and civic associations in site plan reviews

- SPRC would continue to be the County's principal forum for site plan reviews.
- Other Commissions with a planning–related portfolio central to site plan review would be "standing members" of SPRC and asked to identify a representative for each site plan review (see Attachment A)
- Other Commissions with an interest in a limited set of planning issues would identify those site plan reviews on which they elect to be represented and their commission's representative for the review or a specific agenda item discussion for the review
- Civic Associations where a proposed site plan is located ("host") as well as civic associations in close proximity would continue to be invited to participate in relevant reviews.
- Site plan applicants would be encouraged to schedule briefings of civic associations and other commissions, whenever possible, sufficiently in advance of the SPRC reviews to allow the views of these organizations to be considered in the SPRC review.
- An in-person/on-line orientation to SPRC would be developed for representatives of other commissions, civic associations, and interested parties. The Neighborhood College curriculum would include an orientation to the site plan review process.
- SPRC meeting summaries would be available on a particular site plan's webpage on the County website.
- Final reviews of site plans by other commissions should be scheduled to allow their advice to be considered by the Planning Commission and County Board at their public hearings.

Establishment of an Optional Preliminary Review

- Site plan applicants would be offered the opportunity for a preliminary review (before formal check-in) of their conceptual plan for a site prior to development of a full 4.1 submission. The review would be a sounding board/issue identification session with the goal of a less time-consuming, less resource intensive review process following a 4.1 submission.
- The review would offer feedback from SPRC members and staff responsible for the interdepartmental review at an early conceptual stage on an applicant's thinking about site development.
- To facilitate these reviews:
  - Applicants would need to submit exhibits related to site context, site plan, massing, uses, proposed density including bonuses, as well as a basic conceptual rendering(s) for the proposed development at least two weeks prior to the optional preliminary review.
  - Applicants would also need to submit an initial checklist and brief descriptions of expected requested zoning and policy exceptions.
  - The SPRC Chair would designate the review chair and two other commissioners who will participate in the preliminary and subsequent full/streamlined review.
- Other commissions and civic associations would be invited by the review chair to send a representative. For continuity, it is hoped Individuals who represent organizations in preliminary reviews would also represent their organizations in reviews of the final site plan applications.
- Preliminary reviews would entail a single public meeting of no more than two hours. These reviews would include a brief applicant presentation and a preliminary staff analysis. Presentations would be followed by a general discussion with the goal of identifying major questions and/or significant issues related to the site development proposal. Participants in preliminary reviews could submit comments to staff following the end of the review meeting. A summary of the optional preliminary review will be posted on the site plan's webpage.
- A brief discussion outline for these reviews would be developed during the implementation phase.

Establishment of a Streamlined Review

- Two potential options for streamlined reviews:
  - Any site plan applications with little or no deviation from existing County policies and plans could be offered a streamlined review. Such applications would include those seeking a rezoning consistent with the General Land Use Plan or an adopted long-range plan.
  - Site plan applications for developments proposing total gross floor area (GFA) of up to 60,000 square feet (or at or below that allowed by the zoning ordinance including any bonus). These site plan applications for modest developments also could be subject to reduced submission requirements, fewer site plan conditions, and lower fees.
- A preliminary review (see above) would be required of site plan applications seeking a streamlined review. Following the preliminary review, the SPRC review chair in collaboration with planning staff and the applicant would determine whether a streamlined process would be appropriate.
- As part of 4.1 submissions, applicants would submit a checklist of exceptions being sought from County polices (e.g., Master Transportation Plan, Public Spaces Master Plan) and plans (e.g.,

sector plans, small area plans). In addition to the checklist, a very brief description of identified policy and plan exceptions would be required.

- Streamlined reviews by SPRC would require no more than three meetings (up to 4.5 hours). This guarantee would apply unless it is determined during the review that significant zoning ordinance or policy exceptions not identified by an applicant are needed for approval of the site plan or a major issue arises that was not identified during a preliminary review.
- Streamlined reviews would follow the same agenda as full reviews. It is assumed that less time would be required to discuss agenda items, as fewer exceptions are being requested. Some agenda topics, for example, could be deleted for some reviews as unrelated to the proposal.

Reviews of Phased Development Site Plans (PDSPs)

- PDSPs will be reviewed by LRPC rather than SPRC.
- When PDSPs and final site plans are submitted concurrently, as has been Planning Commission practice, a completed review of the PDSP by LRPC would precede SPRC review of the related final site plan.

Role of the Site Plan Review Chair

- Chairs would identify other commissions whose participation in a particular review would be beneficial and work with staff to encourage their participation.
- Chairs of site plan reviews would be responsible for actively managing the review process in collaboration with the planner assigned to the review. There is an expectation that each review will be both thorough and efficient – completed as expeditiously as reasonably possible.
- Chairs, in consultation with planning staff and the applicant, have discretion to determine review committee composition (beyond standing members), including designating membership from advisory commissions/committees and other representatives as appropriate.
- Chairs would set agendas for each meeting. Only topics relevant to a particular site plan application would be included.
- Chairs would manage meetings so that issues covered at previous meetings are revisited at subsequent meetings only if they determine there is a need to do so.
- The Site Plan Review Chair Guide would be reviewed and revised during the implementation phase.

Role of Staff

- Staff would play a more proactive role during site plan meetings, offering professional advice or analyses of alternative approaches for an addressing an issue.
- To facilitate participation by representatives of other commissions, staff would need to communicate with other commissions sufficiently ahead of each site plan review meeting agenda items to be covered at that meeting.

Role of Applicant

- Applicants and their consultants participate in reviews to ensure review committee members understand proposed development projects. Toward this end, they may make presentations or respond to questions or issues raised by committee members.
- Participation at the table by applicants, their consultants and counsel generally is limited to four individuals with speaking responsibilities. A review chair may invite to the table other applicant representatives.

Participation of Audience Members and Non-attending Citizens

- Prior to the start of a review meeting, any individual may submit a comment or question card or inquiry on the site plan proposal website. The Chair will determine if and when to raise these questions or share these comments with the review committee.
- Time permitting, at the end of each meeting, observers will have a brief opportunity to speak to raise issues, ask questions or make statements.
- Individuals may also submit comments or questions after a meeting on the review website.
- Individuals are always free to contact the staff planner with questions or issues.

Site Visits

- Site visits should be routine elements of site plan reviews. The site plan chair should collaborate with staff to schedule a site visit for the first site plan review meeting or, if this is not possible, very early in the review.

SPRC Review Committees Membership

- Proposed site plan review committee membership is attached. (Attachment A)

Site Plan Review Agenda

- A proposed revised standard agenda is attached. (Attachment B)
- A proposed choreography for the conduct of a review is attached. (Attachment C)

Submission Requirements

- Proposed submission requirements for optional Preliminary Reviews, proposed changes to 4.1 submission requirements for Streamlined and Regular Reviews, and proposed changes to requirements for submission of materials for SPRC meetings are attached. (Attachment D)

Attachment A
SPRC REVIEW COMMITTEES
PROPOSED MEMBERSHIP

Planning Commission Representation

- One (1) Planning Commissioner appointed by the SPRC Chair to chair the review
- Two (2) additional Planning Commissioners designated by the SPRC Chair
- Other Planning Commissioners may participate in a review at their option

Advisory Group Representation [one (1) representative each who is not a Planning Commissioner

- Standing Commission Members – advisory groups encouraged to be represented at each review
  - Park and Recreation Commission
  - Transportation Commission
- Other Commission Members – advisory groups that may elect to be represented at any review or only for part of the review agenda for any review
  - Commission on the Arts – Public Art Committee
  - Crystal City Citizen Review Council
  - Disability Advisory Commission
  - Environment and Energy Conservation Commission
  - Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board
  - Housing Commission
  - Pedestrian, Bicycle or Transit Advisory Committees
  - Tenant-Landlord Commission
  - Urban Forestry

Citizen Representation (invited as appropriate)

- Two (2) from the "host" civic association, i.e., the association within whose boundaries a proposed development would be located. Other civic association members are welcome to attend.
- One (1) for each civic association that is not the host association but that is in close proximity to the location of the proposed development. Other members are welcome to attend.
- One (1) to represent residential tenants of a site proposed for redevelopment
- One (1) for any homeowners association of a property that is adjacent to the site of a proposed development
- One (1) for the business improvement district or similar organization where the site of a proposed development is located

At-large Citizen Standing Members

- One (1) representative of the Civic Federation
- Up to three (3) additional members of the general public appointed jointly by the Planning Commission Chair and the Site Plan Review Committee Chair. Efforts should be made to include: (1) residents with special expertise in urban planning and design, architecture and related fields and (2) residents of multi-family residential buildings.

- Up to three (3) former Planning Commissioners appointed jointly by the Planning Commission Chair and the Site Plan Review Committee Chair.
- General public members and former commissioners serve staggered terms of two years. Must participate in 40 percent of all reviews begun in a year and attend at least three-quarters of all meetings for these reviews. A successive three-month lapse can result in removal from committee.
- Members of the general public may be reappointed for one term. Former Planning Commissioners may be reappointed for successive terms, however, reappointments should not prevent former Commissioners who recently completed terms from being appointed to these positions.

Alternates

- If any organizational representative is unable to attend a meeting, an alternate may be designated.

Summary of Changes to SPRC Membership

- Reduction in potential membership for a particular review from a maximum of approximately 40 individuals (including Planning Commissioners) to a maximum of approximately 35 (including Planning Commissioners)
- Change from standing commission membership to other commission membership
  - Arts Commission
  - Environment and Energy Conservation Commission
  - Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board
  - Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committees
- Additions to other commission membership:
  - Bicycle Advisory Committee
  - Crystal City Citizens Review Council
  - Disability Advisory Commission
  - Housing Commission
  - Tenant-Landlord Commission
  - Urban Forestry Commission
- Reduction of nearby civic associations' representation from two (2) members to one (1) member per association
- Reduction in at-large standing citizen membership from eight (8) to three (3)
- Addition of former Planning Commissioners as a category within at-large standing members (3).

Attachment B
SITE PLAN REVIEW MEETINGS
DRAFT REVISED MASTER AGENDA/DISCUSSION ITEM LIST

1. Introduction
   a. Introductions [Review Chair]
   b. Framing of the review [Review Chair]
   c. Overview of the Site Plan Application [Applicant – maximum 10-minute presentation]
      - Brief description of the project and its context
   d. Analysis of the Site Plan Application, Related County Policies, and Requested Exceptions [Staff Presentation – maximum 10-minute presentation]
      - General Land Use Plan
      - Zoning Ordinance – bonus density or height, modifications of use, etc.
      - Other Comprehensive Plan elements
      - Long range plans, including sector plans, small area plans, etc.
      - Other adopted policies and guidelines

2. Urban Design – Site Context [Maximum 15-minute applicant presentation]
   a. Natural/Environmental Constraints and opportunities on site and adjacent to site, if applicable (identify applicable and significant elements)
      - Topography
        - street and sidewalk slopes
        - high and low points on the site
      - Solar angles
        - Orientation
        - Shadows
      - Wind
      - Vegetation, including street trees
      - Hydrology and Natural Areas
        - Onsite
        - In vicinity
      - Climate
        - Micro-climates
        - Heat islands
      - Noise
      - Other
   b. Built Environment – Physical Constraints and opportunities, if applicable
      - Private Uses in the vicinity and significant destinations
        - Commercial – office, hotel, residential, retail
        - Medical
        - Entertainment
      - Civic facilities (schools, community centers, polling places, fire stations, etc.)
      - Buildings

- Historic sites nearby
- Transportation
  - Streets
  - Pedestrian routes
  - Bicycle routes
  - Transit, including rail, bus, etc.
  - Parking
- Open Space – Public and Private
  - Parks
  - Plazas
  - Dog parks
  - Children's play areas
- Public art/murals
- Views
  - Sight lines
  - View corridors
  - View axes to and from vicinity streets, public spaces and buildings
- Utilities
  - Electrical distribution system
  - Communication distribution system
  - Water distribution
  - Sewer
- Other

3. Site Design and Massing [Maximum 15 minute applicant presentation]

a. Proposed Uses on the Site

b. Building Massing and Placement

- Location of the building(s) on the site
- Massing, including heights, tapering, setbacks, stepbacks, and relationship of multiple towers (if present) to each other, open spaces, street edges and surrounding buildings
- Location of any retail, retail entrances and relationship to exterior spaces
- Solar orientation of building massing on the site and shadows cast on- and off-site
- Relationship of proposed uses to adjacent streets, nearby open space and neighboring buildings

c. Circulation

- Building entrance(s)
- Pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle access around and through the site
- Access to and impact on adjacent properties and streets of parking and loading
- Delivery issues (retail delivery, the pizza guy, UPS/FedEx, etc.)
- Accessibility

d. Open Space and Landscaping

- Location on site
- Passive/active uses/social gathering

- Public/private uses
- Softscape/hardscape/landscape treatment
- Tree preservation and new trees
- Seating and furniture
- Public art
- Special features (water, play structures, dog exercise area, etc.)
- Streetscape design, including street lighting, tree layout and tree species, furnishings

e. Public Safety

f. Other

4. Architecture [Maximum 15 minute applicant presentation]

a. Architecture in the context of the site, including architectural character of surrounding buildings

b. Articulation, setbacks, stepbacks

c. Podium or special ground floor treatment – materials, fenestration, uses

d. Penthouse or special treatments at the roof – materials, uses

e. Façade treatments, materials, fenestration, sculpting

f. Encroachments, overhangs, canopies, etc.

f. Historic preservation

g. Exterior lighting and other special features, including location of special features in the context of the urban design analysis.

h. Other

5. Sustainability [Maximum 15 minute applicant presentation]

a. Community Sustainability

- Impact of uses on the surrounding community
- Effect of development on the life of the area
- Effect on the character of the area
- Other

b. Environmental Sustainability

- Energy conservation
- Site contamination and abatement
- Reuse of construction materials
- Reuse of buildings
- Massing/Form
- Location issues- sun, shade, wind, etc.
- Stormwater management
- Tree canopy
- Other

6. Community Benefits [Maximum 10-minute staff presentation]

a. Base benefits

- Mitigations
- Sector plan expectations

- Neighborhood Recommendations

b. Benefits related to bonus density or increased height

- Mitigations
- Sector plan expectations
- Density Bonus-related
- Neighborhood Recommendations

c. Special Zoning Districts

- C-O-Rosslyn
- C-O-Crystal City

d. Other

7. Other Issues

Attachment C
SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE
DRAFT MEETING CHOREOGRAPHY

Notes

- This choreography is intended to illustrate generally the conduct of a series of meetings related to the review of a single final site plan.
- As a general rule, site plan review meetings are 85 minutes long.
- For some applications, a single meeting may suffice for major review topics (e.g., Urban Design, Site Design). For others, reflecting project complexity, multiple meetings might be needed. Other topics – architecture, sustainability, and community benefits – may well require less than a full meeting.
- Streamlined reviews for applications seeking few if any zoning ordinance modifications or policy exceptions would follow the same agenda as a regular review. The choreography, however, would be condensed.
- To accommodate the interest of meeting observers, comment cards will be available to them for submission to the chair prior to the beginning of each review meeting.

Introduction to the Site Plan Proposal and the Review Process – First Meeting

- SPRC review chair would introduce her/himself and ask other committee members and members of the audience to introduce themselves. S/he would then introduce the project under review and provide some expectation for the length of the review. In framing the meeting, the chair would alert committee members that one purpose of this meeting is the identification, by staff and committee members, of any big issues" raised by the proposed site plan (5 minutes)
- Applicant presentation would briefly review the site location, the site plan, proposed uses, a ground floor plan and a rendering or elevation. (10 minutes)
- Staff presentation would provide a broad overview and analysis of the proposed site plan with a focus on:
  - Familiarizing the committee with the proposal and related compliance issues, requested exceptions from the zoning ordinance and other major policies and plans.
  - Identifying any issues related to the General Land Use Plan or land use policies contained in sector or similar plans would also be presented at this time.
  - Identifying and "big issues" with the proposed site plan. (10 minutes)
- Committee members would have the opportunity to seek clarification of any elements of the proposed site plan or issues related to the zoning ordinance and other policies and plans. (40 minutes)
- Audience members would be provided the opportunity to raise questions or make statements. (5 minutes)
- Wrap up. Each committee member would have the opportunity to identify information/materials they would like the committee to be provided at future meetings and identify any "big issues" they see with the proposed site plan. (10 minutes)
- Review Chair would offer summary comments as appropriate, discuss issues related to the next meeting, and discuss the details of a forthcoming site visit. (5 minutes)

Discussions of Urban Design and Site Context, Site Design and Form, Architecture and Sustainability – Beginning the Second Meeting

- Applicants would begin each discussion with a presentation. At a first meeting on a topic, the presentation would review the full range of issues (15 minutes). At subsequent meetings, if needed, applicant presentations would respond to outstanding issues or questions and any site plan changes. Items to be covered would be determined jointly by the review chair, staff and applicant (10 minutes).
- Staff at a first discussion on a topic would provide any analysis or comments on the information provided (10 minutes). At subsequent meetings on the topic, staff would comment on applicant responses to previously raised issues and questions or new issues to be discussed at a meeting (5 minutes).
- Committee Members would have the opportunity seek clarification and react to issues raised in the applicant's presentations.
- Audience members would be provided the opportunity to raise questions or make statements. (5 minutes at the close of the discussion of a topic)
- Wrap up. Each committee member would have the opportunity to make additional comments, summary comments or identify information/materials they would like the committee to be provided at future meetings. (10 minutes at the close of a meeting)
- Review Chair would offer summary comments as appropriate and discuss issues related to the next meeting. (5 minutes at the close of a meeting)

Community Benefits and Other Issues Discussion

- Staff would begin the meeting with a presentation on community benefits. (10 minutes)
- Applicants would have the opportunity to comment on the staff presentation. (5 minutes)
- Committee Members would have the opportunity seek clarification and react to issues raised in the staff presentation.
- Committee Members would have the opportunity to raise any other issues.
- Audience members would be provided the opportunity to raise questions or make statements. (5 minutes)
- Wrap up. Each committee member would have the opportunity to make statements regarding their view of the site plan proposal at the conclusion of the review. (10 minutes)
- Review Chair would offer summary comments as appropriate and discuss issues related to the next meeting. (5 minutes)

Attachment D

SITE PLAN REVIEW

DRAFT SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND MATERIALS

Administrative Regulation 4.1 Checklist Updates

- Revise the administrative regulation 4.1 checklist submission requirements to update terminology of plans reflecting industry nomenclature, and eliminate redundancies/duplication in plan sheet details/requirements.

Availability and Accessibility of Administrative Regulations 4.1 Drawings to Public and SPRC

- Make available for review at all SPRC meetings for a project, a full set at 24" x 36" of the Administrative Regulation 4.1 submission.
- Upon filing of the Final 4.1 plan, post on the site plan project page, the entire application and plan submission.

Materials to be Submitted for an Optional Preliminary Review

- Perspective applicant's who choose to present a preliminary proposal for review and comment would present and provide the following materials at a meeting:
    - Aerial Area Map (Context)
    - Conceptual Site Plan
    - Ground Floor Plan
    - Typical Floor Plan
    - Massing Study/Diagram
    - Rendering/Elevation (optional)
    - Density Summary
- 25 copies @ 11" x 17" (color encouraged).

Materials to be Submitted for SPRC Meetings

Applicant Submissions

- Applicants should not present drawings and plans that are different than those submitted for an upcoming meeting on the night of the meeting. Applicants should present and provide copies of the same meeting materials that are posted with the report online.
- Applicant presentation materials and handouts should meet the following specifications:
    - 25 copies @ 11" x 17" (color copies encouraged)
- Failure of an applicant to submit meeting materials one week prior to the scheduled meeting date will result in an SPRC meeting being canceled.
- Applicants are not expected to print and submit new iterations of the 4.1 drawings at each SPRC meeting, but only present relevant sheets or plan drawings that have been updated to reflect revisions, comments and response to issues raised by the committee.
- Materials for SPRC meetings should be based on the meeting topic (guidelines below consistent with the draft revised Master Agenda). However, some flexibility should be provided based on issues and revisions determined necessary through the process.
    - Urban Design

        - Aerial Map of Area (Context)
        - Existing Context (Adjacent and Surrounding Land Uses, Buildings, Open Space, Transportation Facilities)
        - Existing Conditions (Site Analysis – Constraints & Opportunities – Environmental, Land Forms, Infrastructure, Transportation, etc.)
    - Site Design
        - Presentation Site Plan
        - Contextual Site Plan
        - Ground Floor Plan
        - Garage Floor Plan(s)
        - Site Circulation Plan (s)
            - Vehicular, Pedestrian, Bicycle circulation, connectivity, access
        - Striping and Marking Plan
        - Conceptual Landscape Plan
            - Streetscape
            - Tree Survey – Protection, Replacement
    - Form & Architecture
        - Massing Diagram/Study
        - Architectural Façade Elevations
        - Typical & non-Typical Floor Plans
        - Roof Plan
        - Materials (Samples)
        - Building Through Sections
        - Perspectives, Renderings, etc.
    - Environmental Design & Sustainability Features

Staff SPRC Reports & Presentations

- Staff SPRC reports should start with a summary paragraph highlighting changes and updates since the previous meeting's report. Also comparison exhibits should be used throughout the report to highlight changes in data, etc. from meeting to meeting.
- The list of issues at the end of the Staff SPRC report should be updated for each meeting, highlighting new issues with underline and indicating resolved issues with strikethrough when SPRC has reached a consensus on those issues. Italicized language should be used to provide a summary or response to any issues identified where appropriate or applicable.
- SPRC meeting summaries should be posted to the site plan project page no later than one week from the date of the SPRC meeting.
- Staff initial presentation to SPRC should include the following and including covering urban design, transportation, open space, and other subject matters applicable (historic preservation, housing, sustainable design, economic development, etc.) to provide a comprehensive overview of, and context for the proposal:
    - Overview Presentation
        - Summary of the Request
        - Site Location

    - Site Designations:
        - Land Use
        - Zoning
        - Special Designations
    - Site history, County Board actions, approvals, etc.
    - Statistical Summary
    - Summary of Requested Modifications
    - Summary of Adopted Plans and Policies & Compliance
    - Identification of Preliminary Issues
- Community Benefits
    - Summarize standard benefits proposed to ameliorate any impacts of the project on the neighborhood and adjacent/surrounding properties
    - Summarize any off-sets proposed for bonus density

<u>Materials to be Submitted for Public Hearings</u>

- No recommended changes to current submission requirements as provided in the Administrative Regulation 4.1 for the timing of revised submissions and the number of copies to be distributed for public hearings – Planning Commission and County Board.