



**ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA**  
ARLINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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CLERK

TO: Planning Commissioners, SPRC Members

FROM: Steve Cole, Site Plan Review Working Group Chair

CC: Site Plan Review Working Group Members  
Robert Duffy, Planning Director,  
Tom Miller, Current Planning Supervisor  
Samia Byrd, Site Plan Review Coordinator  
Lisa Maher, DES

DATE: June 4, 2014

RE: Potential Revisions to the Site Plan Review Process

Nearly 18 months ago during its January 2013 organizing meeting, the Commission established a working group (see Attachment 2) to review and propose revisions to the site plan review process. The attached document (see Attachment 1) is the result of this effort and is presented for your consideration. These potential revisions would result in changes to the zoning ordinance, the 4.1 Administrative Regulation, and the Commission's review process.

### **Process**

The Site Plan Review Working Group (SPRWG) met more than 20 times during its review and revision development. Early in the process, it met with a broad group of community and development stakeholders in an effort to understand concerns with the process from multiple perspectives. In summer 2013, SPRWG broke into four work groups to develop specific proposals for revisions to the current site plan review process. These work groups focused on review scope, membership, agenda, and submission requirements. The recommendations of the work groups were synthesized by a small subgroup consisting of Carrie Johnson, Bob Duffy, Tom Miller, Samia Byrd, and myself. This synthesis resulted in the first draft of the document entitled, "Potential Revisions to the Site Plan Review Process."

County Board Members were briefed early in the process on the effort and to answer any questions they might have. Board Members were interviewed in May 2013 by a subgroup of working group members on their views on the process, concerns they hear from constituents, and suggestions for improvements. Current plans are to update them following SPRC consideration. A work session with the County Board is currently scheduled for Tuesday, June 24, pending completion of the SPRC

review. Any changes proposed to the Zoning Ordinance would subsequently go to the Board for adoption.

The County Manager has received regular updates from her staff. Any changes to the 4.1 Administrative Regulation would require County Manager approval. The County Attorney has also been briefed on the process and potential revisions.

Earlier this year, a plan for reviewing this document with stakeholder groups was developed. Several meetings with stakeholder groups were held during April and May and the draft document was modified reflecting comments received during these meetings. Individual meetings were held with land use attorneys; NAIOP; advisory board, commission and committee chairs; and civic association presidents and members of the Civic Federation's Planning and Zoning Committee.

Following the work session with the County Board, a final revision will be made to the document, specific actions will be identified, and an action item will be placed on the Commission's agenda. The goal is for this to come before the Commission at its July meeting. Any proposed policy changes that require County Board or County Manager approval, as well as changes to the site plan review that can be made by the Planning Commission, will be developed in full detail throughout the remainder of the year. All detailed changes to the Site Plan Operating Guide, the Site Plan Review Chairs Guide, and the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance will come back to the Commission prior to implementation. It is hoped that the County Board and County Manager will approve all needed changes to the zoning ordinance can be obtained by the end of 2014. If this were achieved, changes would be effective with site plans accepted by the County Manager after January 1, 2015.

## **Issues**

The attached document is relatively lengthy – 14 pages. It provides a reasonably good description of the potential changes. Commissioners and other SPRC members should feel free to ask questions on any element and raise any issue. If we are able to conclude the review at this meeting, this would be fine. If not, we will schedule a follow up meeting to continue the review. To help you in your consideration of these proposals, attached is paper outlining several issues/questions related to the proposal (see Attachment 3). These issues may involve items currently included in the draft; other issues relate to issues on which the Committee is being asked to offer its guidance.

I look forward to a lively and interesting discussion at our meeting next Monday from 7-10 p.m. in Meeting rooms C/D.

**SITE PLAN REVIEW WORKING GROUP  
POTENTIAL REVISIONS TO THE SITE PLAN REVIEW PROCESS  
June 4, 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 advising the County Board on planning issues would continue to be represented on SPRC (see Attachment A, Proposed Membership).
- Commissions with an interest in a particular issue (e.g., HALRB) would participate only in reviews with an issue related to that interest (e.g., a historic preservation component).
- Civic Associations where a proposed site plan is located ("host") as well as civic associations in close proximity will 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 relevant civic associations would be invited by the review chair to send a representative. Organizational representatives who participate in preliminary reviews would be expected to participate in the review of the final site plan application.
- 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**

- Site plan applications with little or no deviation from existing County policies and plans could be offered a streamlined review – one completed more quickly. Such site plans applications would include those seeking a rezoning consistent with the General Land Use Plan or an adopted long-range plan.
- 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 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 identifiable 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.

### **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 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 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.

### **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 at SPRC review meetings**

- Prior to the start of a review meeting, any individual may submit a comment or question card. The Chair will determine when to raise these questions or share these comments with the review committee.
- At the end of each meeting, observers will have a brief opportunity to speak to raise issues, ask questions or make statements.
- Observers may also submit comments or questions on the review website.
- Observers 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, not to include Planning Commissioners, from other commissions]**

- Standing seats
  - Energy and Environmental Conservation Commission
  - Park and Recreation Commission
  - Transportation Commission
  - Urban Forestry Commission
- Members as appropriate (to be determined by the site plan review chair)
  - Commission on the Arts (for developments that propose a specific art-related element or community benefit (as opposed to a donation)
  - Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (developments with a historical or landmark-related element)
  - Housing Commission (proposals with a residential component)
  - Pedestrian, Bicycle or Transit Advisory Committees
  - Tenant-Landlord Commission (proposals that redevelop rental residential property)
  - Other Commissions or Advisory Committees

**Citizen Representation (invited as appropriate)**

- Two (2) for each “host” civic association, the association within whose boundaries a proposed development would be located. Other members are welcome to observe.
- 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 observe.
- One (1) for any homeowners or tenants 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. Effort should be made to include 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 half of all reviews begun in a year and attend at least three-quarters of all meetings for these reviews.
- Members of the general public may be reappointed for one term. Former Planning Commissioners may be reappointed for successive terms.

### 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 30 (including Planning Commissioners)
- Change from standing membership to membership as appropriate – to be determined on a review-by-review basis by review chair (5)
  - Arts Commission – included for all reviews of site plan applications that propose a specific art-related element or community benefit
  - Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board – included for all reviews of site plan applications with a historical or landmark-related element
  - Pedestrian, Bicycle and Transit Advisory Committees – issues are within the domain of Transportation Commission
- Reduction of adjacent civic association representation from two (2) members to one (1) member per association.
- Reduction in at-large standing citizen membership from eight (8) to four (3)
- Addition of former Planning Commissioners as a category within at-large standing members (3).
- Addition of Urban Forestry representative as a standing member
- Addition of the Tenant-Landlord Commission as appropriate as a participant in rental residential redevelopment project reviews
- Establishment of site plan-specific review committee membership
  - Housing Commission (residential development site plans)
  - Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (site plans with a historical or landmark related element)
  - Arts Commission (site plan applications that propose specific art elements)
  - Pedestrian, Bicycle and Transit Advisory Committees (at discretion of the review chair)
  - Tenant-Landlord Commission (site plan applications with a rental residential redevelopment)

**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.
  - Building code
  - Comprehensive Plan elements
  - Long range plans
  - Other adopted policies and guidelines

**2. Urban Design – Site Context [Maximum 15-minute applicant presentation]**

- a. Natural/Environmental Constraints and opportunities, if applicable
  - Topography
  - Solar angles
  - Wind
  - Vegetation
  - Hydrology
  - Other
- b. Built Environment – Physical Constraints and opportunities, if applicable
  - Surrounding uses and significant destinations
  - Buildings, including historic elements
  - Public art/murals
  - Transportation Networks, including pedestrian and bicycle routes
  - Power Grid
  - Sewer & Water
  - Open Space
  - Other

### **3. Site Design and Building Form [Maximum 15 minute applicant presentation]**

- a. Proposed Uses on the Site
- b. Building Placement and Urban Design
  - Location of the building(s) on the site
  - Building form, heights and setbacks
  - Allocation of uses and orientation of development on the site
  - Relationship of proposed uses to adjacent streets, nearby open space and neighboring buildings
- c. Site Design – Circulation
  - Building entrance(s)
  - Vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian access around and through the site
  - Access to parking and loading
  - Location of retail, retail entrances and relationship to exterior spaces
  - Delivery issues (the pizza guy, UPS/FedEx, etc.)
  - Accessibility
- d. Site Design – Open Space & 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

### **4. Architecture [Maximum 15 minute applicant presentation]**

- a. Architectural façade design, including articulation, stepbacks, sculpting, encroachments, overhangs and canopies, etc.
  - i. Podium details, if any
  - ii. Special treatments at the roof
  - iii. Other
- b. Heights, including tapering, relationship of multiple towers (if present) to each other and to surrounding buildings
- c. Façade treatments, materials, fenestration
- d. Podium or special ground floor treatment, materials, fenestration, uses
- e. Penthouse or special treatments at the roof, materials, uses
- f. Historic preservation
- g. Exterior lighting and other special features.

## **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

### b. Benefits related to bonus density or increased height

## **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

#### **Materials to be Submitted for Public Hearings**

- 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.

Site Plan Review Process Working Group (SPRWG)

SPRWG Chair

Steve Cole

Current Planning Commissioners

Brian Harner

Nancy Iacomini

Karen Kumm Morris

Steve Sockwell

Former Planning Commissioners

Carrie Johnson

Terry Savela

Transportation Commissioner

Bill Gearhart

Developers

Nina Janopaul, APAH

Brian Scull, Shooshan Companies

Andy Van Horn, JBG

Development Consultants

George Dove, *Architect*, WDG Architects

Jon Kinney, *Land Use Attorney*, Bean, Kinney and Korman

John Lutostanski, *Civil Engineers*, Bowman Consulting

Community Representatives

Judy Freshman, Crystal City

Martha Moore, Civic Federation

Larry Mayer, Civic Federation

County Staff

Samia Byrd, CPHD

Bob Duffy, CPHD

Lisa Maher, DES

**Site Plan Review Working Group  
Potential Revisions to the Site Plan Review Process  
Issues for Consideration  
June 4, 2014**

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

- The central issue under this topic is the timing of consideration of site plan proposals by other commissions and community groups, especially civic associations. The proposal is drafted to encourage these other reviews, both prior to the start of an SPRC review and the Planning Commission public hearing on the proposal, to be scheduled sufficiently early so the advice and positions of these groups are known by their representatives and can be effectively considered during reviews and hearings.
- On some issues, site plan applicants can receive different guidance from different groups. Sequential scheduling is seen as a way, in part, to address this issue. Should applicants be asked to wait for SPRC consideration of an issue and the balancing of different interests before modifying proposed site plans in response to guidance received or requests from individual groups?

**Optional Preliminary Review**

- The idea behind proposing an optional preliminary review is that such reviews can be useful to applicants and the SPRC if they reduce the need to “go back to the drawing board” on the occasional proposal. Option preliminary reviews could help avoid significant problems identified during a review and, thus, could result in shorter, less resource intensive reviews.
- A small subset of the SPRC and staff is proposed to review preliminary plans before submission. The group would include 3 planning commissioners, representatives of other commissions and civic association. Something on the order of 6-8 individuals would participate. If an optional preliminary review is a good idea, is this composition of the group right?

**Streamlined Review**

- Streamlined reviews are proposed as a way to meet the review needs of proposals seeking few policy or zoning ordinance exceptions. They are also seen as possibly removing the perceived burden that is an incentive for some property owners to build by right, rather than work with the County to achieve a better development that could better meet the needs of the developer and community.
- Is it realistic to think that reviews can be completed in 3 meetings (4.5 hours)?
- Can a commitment to meet this promise be made?
- One condition for a streamlined review is participation in a preliminary review. Is this essential?

### SPRC Membership

- The core idea behind the proposed changes to SPRC membership is that meetings can be more efficient and all interests can be effectively represented all while the size of the committee shrinks. Is there general agreement with this principle?
- Other commission representation has been split into two categories, those commissions whose representatives should participate in each review and those that should participate when an issue of interest to them is central to a proposed site plan. Is this approach to commission representation sensible? Acceptable?
- Not all commissions that might wish to be represented on SPRC have been included in the proposed changes. For example, the Economic Development Commission and the Emergency Preparedness Advisory Commission are not included. Should they or any other commissions that have not been included be added to the proposed membership list? If so and if two categories of commission participation makes sense, should these commissions have standing seats or participate only when their issues are central to a proposed site plan?
- Civic association representation is proposed to change. The civic association where a project is located (the “host” association) would continue to have two seats on a review. Other civic associations with seats would be limited to those in “close proximity” and these associations would have a single seat on a review, a reduction from 2 seats. Does the Committee support this proposed change?
- There are changes to standing at-large membership as well. The Civic Federation is proposed to have a designated seat on all reviews. In addition, there is proposed to be 3 slots each for citizens for the general public and former planning commissioners on the Committee. Currently, there are 8 slots for citizens at-large and no slots specifically for former commissioners. These appointments could be renewed – once for at-large citizens and every two years for former commissioners. Is there support for these changes?

### Master Agenda/Discussion Item List

- The proposed changes are intended to allow SPRC first to become familiar with the context of the proposed development and related issues; next with specific site plan proposal; and then conclude with reviews of architecture, sustainability and community benefits. Is this approach sensible? Acceptable?
- Construction issues have been eliminated from the agenda? The thinking is that SPRC has little to add to staff’s review of construction issues and that site plan conditions clearly outline permissible practices. Does the committee support this change?