

## March 12, 2014 Meeting Summary | Form Based Code Advisory Working Group

### Attendees

**PC Members:** Inta Malis (FBC AWG Chair). **FBC AWG Members:** Mark Cole, Randy Swart, Katherine Guernsey, Ed Miltenberger, Noreen Quill, Linda Dye, Stef Pryor, and Takis Karantonis. **Staff:** Jennifer Smith, Matt Mattauszek, and Melissa Cohen.

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### Agenda Item 1 | Clear Height dimensions

- The upper story height dimensions were revised with a prior FBC amendment, from 9'-4" to 9'. AWG members expressed interest in understanding the difference in rationale between the previous change and the current proposal, and also clarification that the new height (9' clear) would not pose new constraints, or limit use of typical construction techniques or lumber.
- The upper story height for Neighborhood Sites is set at 8'-8". Clarify why it is less than lower floors, and why we would revise it by increasing it to 8'-10"?

### Agenda Item 2a | Hotel parking ratio

- Requests were made for additional information, including:
  - Comparison of existing and proposed ratios to understand magnitude of change
  - Data to indicate utilization of spaces for hotel uses; and clarification on how parking is managed and used when additional commercial, or other, uses are provided in addition to hotel?
  - Assessment of whether hotels on Columbia Pike would likely include conference meeting rooms, which could impact how to establish the parking ratio. Or whether hotels would likely remain small, boutique type hotels.
  - Explanation on why the current ratio is infeasible?
  - Assessment of whether the hotel operators would open and charge for additional parking
- Concerns were raised that fewer parking spaces for hotel guests will result in spillover parking on neighborhood streets. Some suggested that hotel guests staying at a Columbia Pike location may be more auto-oriented and reliant on private vehicles than transit service.

### Agenda Item 2b | Bicycle Parking Ratio for Hotel Uses

- 1 visitor space/5,000 square feet of retail for 1<sup>st</sup> 50,000 sq ft, and 1 visitor space/12,500 square feet of retail above 50,000 square feet seems appropriate.
- Employee ratio of 1 employee space/25,000 square feet seems low. Clarify why this ratio is low, and why it is based on square footage versus other method.
- Alternative ratios for grocery stores are specified in site plan conditions. It was noted however that the FBC establishes a maximum size limit on grocery stores to 50,000 square feet which may reduce the need for a special parking ratio for these uses in the FBC.

### **Agenda Item 2c | Affordable Housing Parking Ratio**

- Strong community concerns were raised about lowering parking ratio below 1.125 space/unit. Spillover on adjacent neighborhood streets is occurring. There is a concern that spillover parking will be intensified with a reduced minimum parking ratio. However, community members noted that parking spillover problems decreased in properties where management changed to non-profit affordable housing developers who are required to follow strict rules regarding overcrowding. Buchanan Gardens and Columbia Grove are two examples.
- Staff indicated interest in postponing this potential amendment until later this year when a more comprehensive evaluation of affordable housing requirements/incentives are in progress for the commercial centers FBC.
- AWG members were supportive of tabling this topic, however, it was suggested that additional parking data be provided soon/sooner so that the community could better understand staff's basis for proposed ratio. More specific data was requested to demonstrate the reduced demand for parking by residents living in affordable housing units.
- A request was made to prepare an analysis of sites that may develop with affordable housing in the commercial nodes that could be subject to the reduced parking ratio.

### **Agenda Item 3 | Civic Uses & Civic Building Designations**

- This item will be discussed in April.
- Staff provided a new handout with references to applicable sections of both Codes.

### **Agenda Item 4 | RBLs at Barcroft Centre**

- AWG members indicated the intent is to achieve an amenity space for people to use and would provide a transition to the park & W&OD Trail. It could include expanded pedestrian areas, outdoor seating and café space, or other plaza-like amenities due to the proximity with the trail. The intent was to avoid separating those uses from the trail by drive aisles.
- If fire access is needed, it could be designed in a manner that maintains the pedestrian/bicycle experience but allows for emergency vehicle access (i.e. like new plaza at Arlington Mill Community Center).
- APAH should comment on whether some connection would be desired between the Buchanan Gardens property and the subject commercial property should redevelopment of the shopping center occur. Currently, a fence separates the two properties to limit access to the apartment complex and its private open space.
- Some AWG members indicated that perhaps "limited access" could entail allowing certain portions of the space to accommodate vehicular traffic.

- An AWG member indicated that the District Boundary may not have to be a firm boundary for streetscape improvements. It is also possible that some of the existing pavement could be removed for a more pervious treatment.
- AWG members did not see a need to move the RBL along the western property line. Members recalled that the reason an RBL was drawn was so the ground floor of the development facing the park/trail would require an active use.
- A request was made to confirm whether there would be any limitations on how the right-of-way could be used.
- Clarify whether any improvements would be made by the County?