



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

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July 14, 2015

Arlington County Board  
 2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
 Suite 300  
 Arlington, Virginia 22201

**SUBJECT: 4. Western Rosslyn Area Plan**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Planning Commission recommends the County Board adopt the resolution to adopt the Western Rosslyn Area Plan attached to the County Manager’s July 1, 2015 memorandum and direct the County Manager to initiate a public park planning process to develop a park and public spaces plan for Rosslyn Highland Park and other public spaces within the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District (WRCRD) with the following amendments:

Transportation Element

1. Amend the plan to include as the street cross-section for the new street that bisects the WRCRD between Wilson Boulevard and 18th Street North, only location #8B as shown on page 29 of the proposed area plan.

Urban Design Element – Buildable Areas / Architecture / Grade Transitions

2. Set 15-foot setbacks as the standard for towers in relation to the bases of buildings within the WRCRD Mixed Use Development Area.
3. Indicate that façade heights along street edges within the WRCRD Mixed Use Development Area should be consistent with façade heights established for the Rosslyn Sector Plan.
4. Apply the “Neighborhood scale transition” design guidelines from the Rosslyn Sector to the WRCRD Mixed Use Development Area.

Urban Design Element – Service / Parking / Streetscape

5. Locate all service and loading entrances for the residential building in the WRCRD Mixed Use Development Area on the new street that bisects the WRCRD between Wilson Boulevard and 18th Street North.

6. Establish as design guidelines for the portion of the 18th Street Corridor located within the WRCRD any design guidelines in the Rosslyn Sector Plan, as adopted, or subsequently developed specific to the 18th Street Corridor. Otherwise, establish as design guidelines for this street section the Rosslyn Sector Plan streetscape standards.
7. Provide curbside space for short-term deliveries, pickups and drop-offs in the WRCRD Mixed Use Development Area on the new street that bisects the WRCRD between Wilson Boulevard and 18th Street North.

#### Urban Design Element – Open Space / Recreation

8. Set as the soil panel and soil volume standards for the WRCRD the standards from the Rosslyn Sector Plan.
9. Create uniform open space design guidelines for the WRCRD Mixed Use Development Area as parts of the follow-on open space planning process.

#### Environment Element

10. Delete the sentence that requires school buildings to be net-zero ready.
11. Establish LEED Gold as the standard for the WRCRD.

#### Action Plan

12. Add a short-term item to the Action Plan to update county tree planting design standards to ensure the viability and longevity of mature canopy trees over parking and other building structures considering soil panel, composition, drainage and serviceability of the underlying building structure.

Dear County Board Members:

The Planning Commission heard this item at its July 6, 2015 public hearing. Richard Tucker, Community Planning, Housing, and Development (CPHD), Planning gave an overview of the changes in the WRAPS proposal since the Request to Advertise (RTA) in June. Also present were Steve Cover, Director, CPHD, Arlova Vonhm, CPHD-Planning, Rich Viola, Department of Environmental Services (DES)–Transportation.

#### **Public Speakers**

Carmen Romero, Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH), testified that Queens Court is a 39-unit one bedroom apartment complex, but the proposed concept plan will increase the site, which is only 1500 feet from the Rosslyn Metro, to 250 affordable housing units and a 9000 square foot public park. APAH supports adoption of the plan as it reflects the preferences of the WRAPS Working Group, it achieves County goals for affordable housing, including housing near transit sites, as well as increasing the number of units in North Arlington. It also increases open space and achieves a successful balance of the County Board objectives. Staff has answered some of our questions and we're confident that some clarifications in the intent of the plan are consistent with the goals and the objects of the concept APAH envisions. Therefore we

think this is a rare opportunity to create a great place while advancing the goals of affordable housing this County.

Jim Sharkey, Highgate Village resident and Williamsburg Middle School student said that when he learned that Rosslyn Highland Park was being taken away, he discovered that Arlington has one-quarter of the park space per capita compared to neighboring Fairfax County. Taking away Rosslyn Highlands Park takes away a valuable and scarce commodity in Arlington. He grew up at the park playing on the playground, playing basketball and catch, sledding, and doing science projects. If the County were to take this park away, it takes it away from not just his family and friends, but all the young children that have not had those experiences yet. One of the plans to use the site as a school-controlled Ultimate field takes the land away from the neighborhood and redistributes it to a select few children from all over the County who won a lottery to get into the school that would control the park. Many of those neighborhoods have more parkland than Rosslyn and resident of Rosslyn, who need parks the most, have a high likelihood of losing their only one.

### **Planning Commission Committee Report**

Commissioner Cole reported that the Working Group has not met since the last time the Planning Commission took up the Request to Advertise (RTA).

Commissioner Schroll reported the Transportation Commission sent a letter that was included in the packet. At the meeting, he made a motion to amend the draft document to move service and loading from 18<sup>th</sup> Street to the new street, which was adopted by a unanimous vote of the Transportation Commission

### **Planning Commission Discussion**

Commissioner Forinash asked Mr. Tucker for an overview of the clarifications referenced by the APAH speaker.

Mr. Tucker said that APAH met with County Board members and went over some of these points. There was a concern about when the planning process for the open spaces would take place and whether it would interfere with APAH's timeline for redevelopment. They were not aware that staff had outlined the process would take place within a year.

There was a misunderstanding regarding exempting APAH from above ground parking restrictions. It was clarified that, because of topography, this requirement doesn't apply to the APAH site.

There was a general concern on APAH's part dealing with urban design guidelines, especially as they relate to historic preservation and cost implications. The general response was that the design guidelines in the plan are guidance, and during the site plan review process some those issues would be addressed.

APAH also questioned the 18<sup>th</sup> Street and Key Boulevard cross-sections as it seemed there was land taken out of APAH's side of the street. That is not the case and staff's recommendation is generally acceptable to APAH. With respect to Key Boulevard, there was a concern about an additional 6-foot wide landscape area adjacent to the building's front facade. It was included because from an urban design standpoint, it's advisable to have some buffer space. There are a

number of things that you could do in that space to avoid having blank walls or looking directly into the parking garage, which may be partially exposed. APAH had a concern that they could see the value in having that landscaped buffer area, but perhaps it should not be so wide. Staff agreed to review it again.

Commissioner Hughes asked if the park tot-lot to be included within the APAH site is part of the comprehensive park planning process and if APAH will fund the tot lot.

Mr. Tucker responded that is not his understanding. The intent is to include a tot lot facility that is part of a comprehensively planned park and APAH would not be expected to provide the entire funding; they would make the land available but the balance of the space would be determined during the comprehensive planning process.

Commissioner Hughes said the word “sale” is never used in reference to Rosslyn Highlands Park and asked if it would be considered a land lease.

Mr. Tucker responded that since the negotiations have not occurred, there is not yet a final determination. There have been internal discussion about a land lease and it would not be likely that the County would entertain a sale.

Commissioner Iacomini suggested to Ms. Aljabar that Mr. Sharkey might be a candidate to participate in a group to help plan the park.

### **Existing Conditions, Challenges & Opportunities**

Commissioner Harner asked if there was discussion during the Working Group about the impacts of the proposed 12-story building and parking garage next to the townhomes on Key Boulevard and if any of those owners participated in Working Group meetings. It appears that above-grade parking is going in next to the townhomes. Perhaps there should be design guidance to arrange the bulk of the building closer to Quinn Street.

Mr. Tucker said there was not such a conversation. No specific effort was made to reach out to the townhome owners although certain people did attend meetings from time to time. Staff looked at the height and massing of the proposed APAH development. There was quite a lot of support among Working Group members and members of the general community that the 12-story option be made a part of the plan. There are compatibility issues between those townhouses and the APAH development and the relationship between the APAH development and other surrounding development across Quinn and across Key Boulevard, but the goal of achieving affordable housing in this location was seen as important. The site is tight and changes in design due to tapering or setbacks would have an impact in terms of yield. Additional guidance that might be added to make the building smaller or reduce bulk or move it further away from the adjacent site have an impact on the design of the project. The town houses are a part of the Atrium site plan. In a way, they are units that could be built within the density maximum that could be reached on the Atrium site. They may not make sense in that location.

Commissioner Hughes asked about the intent of including the Letter of Intent in the reference to the public private partnership paragraph on page 8.

Mr. Tucker responded that staff was trying to include all of the constraints and considerations that guided the Working Group in this process. There was significant discussion among Working Group members and others in the community about the agreement. We wanted to make sure in the plan that that particular point did not get lost; it that is certainly something that has been part of the Board's consideration in initiating this process.

### **Concept Plan**

Commissioner Gutshall suggested the document needs to be more user friendly and match up with the Retail Plan in text and graphics.

Commissioner Cole said that the concept plan maps need to include the same language as included in the Retail Plan on the legend so that people understand what they symbolize. For example, a dashed line is inconsistent with the language of the Retail Plan. A narrative paragraph should be added that notes the Retail Plan and this Western Rosslyn Plan are consistent.

Commissioner Gutshall said the way heights are designated should match the Rosslyn Sector Plan. Mr. Tucker said there was significant discussion at the previous Plan Commission meeting about where the open spaces should be located, and what was expressed in the plan is staff's preference is for the open space to be on the corner but there is added flexibility that it could be located elsewhere. Regardless of where the building is and where the open space is, the height allowed would be the same.

Commissioner Gutshall said he had another formatting issue with the difference in the way loading and servicing is indicated in the Rosslyn Sector Plan versus how it is indicated in the WRAPS document and it should be made consistent.

Commissioner Hughes clarified that the 40-year old fire station at the corner of Wilson Boulevard will be replaced and Building 2 will be located on County property under a land lease.

Commissioner Schroll noted on page 21, Concept Plan Diagram Map 3.1, the retail in gold that wraps around the intersection and part way down the block and asked if that is where the lobby is envisioned. Mr. Tucker said the consultants created too much detail in the illustrative graphic and it will turn the corner but will not pick up in the middle of the building

Commissioner Cole asked if the language of the plan suggests that both buildings in the mixed use area could be office, residential or something else. He further asked if the notion that one would be residential and other office has been abandoned. Mr. Tucker said that the plan is intended to be more general.

Commissioner Cole asked if there was something lost in being more general because it suggests that the County is indifferent to the land uses. The space that has been granted to the applicant reflects uses and are more specific. If we want to assume that the floor plates in the concept plan are the ones that will constrain or provide opportunities to the private partner of the County, should we be more specific in terms of the specific uses that will be in these buildings? For example, if the developer wished to change the office building to a residential building, would that result in the County having more land for the park? And should that be established in the plan? Or would they continue to be able to have same amount of land even if the floorplate for

the building changed? This outlines the parameters of the agreement with the applicant, and it also governs the review of the applicant's proposals at site plan.

Mr. Tucker responded that there has been more detail discussed in this plan we would normally have in a planning process. Normally what you would see here are two buildable areas. We know that one is likely to be a residential building and one is likely to be an office, but the plan states that there is mixed use development within these two buildable areas. When an applicant comes forward, they have the ability to request either office, residential, hotel.

Commissioner Cole said this, of course, is the case when an applicant owns the land. In this case, the County is in a position to constrain the uses on the land because the County owns the land. Does the County have an interest in establishing constraints on the use of its land to create a better environment?

Mr. Tucker responded there is a County interest in remaining flexibility. There has been significant discussion about whether an office building could be developed on this site and in the future if nothing had happened, the applicant could come forward with another proposal and this plan should incorporate that possibility. There is an understanding that the office building could become residential.

Commissioner Forinash asked Stan Karson, RAFOM President, to offer comment on behalf of his neighborhood.

Stan Karson said his neighborhood feels strongly about maximizing open space because it is very important here due to the number of people that use it.

Commissioner Forinash asked Steve Campbell if he had any comments on behalf of the Urban Forestry Commission officially or had comments himself.

Mr. Campbell said that in the Rosslyn Sector Plan there is language that says new development should provide 600 to 1000 cubic feet per street tree and use alternative techniques such as structural cells and continuous soil panels where feasible and suggests this plan use consistent language in this regard.

Mr. Campbell noted that it is unclear from the handout that APAH presented if the entire 9,000 square foot park is available to the public or only a portion of it. He expressed appreciation for all of the support planning commissioners have given to various parts of the plan in terms of tree canopy, groves of trees, and paths to the extent possible in a County park. There has been a lot of disappointment in parts of the community about the result in the plan. Going forward there is some reason for hope with all of the space that will be available at the APAH site.

Commissioner Harner asked Mr. Campbell if he or the Urban Forestry Commission had a position on plantings on top of structures versus not on top of structures. Is one as good as the other or is there a preference one way or another? Is there a real qualitative or difference in terms of water infiltration or retention or the sort of stormwater benefits of trees?

Mr. Campbell said it is simply a matter of added costs. The garage would need a deeper soil depth or there would have to be one less level; as long as there is 30 inches of soil, that's all it takes to grow a tree and a soil volume of 600 to 1000 cubic feet. The forester for the state of

Virginia has said if you can build a building on top of a garage, you should be able to design a garage to support a large tree. In the future, if there has to be significant maintenance to the underground structure there, this might significantly limit the lifespan of a tree.

The WRAPS plan mentions the depth of the soil to assure the viability and success of trees, but there is not mention of the quality of the soil. You really need high quality soil. This is in an area where originally the plan was hoping for 25 percent tree canopy coverage, as it is a transition between commercial and residential property. He does not see that happening and planting trees effectively and well will help approach as close as we can to that 25 percent.

Commissioner Forinash asked what the public availability of the APAH park space is intended to be once it is built and whether the entire 9,000 square feet would have a public access easement.

Mr. Tucker said there would be a public access easement across the whole tot lot and regardless of what portion is built by APAH and what portion is built by the county, there would be an ability for the public to use the entire space.

Commissioner Cole said the term “tot lot” suggests it is focused on 1- to 3-year olds; it may be helpful to refer to it simply as a “playground.”

Mr. Tucker said the plan suggests that it is a children's playground, understanding that there's a range of ages that could be served.

### **Building Height**

Commissioner Cole said with respect to the Heights Map, Map 3.4, there is an asterisk on the school property; it says up to a 175 feet and the meaning of the asterisk is to be determined. He understands the height of the school is to be determined, but the height shows maximum allowable heights, not actual heights to be built. The private developer of the mixed use property could decide ultimately to come in at lower heights than 270 and 240 feet allowed under the plan. APAH could decide to come in at a 129 feet or 128 feet. Yet for the School Development area, there is no number only an asterisk. Why isn't the 175 feet indicated and is the intent is to allow to build up to 175. Second, on the school development area, is the intent to allow the 7-11 to be allowed to go to whatever height the school is ultimately allowed to go to?

Mr. Tucker said staff would need to discuss the 7-11 site. On the school site by putting the asterisk there, we were saying the school process will play out and that will be determined in that process.

Commissioner Cole said it sounds like staff is concerned about the optics of how the public will react. We should be careful in describing that this map sets limits and not actual heights. It is quite clear from the school planning process to date that there is no intent to build a school up to 175 feet. It creates confusion for people to figure out what the asterisk really means.

Commissioner Schroll said it would be helpful if the Heights Map was shown in the Heights Plan

### **Land Use**

Commissioner Gutshall asked if the lines in front of the school and the private development area were consistent with the Retail Plan.

Commissioner Forinash said that, during the discussion on the Retail Plan, staff reported that the blue label on Wilson Boulevard in front of the school development site was an error and that it should be white/blank.

Commissioner Gutshall asked about the eastern boundary between the Penzance site and the adjacent property running along the driveway for the fire station. There's just one blue line and not two blue lines.

Mr. Tucker responded that on the eastern boundary or across the eastern boundary of the WRAPS area, the Rosslyn plan calls for a pedestrian way, which may have a designation for it.

Commissioner Gutshall asked if it is intentional that there is green on both sides of 18<sup>th</sup> Street as it comes up and stops right as you hit the WRAPS area at that potential pedestrian way but there is no designation there. He asked if it would change anything if the school ended up on 18<sup>th</sup> Street.

Mr. Tucker said it is the intention and there is dotted green along the park side of the potential office building. Staff recognizes that as a less-optimal retail location and showing it optional. It is a divergence to the convention of the retail plan and staff will look at it. A change at the school would not change anything because regardless of where the school building is located, there will be school uses throughout that site; school properties are specifically prohibited from having retail activities or leased retail space.

Commissioner Harner asked about the type of grocery store intended. Mr. Tucker said full-size was discussed. Commissioner Harner expressed concern about the possibility of grocery store loading operation on 18<sup>th</sup> Street because it would impact the residents of the Atrium and would have a negative impact on the vision for 18th Street. The best location at this site would be on the alley separating this site from the project to the east for grocery store loading, however that is not possible due to the fire station.

Commissioner Hughes asked if there was any reason why staff is not proposing the 9,000 square foot park area as being changed in the GLUP to a semi-public area within the site. Mr. Tucker said that there are often public spaces or park spaces that are developed as part of site plans. They are called out where there should be open space, there is a triangle on the GLUP, and the GLUP is amended to have the designation that is appropriate for that level of density and amend the zoning when the site plan comes forward.

Commissioner Harner sought unanimous consent that the Planning Commission recommend that the WRAPS Plan designate any loading for a full size grocery store to be located internally to the site, or below grade and not on 18<sup>th</sup> Street or the new connecting street. There was no objection.

Commissioner Hughes sought unanimous consent that the 9,000 square feet that is intended to be a park within the APAH park be zoned within the GLUP as semi-public. Commissioner Cole objected.

Commissioner Hughes made a motion that the 9,000 square feet that is intended to be a park within the APAH park be zoned within the GLUP as semi-public. There was no second and the motion failed for lack of a second.

### **Transportation**

Commissioner Cole referred to the staff presentation and said that the small map in the top right hand corner of each cross section shows the cross section being illustrated in different places. In the report there's a single key map that shows it in a single place. As he read the report, he assumed that location 8A and location 8B are alternatives to one another, not for different sections. Mr. Tucker said they should be in the same location and there is an editing error.

Commissioner Cole said that Planning Commission would like to express a preference between 8A and 8B. Mr. Tucker said that was fine; the intent is that both 8A and 8B will stay in the plan and be considered as part of site plan review as to the appropriateness of one or the other.

Commissioner Gutshall said on page 29 in the plan there's a "Note 2" that says additional cross section width in 8B is to be achieved by reducing the tree planting areas and the building area to the east of the road alignment and no reduction of park space. He is wondering if the difference between 8A and 8B is only shifting the build-to line that's on the east or that means the build-to line that's on the left, on the west side, is fixed. But it's fixed to where? How is that build-to line located? Is it staff's intent then if both 8A and 8B remain in the document that when a site plan application comes forward that the site plan would have two options, 8A and 8B in the site plan?

Mr. Tucker said this is a concept plan and not engineering drawing. What staff has expressed in words and are reinforced by the graphics is that there are two alternative cross sections and there's no impact to the east side of the road or the west side of the road. The build-to line stays in the same location on the west side of the road, and there's a slight change to the right side of the road. Staff would fully expect that the applicant would choose one or the other and be prepared to discuss why they've made that choice, and alternatively the community or commissions can discuss why the other choice may be preferable.

Commissioner Forinash noted that the planting strip in alternative 8B is down to four and a half feet on one side and asked if that is the minimum that the County arborist and the Urban Forestry Commission and our streetscape standards allow and how narrow a continuous tree planting pit could be and if the presence of the parking lane on one side is why one planting strip in that alternative is an extra foot wide.

Mr. Tucker said that 60 square feet is a minimum and it is possible to have different, varying dimensions. There is not a width minimum expressed in the streetscape standards although in practice, four feet would likely be a minimum. Space was taken out of the west side of the road with the understanding that there is parking on the other side of the road.

Commissioner Harner said he doesn't understand the advantage of the no parking option.

Mr. Tucker said that the Working Group discussion evolved from why have a street at all to how to minimize the street. There's a desire to have this as an option with parking on at least one side

for pick up and drop off, but when we go to the extent of parking on both sides, then this becomes a full street which was never the intent and not the desire of those who were a part of the discussion in the Working Group setting.

Commissioner Harner sought unanimous consent that cross section 8B is preferable to cross section 8A as guidance for future development in the plan. Commissioner Cole objected. Commissioner Harner did not make a motion.

Commissioner Cole, referring to 18<sup>th</sup> Street North, said the first section shown is in the Rosslyn Sector Plan area and shows a cross section of 62.5 feet. And with two parking lanes and two travel lanes and sidewalk widths between 13 and 14.5 feet. Immediately to the west, cross section number 7, is the section of 18th Street east of the new street up to the Rosslyn Sector Plan area. This shows a cross section of 76 feet; as soon as it hits the Rosslyn Sector Plan border it shrinks by 14 feet to 62.5 feet. Commissioner Cole was trying to understand how this transition occurs, when 14 feet of right of way are instantaneously lost. Going west again, 18<sup>th</sup> Street North goes from 76 feet to 60 or 66 feet depending on which of the two cross sections is used; 10 feet is lost between these cross sections. This is important because 18th Street is essential to Rosslyn. In response to the RTA draft, it was the Planning Commission's recommendation that the 18th Street corridor from Oak Street to Quinn Street be uniform. And this is anything but uniform.

Mr. Viola responded that staff is trying to have a curb to curb dimension of 36 feet with two travel lanes, two parking lanes. The width of the parking lane by the school might be slightly wider due to busses. That would be a consistent curb to curb width for 18th Street from Oak Street all the way to Quinn Street. The section today is about that width. It continues through the back of the Atrium going west along 18th Street until the APAH and APS properties and then there is a narrow 25-foot stretch of road today. The idea is this would be improved so it is continuous 36 feet curb to curb and the difference is largely in the sidewalk sections. There are currently sidewalks of about 14 to 16 feet on either side on the east side of the 18th Street block. Those are continuing but making a wider one along 18th Street in front of the school and somewhat narrower on the APAH side.

Commissioner Cole said he was confused because the two options for the easternmost section shows a 29 feet section and the other shows a 39 foot section of the street and the difference is one of them has the bus parking lane. During PFRC discussion, he noted, it was indicated the buses would be parked along 18th Street North, which is the location of the principle drop-off. If that is the case, why do we have one option with bus drop off and one without? Mr. Tucker clarified the buses will be on 18th Street.

Commissioner Cole said there is an option without a bus drop-off. Mr. Tucker said the PFRC and BLPC APS considerations are ongoing. Commissioner Cole asked where else would the buses be parked and if there is no real alternative to accommodate the number of buses required to be parked there, let's define the public realm correctly.

Mr. Viola said east of the new street there will not be bus parking along 18th Street and there should be a 7-foot wide parking lane. West of the new street is assumed to be used as bus parking area so that should be wider than 7 feet.

Commissioner Cole said two options are both marked as east of Quinn Street on page 50. Mr. Viola said Option 1 is the appropriate section.

Commissioner Cole said if the only difference is that in the part of 18th Street closer to Oak Street there is wider sidewalks, just as long as the street section is the same. This is a 39-foot street section shrinking down by three feet to 36 feet on the east side of the new street. When we calculate that for the part between Oak Street and the end of the Rosslyn Sector Plan it shows 35 feet and it is a foot different. It should be uniform the whole way.

Commissioner Harner sought unanimous consent that the Planning Commission recommend that Option 1 is the appropriate street section for 18th Street. Commissioner Gutshall objected.

Commissioner Hughes made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend that Option 1 is the appropriate streetscape for 18th Street North. The motion failed for lack of a second.

Commissioner Gutshall said the Plan still has the option that the school could be on the 18th Street side and the plan needs to be internally consistent.

Commissioner Cole said the bus lanes have always been on 18th Street regardless of the frontage of the school and staff has said it would be addressed.

Commissioner Cole made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board establish as design guidelines for the portion of the 18th Street Corridor located within the study area any design guidelines in the Rosslyn Sector Plan or subsequently developed specific to the 18th Street Corridor. Otherwise, establish as design guidelines for this street section the Rosslyn Sector Plan streetscape standards. Commissioner Gutshall seconded the motion.

Commissioner Cole said the Rosslyn Sector Plan adopted design guidelines for all of 18th Street and this says apply them to 18th Street section in this plan. If that does not happen, then apply the general Rosslyn streetscape standards to this section.

The Planning Commission voted unanimously 9-0 to support the motion with Commissioners Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Gutshall, Brown, Hughes, and Schroll in support.

Commissioner Cole made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board amend the plan to include as the street cross-section for the new street that bisects the WRCRD between Wilson Boulevard and 18th Street North, Location #8B as shown on page 29 of the proposed area plan. Commissioner Harner seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted unanimously 9-0 to support the motion with Commissioners Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Gutshall, Brown, Hughes, and Schroll in support.

### **Open Space**

Commissioner Schroll asked how much reduction in park space would happen due to the shy zone indicated in Map 3.6. Mr. Tucker responded they do not anticipate any reduction in the park space.

Commissioner Gutshall asked, given APS is moving forward with decisions on the school's open space, where in the process is the opportunity for public participation in the park planning process. Mr. Tucker responded that the BLPC and PFRC processes will play out and the coordination comes in with understanding what APS will do with their property and then work with that during the public planning process.

Commissioner Schroll said the notes about the dimensions of the Ultimate field that could be achieved underneath the second option for rotating the building in the illustrative concept plan on page 22 should be included in the illustration.

Commissioner Cole said that the community has an idea that County and APS processes will be integrated however the APS process is moving forward and may constrain the park planning process and there should be a process that finds the best integrated option across all three properties.

Ms. Aljabar responded that the APS design process for schematic design will be running concurrently with the park planning process. Commissioner Cole said he does not believe decisions about the nature of the field will be left open by the School Board and that directly impacts the ability to have a coordinated planning process and an optimal distribution of functions and relationships in the plan.

Mr. Scott Prisco, APS, said the elevation of the field will change during schematic design and they intend to work collaboratively with the community and the County to find the best option for integrating the public spaces on this site.

Commissioner Hughes made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend the County Board modify recommendation six to say, "work with APAH and the County to develop" and "shall be available to the general public" instead of should. Commissioner Forinash seconded the motion.

Commissioner Forinash said that is implicit in the document. Commissioner Hughes withdrew his motion.

Commissioner Iacomini sought unanimous consent that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that the continuous soil panels and soil volume recommendation in the Realize Rosslyn plan be referenced in the WRAPs study documents as the standard. There was no objection.

### **Urban Design**

Commissioner Cole asked about last bullet in the first column discussing grade transitions along the sidewalk. Mr. Tucker said that with some of the grade changes involved, there might be blank walls without guidance to provide some activation of the building facade.

Commissioner Cole asked about the first bullet in the second column which talks about porches, stoops, and landscaped areas for residential access to the street and stated that his expectation is

that the residential structure will not have that type of access. Mr. Tucker said that is still to be determined.

Commissioner Cole made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend that County Board that the plan:

1. Indicate that façade heights along street edges within the Mixed Use Development Area should be consistent with façade heights established for the Rosslyn Sector Plan.
2. Set 15-foot setbacks as the standard for towers in relation to the bases of buildings within the Mixed Use Development Area.
3. Provide curbside space for short-term deliveries, pickups and drop-offs in the Mixed Use Development Area on the new street that bisects the WRCRD between Wilson Boulevard and 18th Street North.
4. Add an item that applies the street and “Neighborhood scale transition” design guidelines from the Rosslyn Sector to the Mixed Use Development Area

Commissioner Gutshall seconded the motion.

Commissioner Cole explained this says the design guidelines for Rosslyn should apply to the buildings in the Mixed Use Development area. Commissioner Gutshall asked if there is a need to be more explicit that this is on 18th Street and Wilson Boulevard.

Commissioner Cole added an additional item to his motion to say, “Locate all service and loading entrances for the residential building in the Mixed Use Development Area on the new street that bisects the WRCRD between Wilson Boulevard and 18th Street North.”

The Planning Commission voted 8-0-1 to support the motion with Commissioners Ciotti, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Gutshall, Brown, Hughes, and Schroll in support and Commission Iacomini abstaining.

Commissioner Harner made a motion that the Planning Commissioner recommend the County Board require staff to develop design guidelines especially for the western most mixed use development parcel to create unified urban design guidelines as parts of the open space planning process or immediately thereafter.

The Planning Commission voted unanimously to support the motion 9-0 with Commissioners Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Gutshall, Brown, Hughes, and Schroll in support.

### **Environment**

Commissioner Cole asked about the elimination of the term “carbon neutral” and addition of the idea that this is related to Arlington County's economic competitiveness. Mr. Tucker responded that by maximizing our efficiency and sensitivity to the environment we’re placing ourselves competitively compared to other jurisdictions.

Commissioner Cole made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that they

1. Recognize School Board authority for school design; delete the sentence that requires school buildings to be net-zero ready.
2. Establish achieving LEED Gold as the standard for the WRCRD.

Commissioner Gutshall seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission supported the motion 6-1-2 with Commissioners Forinash, Cole, Harner, Gutshall, Hughes, and Schroll in support, Commissioner Ciotti opposed, and Commissioners Iacomini and Brown abstaining.

### **Implementation**

Commissioner Gutshall asked if there were parking under the entire Mixed Use development area, if the entire site would be excavated at the same time, what happens to the existing fire station site in the interim phase and how Penzance will execute their option on this site. Mr. Tucker said that it was likely to take two phases because the fire station needs to remain, but the phasing is undetermined. The fire station would be demolished unless there was a temporary use for it. It would likely be a cleared site for a period of time. Mr. Tucker responded it could be a site plan or a PDSP. Commissioner Gutshall suggested that staff should add text to allay concerns in the community about the interim condition and use of the existing fire station site until it is developed.

### **Action Plan**

Commissioner Gutshall made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board to add a short term item to the action plan to update county tree planting design standards to ensure the viability and longevity of mature canopy trees over parking and other building structures considering soil panel composition drainage and serviceability of the underlying building structure. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion.

Commissioner Iacomini clarified that this adds a study to update documents that would be applied Countywide and so the study is outside the scope of this particular plan and its defined area. Commissioner Iacomini said this advice is inappropriate for this matrix because this matrix outlines recommendations specific to this plan. A standalone motion would make more sense. Commissioners Ciotti stated such a study belongs in a larger conversation with Urban Forestry or in a planning session with the County.

Commissioner Gutshall said it is specific to this plan and the timing is important. The information likely exists and the action item is an effort to pull it together to create a new subsection of the relevant document, which needs to happen before moving forward with construction of these structures. While the standards may be applicable throughout the County and the best way to make sure they are available for implementation of the WRAP is to have this action item in the WRAP Action Plan.

The Planning Commissioner voted 7-2 to support the motion with Commissioners Forinash, Cole, Harner, Gutshall, Hughes, Schroll, and Brown in support and Commissioners Ciotti and Iacomini opposed.

**Main Motion**

Commissioner Cole moved that the Planning Commission recommend the County Board adopt the resolution to adopt the Western Rosslyn Area Plan attached to the County Manager's July 1, 2015 memorandum and direct the County Manager to initiate a public park planning process to develop a park and public spaces plan for Rosslyn Highland Park and other public spaces within the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District (WRCRD) with the amendments as agreed to. Commissioner Forinash seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted unanimously 9-0 to support the motion with Commissioners Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Gutshall, Brown, Hughes, and Schroll in support.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Forinash", written in a cursive style.

Arlington County Planning Commission  
Christopher J. Forinash, Chair

Good evening everybody. I am Jim Sharkey, a 12 year old who lives in the Highgate Village neighborhood, and attends Williamsburg Middle School. I've come here to speak on the issue of the sale and development of Rosslyn Highlands Park. When I learned that Rosslyn Highlands Park had a possibility of being sold off to developers, I started doing research on said topic. I found that Arlington has one quarter of the park space per capita of neighboring Fairfax county. If we take away Rosslyn Highlands Park, we take away even more valuable park space from Arlington, where parks are a valuable yet scarce commodity to start with. But Rosslyn Highlands Park is not just some statistic.

Parks are important, due to the fact that they are an important place for people to have fun, and to bond together during their free time. I have lived here in Rosslyn for 7 years now, and I grew up on this park. From hanging out on the playground, to playing basketball and catch, to sledding, to even doing science projects for school, I have used this park for all sorts of purposes. Even today I go out almost every weekend and play catch with my mother, and 10 year old brother John. I take batting practice on this park's field. I have one friend who is great at basketball, and often goes

down to the park by himself to practice his game. If you take away this park, you take all of that not just from my friends and family and me, but from all of the young children in this neighborhood who haven't had these experiences yet. That isn't to say that the young children don't and haven't enjoyed the park though. I often see people enjoying themselves, and playing on the tot lot.

One of the plans put forth for the land usage on the site is a school-controlled, permitted ultimate field. This is a plan that takes away the land from our neighborhood, and redistributes it to a select few children from all over the county who won a lottery to get into the school that would control the park. These children may come from parts of the county where they have parks in higher abundance than Rosslyn's neighborhood. The residents of Rosslyn, who need parks the most, have a high likelihood of losing their only one. With all that in mind, I'm Jim Sharkey. Please save Rosslyn Highlands Park.

Dear members of the Planning Commission:

I would like to thank all of you, along with staff and citizen participants, for your work in crafting Western Rosslyn Area Plan ("WRAPS"). A planning study of this scope is an enormous undertaking, and the dedication displayed in creating the Plan is truly commendable.

APAH believes that the Western Rosslyn Area Planning Study (WRAPS) process has yielded successful balance of the charge adopted by the County Board in July 2014. APAH has been working to redevelop the Queens Ct site since 2007. Today, Queens Court is a 39 one-bedroom unit complex on a site area of 44,727 sq. ft. only 1,500 feet from the Rosslyn Metro.

In order to maximize affordable housing at this site, APAH proposed redevelopment of the existing 39-unit apartment complex into a 12-story multifamily building with approximately 250 units and a large, 9,000 sf public park at the ground level. The WRAPS working group strongly supported the APAH Proposal. In fact, every member of the stakeholder group (except for one person who advocated for 150 units of density for APAH) expressed a preference for the larger APAH Proposal over other potential lower density development schemes.

APAH requests the support the adoption of the Plan particularly the envisioned affordable housing development because:

- reflects the preferences of the WRAPS working group,
- achieves multiple County goals for affordable housing,
- furthers the County open space goals via the inclusion of the additional 9,000 sq. feet of park area.
- APAH believes that the Western Rosslyn Area Planning Study (WRAPS) process has yielded successful balance of the charge adopted by the County Board in July 2014

While APAH is steadfastly in support of the plan, we have significant concerns about the cross-section dimensions along Key Blvd and 18<sup>th</sup> Street. These cross sections will

create streets that are in conflict with the concept plan, and will reduce APAH's site area in a way that will seriously jeopardize the ability to provide the 250 units and park space contemplated by the plan. Attached is a detailed list of recommended changes to address these issues.

In addition, APAH would like the plan to reflect needed flexibility on implementation of design guidelines due to Virginia Housing Development Authority cost constraints on affordable housing developments. APAH would also like to advocate for the expeditious implementation of the actions called for in this plan, including the parks, planning process, and zoning recommendations as to not delay the execution of the plan's vision in the needed timeline.

Again, the Plan represents a rare opportunity to create a great place while advancing a number of the County's goals. We urge you to embrace this opportunity to support affordable housing for generations to come.

We appreciate your time and consideration of this matter.



Nina Janopaul

CEO/President

## APAH COMMENTS TO WRAPS DRAFT PLAN, June 2, 2015 DRAFT

- Proposed Street Section modifications for both 18<sup>th</sup> and Key make it questionable that APAH will have the site area to be able to provide the 250 units and 9,000 sq ft park space contemplated by the plan. We recommend:
  - o Proposed street section for Key Boulevard calls for a total 18' setback. The current design for interior 6' planting strip, 6-8' sidewalk, and a second 4-6' exterior planting strip is excessive along Key Blvd. We recommend 15' to the build-to-line. (page 49)
  - o Clarify the relationship of these street sections to the current centerline of 18th Street. The existing condition appears to indicate that considerable land will be taken from the APAH site to widen the street. Any additional width should come from the School site and not from the APAH site since it is for the School. Also, there are parking lanes on Quinn and Key Blvd, therefore, parking on 18<sup>th</sup> should not be required. (page 50)
- Recognize APAH's design, construction and cost constraints in application of the general list of architectural requirements/design guidelines (p. 32).
- Exempt the APAH site from the above-ground parking restrictions, or provide additional flexibility in screening types, particularly when significant grade changes are at play (p. 33).
- Clarify that the park on the APAH site will not be required to go through the same park planning process as the other open spaces, and that this space will include a tot lot open to the public but also serving the residential building, regardless of the eventual function of the other park spaces (p. 39).
- Add that all processes related to the APAH site require a flexible timeframe, given reliance on County funding and the LIHTC schedule (Action Plan Section).



ARLINGTON COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 900, Arlington, VA 22201  
TEL 703-228-3689 FAX 703-228-7548 [www.arlingtonva.us](http://www.arlingtonva.us)

July 8, 2015

Ms. Mary Hynes, Chair  
Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: West Rosslyn Area Plan Study

Dear Chair Hynes,

I am writing to express the view of the Transportation Commission regarding the proposed West Rosslyn Area Plan. The Commission heard this item at its meeting on Monday June 29th. The Commission heard a presentation from staff. There were no public speakers.

**The Transportation Commission, by a vote of 9-0 recommends adopting the West Rosslyn Area Plan with the following modifications:**

- **On map 3.5, show the loading and parking entrances for both mixed use development buildings on the new street rather than 18<sup>th</sup> Street.**
- **On page 32 under the heading "Service / Parking / Streetscape" strike "18<sup>th</sup> St" from the list of secondary streets that loading and parking access should be located on.**

Commission conversation centered on the location of loading for the mixed use buildings. The commission expressed that with the vision for 18<sup>th</sup> Street as a long pedestrian promenade through Rosslyn, 18<sup>th</sup> Street is not a preferred location for parking and loading.

While practical concerns may require that parking and/or loading for a mixed use building occur there, it is important that as a planning document, the WRAPS plan express the preferred location. If the practical engineering concerns of trying to fit a grocery store on-site ultimately mean that loading or parking will need to be on 18<sup>th</sup>, Site Plan Review is the appropriate venue for that conversation.

Present and voting at the meeting were Commissioners Weir, Perkins, Price, Slatt, Schroll, Dickson, Gutshall, Hubbard and Gearhart.

I am happy to answer any questions at 571-482-8454 or [chris@dodgersden.com](mailto:chris@dodgersden.com).

Best,

Christopher Slatt,  
Chairman