



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

ARLINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

2100 CLARENDON BOULEVARD, SUITE 700
ARLINGTON, VA 22201
(703)228-3525 • www.arlingtonva.us



CHRISTOPHER FORINASH
CHAIR

NANCY IACOMINI
VICE-CHAIR

MICHELLE STAHLHUT
COORDINATOR

GIZELE C. JOHNSON
CLERK

September 10, 2015

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

SUBJECT: 7. ADOPTION of the Courthouse Sector Plan addendum

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Planning Commission recommends to the County Board that it adopt the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum as proposed by the staff in its September 1 draft with the following amendments:

- 1. Include substantially more specificity in the plan with regard to building heights, streetscape dimensions, and other design elements so that the community's expectations for buildout of the plan are clear and the developer's expectations for the limitations that they face are also clear.**
- 2. Identify specific sites in the study area where buildings are expected to achieve architectural distinction and that architectural distinction is not be a basis for bonus density.**
- 3. Identify maximum allowable heights achievable without bonus density as well as maximum allowable heights achievable with bonus density.**
- 4. Clarify the relationship between the Retail Action Plan and the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum and especially with respect to which standards apply in which circumstances.**
- 5. Limit 15th St North to pedestrians, bicycles, and transit. If the County Board decides motor vehicles shall be allowed to use 15th Street North, design 15th Street North and, in addition, the segment of 14th Street North adjoining the civic building in a way that constrains motor vehicle speeds to a very modest level.**
- 6. Amend the Priority Concept Plan recommendations by removing the sentence related to parking from the proposed recommendation regarding the 21st century civic square and create a new first recommendation on parking that reflects the foundational nature of parking in the plan.**

P.C. #50.

7. **Amend Figure 2.16 to remove the underground pedestrian promenade and the part of Section 2.16 dealing with the north/south underground promenade be deleted from the report.**
8. **Direct staff to identify the land use tools that might be employed to increase density on the Verizon Plaza site.**
9. **Amend the Plan to require the design of the square be principally at grade.**
10. **Amend Section 5.4 to recommend preservation be considered only for the First Federal Savings and Loan and Investment buildings by the Planning Commission and its Site Plan Review Committee and the Historic Affairs Landmarks Review Board during consideration of a final site plan for the Landmark Block site plan application.**
11. **Include a priority list of community benefits that could result from redevelopment of privately owned parcels in the study area.**
12. **Prioritize parking, open space, and cultural resource studies in the implementation plan and direct staff to identify resources needed to conduct and finish the studies within two years following adoption of the plan.**
13. **On page 38, add the following sentence to the end of Section 4.3.6, “If the theater is developed as a unified site with the Court Square west site, the northern entrance to the combined site be designed with a prominent civic entrance.**
14. **On page 27, after 2.11, add a new Section 2.18, North and South Square, “In the future design of the north and south square allow for pedestrian paths both east and west across the square as well as on the diagonal.”**

BACKGROUND

The Planning Commission heard these items at its September 10, 2015 public hearing. Kris Krider, Urban Design and Research Supervisor, Department of Community Planning, Housing, and Development (CPHD) Planning gave a presentation on the background of the Courthouse Study. Additional staff present included Steve Cover, Director, CPHD, Margaret Rhodes, CPHD-Planning, and Andrew D’Huyvetter, CPHD-Planning.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS

Janet Kopenhaver, Chair, Arts Commission said she is excited about the opportunity to include a cultural center in the addendum. It is an excellent chance to promote Arlington as a community known for creativity, innovation, and economic responsibility. Our goal for the Courthouse area is to make it a lively area that functions during the day and attracts visitors at night and on weekends. Performances from local arts groups are adventurous, innovative, entertaining, and risk-taking. Given the fact of how much economic and cultural impact these performances have

on our community, it would send a powerful message to spotlight and support an indoor venue suitable for theatrical, dance, and music performances. The Arlington Arts Commission is gratified that the concept plan in the draft Courthouse Square Sector Plan Addendum includes such important community assets as public art, outdoor galleries, and performance spaces. We are concerned about the tentativeness of the statement regarding cultural facilities. The commission strongly believe the cultural facilities should consist of a community theater complex providing much needed flexible space for Arlington's burgeoning performance groups. It's important that these facilities be considered as an integral part of the plan. The Arts will bring a vital ingredient to Courthouse by contributing to Arlington's civic identity, augmenting the creative economy we seek to attract, and injecting vitality into the 18-hour square concept. Proximity to the Metro stop means a regional presence and easy access to the metro corridor. Arlington currently lacks indoor performance space for arts groups. These groups add to the richness of the community and enhance the quality of life in Arlington. The inclusion of an appropriate sized theatre complex at Courthouse Square is necessary for the County's current and future vitality.

June O'Connell, who has owned a condominium in Courthouse since 1999, urged the Planning Commission to recommend the Board not adopt this plan but only accept it. It has pages of implementation and it is unclear what the processes will be for the critical parts of the plan, and it should not be adopted until those are known. If a developer wants additional density, community benefits are required. They need to pay for their community benefits and we are guaranteeing that they can build as tall as they want without reimbursing the community. It is unclear how far down they can build, and to park a building, they need to compensate the community for parking. She would like to see a plaza. The developers at Strayer and the Landmark block are not subject to community benefits in this plan. Accept the Plan, but do not adopt it.

REVIEW PROCESS

Commission Schroll reported the Transportation Commission discussed streetscape, circulation, underground circulation, and supported the modification on 15th Street.

Commissioner Iacomini reported the Courthouse Working Group put a lot of time and discussion into the 18 meetings that began in December 2013. The Working Group did not get everything they desired, but there was good dialogue with staff throughout the process. She said there needs to be more of a legislative history to memorialize the discussions during Working Group meetings between staff and citizens so that it's clear how the vision for Courthouse was developed and what ideas were discussed to achieve the vision. On circulation, the Working Group is still interested in North 15th Street being transit only although staff does not agree. A transit and pedestrian only street is an opportunity to enlarge the public realm and essentially increase the open space. The chart on page 51 supports wide sidewalks. The addition of more connectivity across the square was discussed. In design of the open space, there needs to be respect of pedestrian east west pathways as well as diagonal routes across the Square. The future design will also need to balance hardscape and softscape. There should be a more pronounced civic entrance at the AMC site, particularly if it is combined with Court Square West. The Working Group coalesced around that site as a civic building because it would have an entrance to it facing the new metro entrance.

A recurring theme regarding height of buildings focused on the needs of the Square and when do shadows occur. Staff was still getting comments from other stakeholders when the Working Group last met and had shared some of the comments. The Working Group is pleased to see staff has stayed with the heights from the draft RTA plan and not incorporated height changes. Stepbacks are important for the built environment in Courthouse so as to provide a better pedestrian scale and respect the public realm. There was discussion at the last Working Group meeting about them being eliminated, but in this draft they are only reduced.

The Working Group discussed facade preservation as a placemaking element rather than a cultural resource and as something that gives authenticity to the place. Finally, on implementation, future studies, such as parking and cultural needs, are very important for to the long range realization of the proposed plan..

Commissioner Cole reported on the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) review and referred to his written report. He said there were a number of issues that were left unaddressed in the final staff draft and proposed a discussion focused on Buildings and Circulation, Open Space, and Cultural Resources, following by Priority Concepts, Guiding Principles, Sustainability, Implementation, and Other such as Community Benefits and the Performance Venue. Commissioner Schroll added street cross-section to the discussion on Circulation.

PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION

Commissioner Cole made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that it adopt the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum as proposed by the staff in its September 1 draft. Commissioner Hughes seconded the motion.

1. Commissioner Cole moved the Planning Commission recommend to County Board that it include substantially more specificity in the plan with regard to building heights, streetscape dimensions, and other design elements so that the community's expectations for buildout of the plan are clear and the developer's expectations for the limitations that they face are also clear. Commissioner Siegel seconded the motion to amend.

Commissioner Siegel supports it and believes something can be crafted to allow for pursuit of extraordinary buildings but gives the community certainty. We should remember that we are looking for a streamlined process for site plan and the flexibility we also want will add time and difficulty in solving issues during the SPRC review.

Commissioner Gutshall said the RTA letter noted support for the proposed heights in the June 12, 2015 draft and asked if the September draft has significantly changed.

Commissioner Cole said yes it has changed by adding the notion that bonus density can be granted above the maximums and therefore heights are imprecise.

The Planning Commission voted to support the amendment 10-0-1 with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Sockwell, Schroll, Harner, Hughes, and Brown in support and Commissioner Gutshall abstaining.

2. Commissioner Cole moved to amend the main motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that the addendum clearly define architectural distinction and identify those buildings for which architectural distinction is an expectation, both public and private buildings, and that architectural distinction not be a basis for bonus density. Commissioner Harner seconded the motion.

Commissioner Schroll asked how architectural distinction would be defined.

Commissioner Cole said he would be willing to allow staff to seek a definition.

Commissioner Harner said in San Francisco there was a similar policy in San Francisco that was abandoned because one person's idea of distinction is another's displeasure.

Commissioner Sockwell said in other sector plans, buildings of architectural distinction have been noted and it has worked.

Commissioner Cole modified his amendment to eliminate the definition of architectural distinction and just identify those buildings where architectural distinction is expected. It suggests in a less than a precise way that the expectation for the design of a building is higher in some locations than other locations.

Commissioner Ciotti said the motion was to delink bonus density with the requirement

Commissioner Cole said part one was to define architectural distinction, part two was identify the locations where architectural distinction is expected, and part three is to decouple the bonus from architectural distinction. He is suggesting not including part one.

Commissioner Harner said architectural distinction may not just be a building but a more fine grained pattern making of distinction.

Commissioner Cole moved that the main motion be amended that the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board that it establish specific sites in the study area where buildings are expected to achieve architectural distinction and that there is no relationship between earned bonus and architectural distinction. Commissioner Siegel, the seconder, concurred.

The Planning Commission voted to support the amendment 7-3-1 with Commissioners Siegel, Cole, Sockwell, Schroll, Harner, Hughes, Gutshall Commissioners Ciotti, Iacomini, and Forinash against, and Commissioner Brown abstaining.

3. Commissioner Cole moved that the main motion be amended to recommend to the County Board that the Sector Plan Addendum identify maximum allowable heights that are achievable without bonus density as well as maximum allowable heights that are achievable with bonus density. Commissioner Schroll seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted unanimously 11-0 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Sockwell, Schroll, Harner, Hughes, Gutshall and Brown in support.

4. Commissioner Cole moved that the main motion be amended that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that the Sector Plan explicitly clarify the relationship between the Retail Action Plan and the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum and provide clarity with respect to which standards apply in which circumstances. Commissioner Siegel seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted unanimously 11-0 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Sockwell, Schroll, Harner, Hughes, Gutshall and Brown in support.

5. Commissioner Cole moved that the main motion be amended that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that the Sector Plan Addendum limit 15th St North to pedestrians, bicycles, and transit. However if the County Board decides that motor vehicles shall be allowed to use 15th Street North, that the design of 15th Street North and, in addition, the design of segments of 14th Street North adjoining the civic building be designed in a way to constrain motor vehicle speeds to a very modest level. Commissioner Sockwell seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted 9-2 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Sockwell, Schroll, Harner, and Hughes in support and Commissioners Gutshall and Brown opposed.

6. Commissioner Cole moved that the main motion be amended to add that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that it amend the Priority Concept Plan recommendations by removing the sentence related to parking from the proposed recommendation regarding the 21st century civic square and establishing a new first recommendation on parking that reflects the foundational nature of parking in the plan. Commissioner Schroll seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted 9-2 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Sockwell, Schroll, Harner, Brown and Hughes in support and Commissioners Gutshall and Ciotti opposed.

7. Commissioner Cole moved that the main motion be amended that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that it amend Figure 2.16 to remove the underground pedestrian promenade and further that the part of Section 2.16 dealing with the north/south underground promenade be deleted from the report. Commissioner Forinash seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted 7-3-1 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Forinash, Cole, Sockwell, Harner, and Hughes in support and Commissioners Iacomini, Gutshall and Brown opposed and Commissioner Schroll abstaining.

8. Commissioner Cole moved that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that it direct staff to identify the land use tools that might be employed to increase density on the Verizon Plaza site. Commissioner Iacomini seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted 9-2 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Brown, Schroll and Hughes in support and Commissioners Gutshall and Sockwell opposed.

9. Commissioner Cole moved that the Planning Commission recommend the County Board amend the plan to require the design of the square be principally at grade. Commissioner Sockwell seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted 9-2 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Sockwell, Brown, Schroll and Hughes in support and Commissioners Gutshall and Iacomini opposed.

10. Commissioner Cole moved that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that the Plan be amended in Section 5.4 to recommend preservation only be considered for the First Federal Savings and Loan and Investment buildings by the Planning Commission and its Site Plan Review Committee and the Historic Affairs Landmarks Review Board in consideration of a final site plan for the Landmark Block site plan application. Commissioner Harner seconded the motion.

Commissioner Hughes clarified that the intent is the First Investment Bank is the only facade to be considered. Commissioner Cole said it was First Federal Savings and Loan and Investment Buildings, which are on the Historic Resources Inventory.

The Planning Commission voted 9-2 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Sockwell, Gutshall, Brown, Schroll and Hughes in support and Commissioners Ciotti and Iacomini opposed.

11. Commissioner Cole moved that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that the Addendum include a priority list of community benefits that could result from redevelopment of privately owned parcels in the study area. Commissioner Siegel seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted 6-5 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Iacomini, Cole, Harner, and Hughes in support and Commissioners Sockwell, Gutshall, Forinash, Schroll, and Brown against.

12. Commissioner Cole moved that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that it prioritize parking, open space, and cultural resource studies in the implementation plan and direct staff to identify resources needed to conduct and finish the studies within 2 years following adoption of the plan. Commissioner Iacomini seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted 10-1 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Sockwell, Brown, Hughes, and Schroll in support and Commissioner Gutshall opposed.

13. Commissioner Iacomini made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that on page 38 add the following sentence to the end of Section 4.3.6, “If the theater is developed as a unified site with the Court Square west site, the northern entrance to the combined site be designed with a prominent civic entrance. Commissioner Harner seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted unanimously 11-0 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Sockwell, Gutshall, Brown, Hughes, and Schroll in support.

14. Commissioner Iacomini made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that the following language be added to Section 2.17, page 29, “A new Section 2.18 North and South Square, In the future design of the north and south square allow for pedestrian paths both east and west across the square as well as on the diagonal”.

Commissioner Harner said that was a subheading under Underground Circulation recommendations. Commissioner Iacomini withdrew her motion.

15. Commissioner Iacomini made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that the following language be added on page 27, after 2.11, “A new Section 2.18 North and South Square, In the future design of the north and south square allow for pedestrian paths both east and west across the square as well as on the diagonal”. Commissioner Harner seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted 9-1-1 to support the amendment with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Iacomini, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Sockwell, Gutshall, Hughes in support, Commissioner Schroll opposed and Commissioner Brown abstaining.

Main Motion

The Planning Commission voted to adopt the main motion as amended 10-0-1 with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Forinash, Cole, Harner, Sockwell, Gutshall, Brown, Hughes, and Schroll and Commissioner Iacomini abstaining.

Commissioner Forinash thanked Commissioner Cole for turning the discussion into a motion, and thanked staff for putting the vision together. This is among the most important things the Planning Commission will deal with.

Commissioner Harner thanked Commissioner Iacomini for her good-natured entertainment of the historic preservation discussion, and thanked staff for continuing to work on the plan. It has moved toward becoming a solid framework for moving forward.

Commissioner Siegel thanked everyone and reiterated her concern regarding the need for flexibility and specificity. She said she was convinced that it is possible to achieve both, but that the County is not yet there yet, and further work on crafting a template is needed that would allow for flexibility and at the same time reassure the community about what is planned, so that we can have constructive SPRC meetings with developers.

Commissioner Iacomini thanked everyone for the thoughtful discussion. She agreed there is a way to have buildings that are malleable and there is a way to keep a compact with the community and development community.

Respectfully Submitted,
Arlington County Planning Commission
Christopher J. Forinash

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Forinash". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

1 **Commissioner Forinash:** Let's start from the top with that discussion outline, please, with item
2 number one, "Buildings." You see the page number references, including the heights, as
3 described from page one of Commissioner Cole's memo to us, "Frontage and Streetscape."
4 Commissioner Cole.

5 **Commissioner Cole:** I have a deep concern that the plan provides--it's imprecise when it comes
6 to heights. On the one hand, under each of the buildings it indicates a maximum height. But in
7 the general statement, which is a preface to the individual building discussions, it indicates that
8 these maximum heights are not really maximum heights, they are sort of suggested heights that--
9 maximum heights on each of the buildings could be higher, with the potential exception of the
10 symbolic civic building. And that those heights we can't know, but they will respond to
11 community benefits and/or quality of architecture. I'm really concerned. And in the general
12 statement here is, I'm deeply concerned that the lack of precision in this document makes the
13 kind of social contract that I view Sector Plans as having immaterial here. In particular, no one
14 can predict, based on what's in this document, what the heights of the buildings will be, what's a
15 reasonable expectation. That is deeply concerning to me because we may say--and let me be
16 clear, I'm not sure where I stand on this myself, in terms of what the heights of the buildings
17 should be and whether we ought to provide for bonus density, because we have become addicted
18 to bonus density as a mechanism for paying for things. And we are proposing a plan here with
19 definite cost increments that are significant. And in order to meet those new costs, we have to
20 find a revenue stream to pay for it. And if bonus density gets it, we'll ignore our maximums and
21 let the buildings grow, and grow, and grow, to generate the revenue that we think we will need to
22 pay for this. That's deeply concerning to me on a philosophical level that that's the way that we
23 tend to finance things rather than saying, "This is something the community wants, the
24 community ought to pay for it." We don't do that anymore. And so this notion of maximum
25 heights--and this theme, I promise you, I will repeat it throughout the night, which is the lack of
26 definition, the lack of precision, the lack of certainty that the community will, in the end, know
27 what they will be getting if this plan is realized. That's a deeply concerning thing to me. And so
28 my question to you is, can the language of this be changed to reflect the lack of certainty so that
29 we're not saying it's maximum heights? 'Cause they're not maximum heights. They are sort of
30 suggested heights. Something like that in this document.

31 **Mr. Krider:** I think that if that's a concern that's felt by other planning commissioners that you
32 should reflect that in your motion. Staff recognized that the working group, and through the
33 community process, that there was a desire to have a maximum height, for the reasons that
34 Commissioner Iacomini outlined in terms of, you know, creating them most appropriate type of
35 environment within the open space. And with the exception of the civic building, which we did
36 get clear direction that there could be exceptions to the 50 feet in height, we have not gotten clear
37 direction about this matter. So I support your efforts to clarify what the Planning Commission's
38 position on this is.

39 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion on the matter of heights? Buildings, in fact,
40 including heights, frontage, and streetscape? Commissioner Harner.

41 **Commissioner Harner:** Thanks, Commissioner Forinash. And before I speak to that, I would
42 like to thank Mr. Krider for a really good presentation, and really liked the way that you zoomed
43 in on the key points, so I really appreciate that. On the issue of the heights, pretty sure that there
44 was a lot of shadow studies in the working group, a lot of shadow studies and other

1 considerations of height. So I have similar concerns as Commissioner Cole on the issue of
2 exceeding the maximums. And we know that the pressure is always there to do that. So I'm--
3 what has led to this language about exceeding the maximum?

4 **Mr. Krider:** I'm sorry, how--?

5 **Commissioner Harner:** So my question is what is the purpose of, given some of the studies
6 about heights, NCPC view sheds, shadows, neighborhood input, working group input, what is the
7 purpose for the exceeding the maximum height limits? And is there any guidance at all around
8 that?

9 **Mr. Krider:** We did not develop any specific criteria, except to note that it would have to be for
10 to reinforce the overall aesthetic of the plan. For example, responding to the axes, should a
11 building, such as the landmark building, which is centered on the axes, should that building have
12 an architectural feature that reinforces that alignment? That might be one criteria that would be
13 considered. So it was primarily an effort to recognize that when the time comes with a Site Plan
14 application, there's an opportunity at that point to really look at the actual design. And we wanted
15 to maintain that flexibility for that conversation when a final Site Plan application was accepted.
16 That's the primary reason.

17 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Iacomini, did you have a quick follow up to that,
18 'cause Commissioner Hughes was ahead of you?

19 **Commissioner Iacomini:** No, it's not a--it will be about this, and about buildings, and about the
20 height, but, please Commissioner Hughes.

21 **Commissioner Forinash:** Then Commissioner Iacomini.

22 **Commissioner Hughes:** Sure, I feel sort of a little obliged to speak here, only because I feel like
23 I opened Pandora's Box by suggesting a clock tower, or a bell tower at the request to advertise. I
24 just, I have a great deal of apprehension about significant architecture being of such a grand scale
25 as to warrant exceeding a social compact as building maximum heights when such great study
26 has been done to create an amazing open space. Extraordinary, which I don't know what
27 extraordinary community benefits are, maybe it's a dollar. I don't know. But I might see that. But
28 I do want to just lay that out for the commission to think about whether extraordinary
29 architecture is such a great thing in this space, where we know it's gonna be an expensive place
30 to build to exceed these social contract we've created.

31 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Iacomini.

32 **Commissioner Iacomini:** I appreciate the thoughts of my two fellow commissioners on this.
33 And Commissioner Cole's sort of philosophical point. And Mr. Krider is right. During our
34 discussions with the working group, we did talk a lot about the appropriateness of height. And as
35 Commissioner Harner rightly said, we had lots of shadow studies. We had a whole exercise with
36 moving blocks around, you know, literally, little building blocks, and figuring out, you know,
37 what might work. And very much took into consideration NCPC's comment about what you can
38 see from the vista, you know, how much of something do you wanna have popping up? Another
39 thing that we also talked a lot about was the civic presence here. How do you tell the civic
40 building? It's about the square, but it's also about being a governmental center. And I think
41 Commissioner Hughes spoke to that last time when he said, "Let's let the southern plaza building

1 be a little taller or something if it needs to be to say, "This is the civic heart." My worry about the
2 architectural features is that by having a proliferation of them in the area, you will then--we
3 might get a private building that in some ways outshines the civic building. And some
4 philosophies would say, "That's okay," right? I mean, because you have a great building. But is it
5 right here in what is supposed to be the civic heart of the place? The other thing that I worry
6 about is that it opens up that an owner of a property could decide to max out however many
7 units, or GFA if it was an office building, and just say, "Oh, I can get the rest of it by doing what
8 I will call, 'An extraordinary detail.'" And so, instead of really incorporating what they need, and
9 good architecture within a building envelope that has been carefully--and a height carefully
10 thought out because of shadows, because of NCPC, because of needing a good civic presence
11 here, we get a bigger building for no good--for simply the reason that they can do it. We all need
12 to keep in mind now that we're still talking about the addition of penthouses up to 23 feet. So
13 that's sitting on top of 210 feet. Because we no longer get to use the term "absolute." We changed
14 the term to allow for bonuses and penthouses, but we didn't change the number. So I appreciate,
15 you know, what staff has been thinking about. But I am with my fellow commissioners in this
16 trepidation.

17 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Cole.

18 **Commissioner Cole:** A few points I wanna add here. Point one is that, based on experience and
19 nothing more than that, applicants propose to build as much density, and as much height, as they
20 can. One of the immutable laws of development is square footage at the top of a building is more
21 valuable than square footage at the bottom of a building. It's pretty straightforward. And so when
22 we invite them to make a proposal that could get them up taller than they might otherwise, they'll
23 do it. That sets us up for a Site Plan review which is full of conflict, and requires a deft hand to
24 see our way through it. And I think that we ought to be mindful of that as we go forward, that the
25 review process becomes more complicated for every one of these buildings. The second thing is
26 that we have no way of judging architectural quality. We don't have any authority beyond
27 community benefits for it. And so how we would actually judge it and say, "Would this one
28 merits this much additional density for this much quality, architectural quality?" Third, in other
29 Sector Plans, and I point you to the Crystal City Sector Plan, we simply said that some buildings
30 had to be particularly high quality buildings, that they were places where architectural distinction
31 was required, that there wasn't a bonus necessarily related to it. It was required in certain
32 locations in the Crystal City Sector Plan. Finally, and this is a change in topic, but it's related to
33 heights. It has to do with density on the Verizon Plaza site. As the plan notes, there is no density
34 available in the Verizon Plaza site. The plan also notes that the Verizon Plaza site, however,
35 without density, could be a maximum of 120 feet tall. The community needs to understand where
36 that 120-foot building is gonna come from, in terms of earning the density to get there. It is
37 beholden upon staff to suggest that there are different tools available to developers, available to
38 staff, that can be used to provide the density. Density is not created out of whole cloth. So that if
39 TDRs would work, okay. If community benefits would work, if locating a performing arts center
40 in the building would work, all of these things need to be stated in the plan. To say that we'll
41 figure it out later is insufficient because the plan--we don't know what we're planning for if we
42 don't say what we're gonna do. We don't know what the guidance is from this document if we
43 don't say what we're gonna do. So the Verizon Plaza site, I'm not opposed to putting a building
44 there, but I am opposed to saying, "We might put a building there, we just don't know where the
45 densities come from." We are all smart enough to begin to make a laundry list of ways the

1 density can be achieved on that site, and we ought to be honest with the citizens about what those
2 are.

3 **Commissioner Forinash:** Did you want responses to any of those points? Thank you. For the
4 discussion on the topic of buildings, including frontage and streetscape. Commissioner Cole.

5 **Commissioner Cole:** I've been a principal advocate of complying with the streetscape standards
6 in the RB Corridor, and a primary advocate of applying the frontage types in the Retail Plan.
7 And I'd find the arguments that you've made not to do that weak. In particular, when you say that
8 the RB Corridor's Wilson Boulevard and Clarendon Boulevard are nothing more, that defines it
9 as narrowly as it can possibly be defined. As opposed to the neighborhoods, the station areas that
10 go along those two routes, and the commercial areas around them. So, I have no objection to
11 your saying the frontage types that you wanna create here are different. I do have an objection to
12 not telling us, however, what the retail expectations are. Where there are retail expectations, and
13 that the frontage types required of the developers where there are retail expectations, make it
14 clear to them what those frontage types need to be to accommodate the retail, okay? So when the
15 interior needs to be built out at 15 feet, or to have an exhaust vent that would accommodate a
16 restaurant, i.e. a red site, they need to know that that's the frontage type for that site. When it
17 comes to retail, there are multiple functions for frontages. We could have both your frontage map
18 and the retail frontage as well. If they're inconsistent, we have a problem. But they shouldn't be.
19 So I have a concern about that. In terms of streetscape, the point that I was alluding to earlier that
20 I'll make more concretely here, is that merely because 15th Street, for example, is one block off
21 of Clarendon, doesn't mean it shouldn't comply with the RB Corridor's streetscape standards. If it
22 can't, there's a sort of a rebuttable presumption here, that the policy we've adopted is a reasonable
23 policy, and that we should adhere to it unless there's a compelling reason not to. And so to
24 simply dismiss it because it's a block away is sort of to say, "Well, in Boston, Quincy Street is
25 not on it." But it's a major street that bisects Boston, and therefore we have a reasonable
26 expectation that the sidewalks there will be of a certain depth, that the kind of street furniture that
27 will be on it will be of a certain kind, and so forth, and so on. I understand the desire to make
28 Courthouse this sort of unique public place. What I don't understand is the desire to make it less
29 accommodating of the public than other places. So, where you say, "There's a minimum of 6 foot
30 clear sidewalk," I don't get it. Because I don't get why a 6-foot clear sidewalk works here, but an
31 8-foot clear sidewalk works everywhere else in the RB Corridor. Why should we make the one
32 place where we want to attract people to the public square less accommodating of the very
33 people we want to attract? And every other place in Arlington's urban core. It makes no sense to
34 me. And so, I strongly encourage you to abandon the minimums, and make precise prescriptions
35 so that people know what's expected of them. So that when two neighboring buildings build out,
36 one of 'em doesn't build out at 6 feet, and the next one builds out at 8 feet, or 10 feet. We have to
37 have a consistency from building to building. And we only get that by saying what that
38 consistent size is. So if we don't do that, we will only punish ourselves. And you know, I have no
39 question here. But I, you know, my point--I wanna make these points because these are points to
40 you to give you an opportunity to change the plan before it goes to the board. Not every point
41 that I'm making tonight I will put in a motion. But these are points I wanted to make to you in
42 hope that you will be responsive yourselves to this. If you wait for the board to respond, then the
43 lost.

44 **Commissioner Forinash:** I actually wanna pick up on the question of the retail frontages. Mr.
45 Krider, could you walk us through? You put up a map, the Retail Plan map with the Courthouse

1 frontages inserted in it. And to me, that implied that you had done what I think I heard
2 Commissioner Cole wondering about, which is sort of crosswalk, your frontage types, with
3 Retail Plan street types, or I can't remember that terminology exactly, and that there wasn't
4 incompatibility between those. Could you walk us through that, please?

5 **Mr. Krider:** Yes, could you back up to the--?

6 **Commissioner Forinash:** I knew Mr. Cover was here for a reason. It's to flip slides, right?

7 **Mr. Krider:** Yeah, the--if--also, I wanna direct to the, in the plan, the urban design guidelines,
8 the street sections are consistent as it relates to frontage type one. Which is if there is retail--

9 **Commissioner Forinash:** Which page are you looking at? You're in the plan, right?

10 **Mr. Krider:** On page 63 of the plan. I wanna also use both the diagram up there and the plan to
11 explain my point. So the design that you see on page 63 reflects--it's more specific than the
12 frontage types described in the Retail Plan. It includes such things as tree pits, and other
13 elements. But in terms of--it is also consistent. For example, the floor-to-floor height is 15 feet.
14 And what we're saying is, is that if there is retail, then as the Site Plan comes through, as that use
15 is discussed as part of that process, that's the appropriate time to reference the Retail Plan. If, for
16 example, if it is not retail, then this plan should take precedence. Furthermore, I wanna explain
17 that the 6 foot clear is not a minimum width of a sidewalk. It's the minimum width for clearance,
18 and that is to our standards today. You have to have a minimum if you've got a table out there, if
19 you've got other obstructions, you have to have a minimum of 6 feet. That is consistent
20 throughout our streetscape standards in the county. The--

21 **Commissioner Forinash:** Hang on a second. I know that the issue of retail frontage is--or sorry,
22 retail types, and frontage, and sidewalk widths are related, but let's stick to the retail part for
23 now. I saw a couple of expressions of dismay. Commissioner Cole, and then Commissioner
24 Harner.

25 **Commissioner Cole:** Mr. Krider, as I understand the retail standards that were established in the
26 Retail Action Plan, the expectation is it sets standards for the construction of the buildings, both
27 in terms of frontage types, and in some cases, in terms of interior build out space. It's not if the
28 building is gonna be--if it's gonna be a retail use, it's irrespective of whether it's gonna be a retail
29 use. A blue building has the expectation that it will be built out on the exterior. Blue frontage has
30 the expectation that this is the standard for the build out, whether it's used as retail or not. In a
31 red street frontage type, the expectation is that both the exterior and the interior will be built out
32 to a certain standard, irrespective of whether the applicant wants to rent it as a retail space. So it's
33 not the ultimate use. The standard is that the--these are construction requirements, design
34 requirements. And it's not optional based on what the applicant actually wants to do with the
35 space.

36 **Mr. Krider:** You're correct. And the drawings that we have shown, on page 63, are consistent
37 with the Retail Plan.

38 **Commissioner Cole:** They are and they aren't, because there is no discussion at any point related
39 to interior requirements.

40 **Mr. Krider:** Interior requirements in our plan, or in the Retail Plan, I'm sorry?

1 **Commissioner Cole:** There's a minimum interior height--

2 **Mr. Krider:** Of 15 feet.

3 **Commissioner Cole:** That's really as much an exterior as it is an interior. But I see no place
4 where it says there should be a venting for a restaurant. And there are red spaces in this plan.

5 **Mr. Krider:** Well, there are other restrictions that are put in place when someone chooses to put
6 a restaurant in as well.

7 **Commissioner Cole:** Again, it's not an option of what they choose to do. It's what the Retail
8 Action Plan says you must do, whether you put a restaurant in there or not.

9 **Mr. Krider:** If you put a restaurant in.

10 **Commissioner Cole:** Not if. You must do it whether you put a restaurant in or not. So that some-
11 -you or some future owner of that building may ultimately rent it as a restaurant. But if you don't
12 now, it still has to be built that way because we cannot get rooftop venting if we don't do it in the
13 initial construction. That's the logic behind the red zone in the Retail Action Plan. And so it's not
14 an, "If, therefore." It's, "You must." And this doesn't say that. This departs from the Retail Plan
15 in important ways.

16 **Mr. Krider:** Well, we also, on page 62, recommend that you see the Retail Plan for additional
17 guidance. So those are specifics in the--

18 **Commissioner Cole:** But if they're inconsistent, you argue whichever one benefits you the most.

19 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Harner.

20 **Commissioner Harner:** So, Mr. Krider, there was--the Retail Action Plan slide was just up. I
21 was actually able to look at both at the same time. But let's just make it really simple. On
22 Clarendon Boulevard, the Retail Action Plan had a red zone. Why would we not just utilize that
23 for this plan? And it would allay the concerns that Commissioner Cole has. There's a lot of
24 confusion by two different sets of standards. I mean, they're very similar. I don't understand why
25 we wouldn't just use--you know, you can almost pick these off one by one. Where the Retail
26 Action Plan is very specific, it ought to be clear that that's the standard. Where there are other
27 streets that the Retail Action Plan doesn't cover, then the Sector Plan, it would make sense that it
28 provides guidance for those areas that are outside the coverage of the Retail Action Plan. I don't
29 unders--it seems like it's needless confusion. And there's not a lot of benefit that's derived from
30 this inconsistency. And I agree with what Commissioner Cole said about the confusion in terms
31 of implementation and interior build out. And especially, we just adopted the Retail Action Plan.
32 I'd really, you know, hate to adopt another plan that was confusing relative to the plan we just
33 adopted.

34 **Commissioner Forinash:** Is there a question you wanted answered?

35 **Commissioner Harner:** My question is could you put back up the Retail Action Plan slide and
36 explain very clearly the differences between each of the red streets, and the gold streets, and any
37 other streets, where there's a difference between the Retail Action Plan and the Sector Plan, and
38 why? Just, I mean, you have to make it very simple.

1 **Mr. Krider:** Okay, if you look at your drawing up on the screen, the red areas, as impacted in
2 the plan, are the area along Clarendon Boulevard, on the south side of Clarendon Boulevard, that
3 impacts the Strayer, and the Landmark block.

4 **Commissioner Harner:** So why wouldn't we just use the Retail Action Plan for that area?
5 What's the important difference that we're--the public policy that we're achieving by having this
6 difference in standards?

7 **Mr. Krider:** I don't think there are any objections to that. But the purpose of the drawing on 62
8 was not to illustrate what the Retail Plan should do. The purpose of the drawing on page 62 is to
9 represent the frontage type and the relationship to the street. So, we don't--staff does not have
10 any objections to--on the red section, of using the Retail standards.

11 **Commissioner Harner:** So are there guidances in the frontage types that are duplicative and/or
12 divergent from the Retail Action Plan? So there's fenestration guidance, and I'm sorry, I don't
13 remember all of this off the top of my head, but ground floor fenestration, et cetera, et cetera. If
14 there is guidance here on the frontage type that supersedes the Retail Action Plan, it should just
15 say, "Note: this supersedes the Retail Action Plan." If it's consistent, it's not really necessary to
16 relist it. There should be a global statement that says, "This is consistent and follow the Retail
17 Action Plan." I mean, it seems like it'd be easy to clear up a lot of this confusion. And if there's a
18 reason why there's a divergence, then there should be a significant reason. "We are diverging
19 from the Retail Action Plan in this specific location for this specific purpose, and it is very
20 important to achieve this goal." I think those things should be clear as we move through this.

21 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Siegel.

22 **Commissioner Siegel:** I just wanted to follow on the discussion and the points that
23 Commissioners Cole and Harner made. I seem to remember, and correct me if I'm wrong, that
24 when we reviewed the Retail Action Plan, and correct me if I'm wrong, where there is an
25 inconsistency or a difference with existing Sector Plans, the Sector Plans would take priority. Is
26 that--have I got that backwards, or is that right? Or is there no such blanket statement in the--?
27 Or was that policy? I mean, I'm just, I'm say--

28 **Commissioner Cole:** My best recollection is that the Retail Action Plan takes precedence, not
29 the Sector Plan.

30 **Commissioner Siegel:** The Retail takes priority?

31 **Commissioner Cole:** That's my recollection, but I could be mistaken.

32 **Commissioner Siegel:** Okay, that, well that the--

33 **Commissioner Forinash:** Hang on. Mr. Cover.

34 **Mr. Cover:** Any type of county policy document, such as the Retail Plan, which applies to the
35 entire county, is in fact superseded by the Sector Plan. And in this case, we are consistent with
36 the retail frontage. However, there are additional criteria which we've put in place which are in
37 excess of some of the other requirements. And I wanna also point out, if the Cosi Building is
38 preserved, it does not fall within the guidelines. So what I'm essentially saying is when you go
39 through the Site Plan process, you will reference the Retail Plan. That'll be your starting point.
40 But if you're doing façade preservation, you're certainly not gonna reference the Retail Plan,

1 because that would argue to tear the building down. Further, as you look at the plan, at the
2 design, during the Site Plan review, you have the Retail Plan as one of your policy documents.
3 You also have the Sector Plan, which has more specific information that is really a derivative of
4 the site context, and of the whole Courthouse Square planning process. It's important to note that
5 we are--and I agree with Commissioner Harner's point that we should probably identify exactly
6 where we are consistent and where we are creating additional requirements. And that is duly
7 noted.

8 **Commissioner Forinash:** Every hand is now raised. I think Commissioner Gutshall had, I had
9 already recognized.

10 **Commissioner Gutshall:** Mr. Krider, I appreciate very much the last point you just made.
11 'Cause I think that that's where I am. What I'm seeing what's going on here is you guys have
12 spent a great deal of time thinking very clearly about, "What kind of a built environment do we
13 want?" And I respect that. But I feel, I sense, that it's--was done somewhat--not that you're not
14 aware of the Retail Plan. Of course you are. But that this work appears to be done almost in a
15 vacuum from that. And that that's one of the reasons why we get into these problems that we
16 have, where we have these different plans and there's confusion, and confusion begets what I
17 think Mr. Cole made the point that then, you know, applicants are just gonna go with whatever
18 suits them the best. And that leaves the community then frustrated. And, you know, we don't
19 want confusion. So what I thought I heard you just say, which is what I would very much support
20 in our motion when we get there, is that you would really tighten this up, and be very explicit,
21 that really you would build upon the Retail Plan. The Retail Plan is where we start, and then
22 anything that you wish to highlight and emphasize as an additional requirement that we think is
23 appropriate for Courthouse Square, that would be very clearly delineated. Did I understand you
24 correctly?

25 **Mr. Krider:** Yes, that's correct.

26 **Commissioner Gutshall:** Okay, thank you.

27 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Schroll, then Commissioner Hughes.

28 **Commissioner Schroll:** My comments are on a different subject. They're going back to kind of
29 where Commissioner Cole was on streetscape. So if more commissioners have comments on
30 where we are now, then they should be taken up before mine, if--I attend to a different subject.

31 **Commissioner Forinash:** So finish with retail first. Commissioner Hughes, and then
32 Commissioner Iacomini.

33 **Commissioner Hughes:** I do think it's worth noting in this discussion, you know, it's where you
34 begin to, you know, dive down the hole. And it's important to note, through Commissioner
35 Gutshall's comments in our previous conversations, about consistencies with plans. You know, if
36 you go to the Retail Action Plan, it is very clear that we wrap the corner with a restaurant façade.
37 And in this plan that we have in the Sector Plan, it would appear where the wrap goes we wanna
38 put a loading dock now. You know, that sort of detail, when we're trying to put it in a Sector
39 Plan, we just need to be clear why we're choosing to go and change sort of what we had
40 previously said was our intent in spots. And that's that 15th Street right there. And so I just
41 wanna make sure that we all realize. I think it's important that we begin with the plans that are
42 approved, and then consider how we're deviating from them.

1 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Iacomini.

2 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Thank you. I've very much appreciated the conversation among the
3 commissioners, and I--as well as Mr. Krider's response. Because I do know that in Clarendon, we
4 did have different, if I'm not mistaken, right, requirements for retail and some of the frontages.
5 And even with the adoption of the Retail Action Plan, those that were called out, some façade
6 preservation, some kind of--the rhythm of the windows, and some of the other things specific to
7 the Clarendon Sector Plan remain. It--

8 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Oh, but from what I'm hearing from staff that the way the Retail
9 Action Plan is written is that the Sector Plan, the more specific guidance takes precedent.
10 Correct?

11 **Mr. Krider:** Yes, that's correct. It's very simple in regards to--it's very much like an architectural
12 building design. There's a very clear hierarchy of what supersedes the other. If on architectural
13 plans you see certain dimensions, then you go to the specifications. The specifications supersede
14 the dimensions on the plan. And in the case like this, we have a countywide policy document, the
15 Retail Plan, which sets out very specific minimums and maximums for certain elements. As you
16 drill down to the Sector Plan, you get into more specificity. As we drill down into the actual Site
17 Plan, and the actual building design, we'll get even more specific about the materials and the
18 exact dimensions. As we get into the actual building plans, and the construction plans. So as we
19 move through the process to the implementation of the actual building, more specificity will be
20 included. And I agree that it's not clear that this is a step up, if you will, in terms of the
21 specificity about this as it relates to the Retail Plan. And that's where we concur, that we should
22 highlight that the overarching document and guidance provided by the Retail Plan is recognized,
23 and then additional requirements, additional criterias, should be noted as such. And as you get to
24 the Site Plan review process, additional criteria will be added, such as façade preservation, or if
25 there's an existing tree there that we wish to preserve that we wanna make an exception for, then
26 we have that opportunity to do it at that time.

27 **Commissioner Iacomini:** And if I could follow on to that, it might even incur--because of a
28 placement of a building, or an anticipated tenant, if it's a civic building, it may vary from
29 something in the Retail Plan. For instance if, I think we have the Court Square West, and the
30 AMC here. And it may be different, right? From what it's shown in the Retail Action Plan.
31 Because it's going to be a civic building. And so that's something that we would address in Site
32 Plan.

33 **Mr. Krider:** That's correct.

34 **Commissioner Iacomini:** And what would be helpful though, is in that crosswalk, in some of
35 the language that you may add, to be very clear, some of the hierarchical things that
36 Commissioner Cole mentioned. Such as the standard to include for a restaurant, for food use, is
37 one of those things that it's a hierarchy. It stays. And it's not something that gets taken away as
38 we get down into the specifics of the design for this particular Courthouse area. I mean, there are
39 some of those real big principles that were really hashed out in the Retail Action Plan that
40 deserve to come to Courthouse, and I think we can do that. Mr. Chairman, if I may, one slight--
41 the question's still in this. On this particular appendix D, I'm still wondering why is there a blue
42 frontage on the jail and the courthouse?

1 **Mr. Krider:** I'm sorry, what was your question?

2 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Why is there a blue frontage on the jail and the courthouse?

3 **Mr. Krider:** That is a recommendation that when AED was creating the plan, the Retail Plan,
4 this was the drawing that we worked through. And they included that. So if it's so desired--are
5 you suggesting that there should be no color?

6 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Well, I'm sort of wondering why we would have that there. I don't see
7 those buildings getting torn down and redeveloped any time soon.

8 **Mr. Krider:** But there is retail in the jail. And they may take other parts of the jail in the future,
9 on the ground floor, and make those retail. Same could be said of the courts building. So we
10 don't always know exactly how the future of our buildings will be used. And if the uses are
11 changed, or if Subway is replaced by a restaurant, or another type of facility, then they will need
12 to abide the Retail Plan.

13 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Okay, point taken.

14 **Commissioner Forinash:** For the discussion specifically on retail, Commissioner Cole.

15 **Commissioner Cole:** A few additional points, Mr. Krider, and to my colleagues as well. I think
16 we have to be mindful of the fact that these are guidelines. These are not--this not the zoning
17 ordinance. And so the example that Mr. Krider used before related to, "What about the Cosi?"
18 'Cause the Cosi won't be consistent with the frontage requirements if it's--if it is--if the façade is
19 preserved. And the fact of the matter is that the applicant would then come in to the--in the site
20 application would note that this is inconsistent with the requirements as expressed--the expected
21 compliance with the Retail Action Plan, and here's the reason for it. No one would question that,
22 if that were the case. But the going in presumption is that you will be consistent with it unless
23 there's a good reason not to be. And preserving a façade, a historic façade, is a perfectly good
24 reason not to do it. That doesn't mean that the going in expectation is not that you're gonna
25 comply with the requirements of the Retail Action Plan. But there is good reason to make those
26 exceptions, and it doesn't require a zoning ordinance amendment. The second thing is that one of
27 the confusions here is that you've suggested in your presentation that this plan is inconsistent
28 with the Retail Action Plan. And as part of the implementation plan, you would, at phase 2, I
29 think you said, make proposed recommendations for amending the Retail Action Plan. It's
30 unclear to me why you aren't making those recommendations now. The Retail Action Plan, it
31 was always my expectation that any time a Sector Plan was redone, to avoid these actual
32 inconsistencies, we'd just amend it as a matter of course in the very same way we amended
33 Master Transportation Plan every time a Sector Plan changes an element of it, we amend it. Why
34 don't we do that now instead of having this period of time between phase 1 and phase 2? When
35 we have this inconsistency, Site Plans are likely to come in, and we won't--it will create a
36 confusion that seems to me, at least, to be unnecessary.

37 **Mr. Krider:** May I respond to that?

38 **Commissioner Cole:** Sure.

39 **Mr. Krider:** It's actually a matter of unfortunate timing. The Retail Plan was not adopted until
40 we were doing the request to advertise. So we did not--as part of our request to advertise, we did
41 not include amending the Retail Plan because it had not been adopted yet. So if they had

1 happened a month or two later, if this had come forward as we put in the notice, we could have
2 done that. But because we did not have it in our original request to advertise, staff felt that it was
3 more appropriate to put it in the appendix, and then to deal with this issue along with
4 amendments to the Master Transportation Plan, and other land use controls.

5 **Commissioner Cole:** Yeah, my only advice is that the board ought to be advised that you will
6 bring amendments to this Retail Action Plan, amendments to the Master Transportation Plan, at
7 the first available opportunity, not some arbitrary date set some time in the future. That in the
8 first--the next time that there'll be an RTA related to the Master Transportation Plan, there'll be
9 the piece in there related to this project. The next time the--same thing for the Retail Action Plan.
10 One final point here, which is when you look at the frontage map that you have on page 62, the
11 light-blue colored spaces that wrap around 15th Street and up Courthouse Road, going north on
12 Courthouse Road, the Retail Action Plan shows those as gold, as well as Yule Street Promenade
13 as gold. So your frontage types, you show two frontage types where the Retail Action Plan
14 shows one frontage type. It can't be consistent with both of them, perhaps, you know. Similarly,
15 you show blue frontages, I think, for the same color--you show light blue frontages on the
16 southern part of the Courthouse Square addendum map, where the--which is gold in the northern
17 end, but is blue on the southern end on the Retail Action Plan. Again, a kind of inconsistency. So
18 they're not matching up very well. And the question is, what's the guidance that a developer's
19 supposed to take from the lack of consistent treatment between the two guidances? And if you're
20 saying, "Well, that this will precedence over the Sector Plan," then let's be absolutely crystal
21 clear in this and say that, that the Retail Action Plan will not apply on the features that are
22 addressed in this, but will apply on the features that are--you know, for example, as I said before,
23 there's this whole set of interior standards that are not addressed here. There's transparency
24 standards that are not addressed here that the Retail Action Plan does. So you need to figure out
25 what the crosswalk is between which standards apply when, and which don't. Because there's a
26 whole lot of inconsistencies, and some kind of addendum that makes it clear how we'll
27 operationalize this is really important.

28 **Mr. Krider:** Well, you know, and I appreciate that. First of all, the Retail Plan does not have a
29 frontage type, such as we've proposed, on the promenade. So once again, we're coming forward
30 with a more specific type of frontage. However, on all of these, we do have transparency
31 requirements that are consistent with, or in excess of what the Retail Plan. We also have spacing
32 between entrances which is actually more specific than what the Retail Plan calls for. And I
33 would say too that some of this conversation is really a function of the flexibility that we've built
34 into the plan. For example, on Verizon Plaza, there could be a cultural facility. Retail Plan would
35 not apply. It could be a residential building. Retail Plan would not apply. So if, and I'm sorry, I
36 keep using this, if it is a retail use, and that's determined during the Site Plan process, then the
37 Retail Plan's standards would apply.

38 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion on the topic of retail frontage?

39 **Commissioner Cole:** If I may just respond to Mr. Krider, just one moment, which is it's not the
40 flexibility in the standards, and therefore the flexibility in the plan, it's the flexibility in the
41 application of the standards. So that the standards for the Verizon Plaza, even if it has a theater
42 proposed in it, will still be the same retail frontage standards, Retail Plan, if it applies there. The
43 point is, the applicant will come in and say, "I'm not building retail." And because they're not
44 building retail, and they're building a theater where there's no chance for it to be converted,

1 they're gonna ask for an exception to the expectation that they're building--that the frontage will
2 be built out consistent with the plan, you know. It doesn't mean that our policy on that frontage
3 type will be different. It just means that they can come in and ask for an exception to it. No one's
4 saying that they have to build according to this, but they have to have a reason not to.

5 **Commissioner Forinash:** Mr. Cover.

6 **Mr. Cover:** Yeah, I'd like to jump in here just for a second because particularly with the
7 discussion about buildings, building height, and everything else, I find it amazing that we're
8 talking about venting, a little bit earlier, on a Sector Plan. The Sector Plan--the plan that's before
9 you tonight is--a plan is not law. It's not legislation. It's a guide. It's advisory to what happens in
10 the future. That's what plans are all about. And I think, you know, in particular, for this sector,
11 Courthouse Square, here's a chance for the county to do something absolutely spectacular that's
12 never been done before that will create a county focal point for every citizen in the entire county.
13 A place where special events, major events, can take place. And would be really the main draw
14 for these kinds of events for everybody around the county, and even outside the county. So in a
15 plan like this, it's extremely important that it be flexible, and not be so specific that everything is
16 locked in. Because when you go down that path, where everything is locked in, and everything's
17 super precise, you're gonna get something really very uninteresting, I think, when all is said and
18 done. You know, one of the things we've been looking at is potentially having design
19 competitions or something like that for this. If you have a plan that's so specific that, "Oh, we
20 gotta follow every item in this plan," then you're gonna have a very boring design competition.
21 What we want to do is give ourselves the greatest opportunity to create a spectacular place. And I
22 think in order to do that, you have to have a plan that's more flexible. And that means height, that
23 means relationship to the street, that means the civic building can be anything. We don't know
24 what it's going to be yet. But it could be anything. It could be some type of art form on the street
25 level, it could be a restaurant, it can be anything. We don't want to limit ourselves to a point
26 where we have a plan that's so prescriptive that we wind up with something that's really not very
27 exciting.

28 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Iacomini.

29 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Thank you, Mr. Cover. And there is no one on the working group that
30 doesn't feel your passion about making this a special place, and how this is a real opportunity.
31 However, the--and first of all, I promised myself if I ever used the word "flexibility," I'd have to
32 put a quarter on the table. And I brought--I may have a couple with me, so I'm going to try to not
33 do that. 'Cause I think that is an unfortunate word. 'Cause flexible, to me, the way we've been
34 using it lately, is starting to equal chaos. So--

35 **Mr. Cover:** That was not my intention.

36 **Commissioner Iacomini:** I didn't think it was, and you probably didn't bring a roll of quarters
37 either. So, the thing is, if we allow variances not used in the technical zoning term, but
38 differences in the height, we say 210 for the landmark, and I think I hear you saying that perhaps
39 the building comes in at 300, and but, "Oh my gosh, then we have this great opportunity that we
40 get help paid for the garage, or--" I suspect that's where you're leading. Or the building is
41 spectacular. But it casts a shadow on the square, which is our main focal point. Or again, at
42 Verizon Plaza, someone comes in--we're not very clear about what the goal for that site is, and
43 we get something that, again, overshadows the plaza. So the very thing that is our jewel, we

1 diminish by the fact that we haven't been very clear about what our expectation is for the built
2 environment. Similarly, we take away from the civic building presence of knowing, of people
3 knowing where their government lives. Now, I know that we've managed to sort of bifurcate that
4 in this plan by having, sort of, the jewel, as we've talked about it a little bit, or the interesting
5 building at the southern part of the square that's the symbol. And we probably will have more
6 back-of-house functions in a little more background building, literally designed that way. And
7 that's fine. But you know, people don't necessarily wanna come here, and the draw is they--a
8 bunch of unrelated, very large, and perhaps with a lot of interesting architectural features that
9 don't relate to each other. And again, it doesn't do much to enhance the square. So I appreciate
10 what you're saying. And I think what I'm looking for from you all is a way to talk about this. I
11 understand that absolute height is something that's not defined in the zoning code. So even
12 though we thought that that was an interesting way to do this, it probably isn't right. And
13 maximum does still allow the bonus, and of course, up to a 23 feet with penthouse. What I think,
14 you know, for myself, I would want to see what language can be added to this plan that is very
15 clear why it's 210 feet, why it's 120, that, you know, maybe it could be 130 without jeopardizing
16 anything with a 23-foot penthouse, but it can't be 200. And that is what I'm not seeing with this.
17 And I hope that that would provide some fluidity, but not chaos.

18 **Mr. Cover:** So, I guess the Planning Commission has questioned, if you allow me to do that,
19 would you, as a Planning Commission, rather have a building that's 25 feet taller than what it
20 should be that is a spectacular building, that casts a little bit more shadow on the park when it's
21 95 degrees during the summer, or would you like a lesser building that doesn't cast as much of a
22 shadow on the park?

23 **Commissioner Iacomini:** So, let me be the first to take a stab at that, because I know my fellow
24 commissioners will wanna do that too. And I apologize that we're taking a lot of time with this,
25 but Mr. Cover, this is the first time I think we've really gotten to engage you on some of this. So
26 it's very interesting, thank you. I can see 25 feet, but I think that's a discussion point. But then, it
27 actually turns into almost 50 feet, 'cause then I got a penthouse on it.

28 **Mr. Cover:** So, I ask you the same question. Okay, let's say it's 50 feet.

29 **Commissioner Iacomini:** And so where do we stop? Do we do a shadow study on all the
30 proposals, and people say, "That's where we stop because now I have--instead of just being a
31 nice shade at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, I now have light that isn't letting my expensive plantings
32 work"? How do we have that discussion?

33 **Mr. Cover:** I'm just gonna ask the same question again to the Planning Commission, so--'cause I
34 think it's kind of obvious, but--

35 **Commissioner Forinash:** We're not gonna go through and have 11 of us answer that question.
36 I'm--this is a productive discussion, but we need to move through the other items on the agenda,
37 excuse me, on the discussion outline. So, unless we think we're going to make progress, absent a
38 motion to react to on the buildings topic, I'm going to call on Commissioner Schroll, who
39 previously asked to be recognized on the streetscape part of that. And then move us on to number
40 two, on "Circulation," okay? And if folks have concerns about that approach, then voice them in
41 the near future. Commissioner Schroll.

1 **Commissioner Schroll:** Mr. Krider, I have a couple questions about the streetscape, and street
2 cross sections. Starting on page 52, I'm wondering, and I brought this up last Thursday at the
3 Transportation Commission, why we don't see any widths here in the cross section. It just kinda
4 [inaudible] back to what many of my colleagues were talking about, about specificity. And this
5 is, as you and your colleagues mentioned, a aspirational document, and what we want to see.
6 And there's also no proposed cross sections, necessarily, in terms of what the width would be.
7 You know, my colleague, Mr. Cole, talked about that in terms of the sidewalk width. But I would
8 love to see that for the street cross sections here. And I'm wondering if you could respond to, you
9 know, you did the other night, and I'm wondering if you could do it again.

10 **Mr. Krider:** Certainly, it's a fair question. The Sector Plan, we do not have an absolute accurate
11 site civil drawing. As part of the Sector Plan process, we did not--it is not part of the scope to do
12 a survey, and to determine the exact widths, as built, of the current streets' relative location to the
13 property lines. So, we had to stay at a somewhat high level because we do not know exactly, and
14 it's inconsistent across Clarendon, it's inconsistent across 15th Street, exactly where the present
15 curb is, and where the building property line is. And on North Courthouse Road, for example,
16 we're not proposing to change the curb-to-curb width. And rather than trying to get specific and
17 say, "Well, it must 13.8 feet in width," we feel that the follow-up studies, which will look at the
18 exact dimensions of the site, the relationship of the property line to the sidewalk--in fact, the
19 property owner on North Courthouse Road at Landmark could say that, you know, "This is my
20 property line. It's the county's fault that they widened their streets so much that now they only
21 have 8 feet of sidewalk." So, I think what we're trying to demonstrate is this is the ideal
22 condition. We have put, in the street sections, all of the elements that must be required in that
23 section. But we've also learned, from experience, such as East Falls Church, that when you
24 actually go out there in the field and you do your surveys, that if you are relying on a very
25 specific dimension that is included in a guiding document such as a Sector Plan, you're going to
26 have to go and contrast to the Sector Plan. So it was a decision that Transportation staff
27 recommended, and we fully support, that we put, first of all, the minimum dimensions, the
28 recommended dimensions, and we wait until the Site Plan application is done and we have a very
29 accurate site survey, that we can determine final dimensions. So we feel like we've covered the
30 basics. We feel like we've covered the minimum requirements. But we also recognize that we do
31 not have the sufficient detail at this time to get down to inches and feet.

32 **Commissioner Schroll:** So that, to me, is somewhat concerning, that we don't know where the
33 lines are, necessarily, around some of these buildings, to be able to do the specificity. We did it
34 in Cour--I'm sorry, in Roselyn recently. There was more specificity on a small area study. During
35 the Wraps process, there were street cross-sections there, proposing what's gonna happen. About
36 the same size parcel, roughly, as this study. Also, as some of my colleagues have mentioned,
37 about developers asking for the highest density possible under the zoning, under what's
38 permitted, if a developer comes along and they see minimums and ranges, they're going to
39 default to the minimums in certain places if it's helpful to their cause. So it would be, I think,
40 helpful, as we see plans come forward, if there's more specificity in terms of street cross sections,
41 proposed land width, bike lanes, things of that nature. So, I'll leave it there Mr. Krider.

42 **Mr. Krider:** You know, I just wanna respond that in the sense that, what if we determine, in the
43 future, that we need wider planting areas? That we need wider areas for the trees? Or that for the
44 particular tree type, or design, that, as Mr. Cover was demonstrating, that if there is a unique
45 solution, and I wanted to point to 15th Street, for example, that can't be part of the RB standards,

1 because the RB standards do not reference this notion of shared streets. So how do we start to
2 reference a document that does not anticipate what the vision is asking?

3 **Commissioner Schroll:** So, that's a perfect thing for the Site Plan process to take up. This is, as
4 Mr. Krover said, not law. This is a guiding document. And we take up deviations, as
5 Commissioner Iacomini said, in Site Plan. And what we need to have, you know, a guidance
6 about what we wanna do as a community. And the community should also have some, you
7 know, sense of where we're going. And this doesn't provide that. We can certainly have, I'll have
8 to find a quarter, flexibility in our Site Plan review process. And that's a perfect place for it. It
9 shouldn't be in a plan document. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

10 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Gutshall.

11 **Commissioner Gutshall:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wanted to follow up very quickly on this.
12 'Cause I think it's actually pretty important. So, I'm particularly interested in the Wilson and
13 Clarendon Boulevard example. Because I thought that this was, that the dimensions were
14 relatively worked out. I don't know about to the inch, because we just recently approved the
15 Wendy's site. And the Wendy's--this, obviously, that's where the streets split apart. And so, the
16 alignment and all that is pretty critical. And I guess, having, you know, living on Highland Street
17 and walking up and down Highland Street on a regular basis, I mean, Highland and Clarendon is
18 the perfect example of how when you don't have forethought of street cross sections, where you
19 end up in very disjointed curbs and blocks. Which, frankly, it's too late. It's not ever gonna be
20 fixed, I don't think. Not in any--not in my lifetime. And I would like to not see that mistake
21 duplicated across the county. So, I'm frankly a little bit surprised to hear that answer, Mr. Krider.
22 Because I would have thought that, you know, if we change our standard for what we need for
23 tree pits, then yes, we would have to go back and revisit what we've done. But in the interest of
24 making sure that we have consistency throughout our Sector Plan, throughout our sectors, I
25 thought that there would be a little bit more detail put on these cross sections. Thank you.

26 **Commissioner Forinash:** Are we done with the first item, "Buildings, including frontages and
27 streetscapes?" Commissioner Iacomini.

28 **Commissioner Iacomini:** I just wanted to go back to step backs, that we had discussed. And
29 even though I know we started out with, on the Landmark, I think, that they were 15, and we've
30 now gone to 10. And on Verizon they were 30, they were more generous, and they're now down
31 to 10. I wanna say that I think we--I am glad that the step backs are still in the plan. And even
32 though they have been modified. And as I had mentioned, that when this all came to the working
33 group, staff was still very much looking through a lot of comments that they've received from
34 other stakeholders. Not just the working group, but property owners, and people interested. And
35 we have some of those in our packet. And I think what is really, really important, is that this is
36 our plan. It's guidance. It's not law. We get that. But this needs to be, Courthouse needs to be the
37 expression of, from the civic side, citizens, staff, County Board, of our vision for this place. And
38 we shouldn't take people, necessarily, who already have a Site Plan in mind, who are already
39 doing this, to say, "Change everything in your plan and your vision to suit what we say we need
40 economically." The time for that is Site Plan. The time to come in to the table and say, "This is
41 what we propose. We know what's in the plan. Here's how our Site Plan still would forward the
42 goals of this particular document, but maybe not exactly as you're showing it in this plan." And
43 that's the time to have that discussion. There's still a circle around that, Mr. Cover, sometimes,

1 with height. But that is the time for the give and take. And so, I am--I thank staff for leaving the
2 step backs in.

3 **Commissioner Forinash:** Okay, let's move on to item number two in the discussion outline,
4 "Circulation." I think we've [inaudible] on street cross sections already. So, this is 15th Street
5 related to our recommendation, underground circulation, including parking and bicycle
6 accommodations. I wanna start briefly on the 15th Street issue, and whether it should be open to
7 private vehicles. We had significant discussion on this at the RTA. We very clearly
8 recommended that we thought, we as the Planning Commission, thought that it should be
9 restricted to bicycles, pedestrians, and transit vehicles. There appeared not to be support for that
10 at the board in their work session. There appears not to be support for that--well, there's certainly
11 not support for that in the updated draft. And there was not support at the Transportation
12 Commission, which I took as informative as well. I'm one of the more strident voices, or I was
13 one of the more strident voices on that at the RTA stage, and earlier in the LRPC. I'm certainly
14 willing to yield to the common, what appears to be the common desire that this street be retained
15 for private vehicle use. I think it will significantly diminish from the quality of the street though.
16 I think we're fooling ourselves if we think we're going to have a place where people--that people
17 really feel is a part of the square and not a part of, primarily, of the circulation system if we
18 continue to allow what essentially sounds like unrestricted private vehicle access at most times
19 onto this street. So we need to, regardless of how some of the drawings animated with figures of
20 people indicate that it really is intended to be a part of the square, it's design elements may read
21 that way, you know, if it's curbless, et cetera, but any real presence of private vehicle traffic will
22 make that, I believe, not the case. That said, I'm certainly willing to yield to the common
23 perception, or the common opinion, that this street needs to retain private vehicle access.
24 Commissioner Harner, and then Commissioner Sockwell.

25 **Commissioner Harner:** Thanks, Commissioner Forinash. I'd like to actually ask you a question.
26 And whether or not a notion of a special treatment of 15th Street that discourages high speeds,
27 that makes driving 15th Street somewhat less convenient, perhaps rough pavers, raised plateaus,
28 is that something is, in your mind, worth considering, or worth potentially considering for
29 recommendation or discussing here?

30 **Commissioner Forinash:** Sure. I mean, in my experience, professionally and personally, those
31 things do make a difference. You certainly, you know, on cobblestones in Old Town, people
32 travel very slowly in their private vehicles. I'll also note that it's a pain to bicycle down. And that
33 I don't know how it really would operate with heavy transit vehicle use, which we'll see here. But
34 certainly, you know, design treatments to the pavement itself, and to, you know, raised elements
35 can make a big difference in my opinion. Commissioner Sockwell.

36 **Commissioner Sockwell:** Yeah, I wanted to sort of echo your sentiments too here. I assume that
37 the street is gonna be used as the venerable letters henceforth, which is basically going to be for,
38 sort of, cruising by retail and drop offs at the movie theater. And so that tells me this may
39 actually be a fairly frequently used street. And I think it will actually diminish the pedestrian
40 experience. And under those circumstances, you know, given that we seem to have a consensus
41 that it's gonna remain open for vehicular traffic, I do think that putting in some sort of controls to
42 it to at least slow cars down, at least diminish the frequency somewhat, still allow access to
43 things like a drop off at the movies if you wanna drop your kids off for a Disney movie. But at
44 least make it less attractive would be appropriate under the circumstances.

1 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Cole, and then--

2 **Commissioner Cole:** I wanna, first of all, say that I agree with all three of you, and move on
3 quickly and say that the staff proposal here is for a shared street. And they have a similar
4 proposal for 14th Street North as well, for a segment of 14th Street North. And I would propose
5 that we, that our recommendation, when we get to the time of making a recommendation,
6 suggest that if we're gonna propose design elements which will slow vehicular traffic, that they
7 should be both 14th Street and 15th Streets. It shouldn't just be for 15th Streets.

8 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Iacomini, and then with her--and then Commissioner
9 Hughes.

10 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Thank you. I still am on the side that I think it would be interesting,
11 and a good thing, to have a street that is pedestrian and transit only. 'Cause I do think that is
12 something special for us, a special place. And again, makes it an extension of the square. And I
13 am sensitive to the fact that the property owners want a better drop off and pick off, but I would
14 point out that actually, out front of this building, where people drop off and pick up, they're
15 really not supposed to because it's for ART buses. And it says say, "Bus Only." So there really
16 actually isn't a place to do that here, legally. And perhaps, when we rethinking, although it's
17 outside of our, this particular study area, that part of Clarendon Boulevard could have been
18 modified for a pull off, you know, where the clock is, or was, here. So that people, with the
19 movie theater, would actually walk through the retail spaces and might activate and see them and
20 use them more, in order to be picked up. So I think there are other solutions to the pick-up and
21 drop-off issue. And I'm still with the transit and pedestrian only street.

22 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Hughes.

23 **Commissioner Hughes:** I would support such a motion, Commissioner Iacomini, just so you
24 know. Maybe others would as well. But back to the pavers, I just wanna make a quick note so
25 it's reminded. Absent the secondary access to the parking garage along North Courthouse,
26 vehicular access from the south primarily uses North Courthouse, and then would swing left at
27 14th Street to get into what is the only access point. So approaching from the north, you'd have
28 two to three garages to enter. And approaching from the south, it'd be a rather circumspect way
29 to get to it for anybody traveling from the Crystal City, Pentagon City, Columbia Pike area.
30 Because you enter on South Courthouse, and then hang that left. So I think it certainly is painful
31 to drive on 15th Street, would be nice. I don't necessarily think 14th Street has that same need.

32 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion on, well, let's dispense with 15th Street and shared
33 streets first, and then move on to the other circulation topics. All right. Bicycle--let's see,
34 "Underground Circulation, Including Parking." Commissioner Cole.

35 **Commissioner Cole:** I want to begin by expressing the view that the entire report plays
36 insufficient attention, and establishes insufficient priority, on parking. I guess it's my view that
37 parking is the single most important foundational element of this plan, that the undergrounding
38 of the parking is essential to achieve everything else that's being proposed. Toward that end, I
39 would suggest to you, and I plan to make a motion in this regard, that parking, which currently is
40 included in the priority concept recommendations as a single sentence, and I'll tell you here--it's
41 included in a single sentence under 21st Century Civic Square. The sentence reads, "A new
42 parking garage below the new square will accommodate parking for existing future uses,

1 Courthouse Square, which may include a joint public-private garage with adjoining
2 developments." I would propose that that sentence be pulled out as its own priority plan
3 recommendation. Make it the first recommendation 'cause all the others aren't achievable without
4 that. And acknowledge that parking is critically important. You know, I, you know, the notion,
5 you know, so many things flow from parking. We have talked about the financing of the parking
6 garage, and the joint agreements with the private property owners. Their depend--their
7 properties--the Strayer block cannot be built on--a garage can't be built on it at all. The kind of
8 garage that can be built on the Landmark block is very limited, so they can't achieve the density
9 that they want without using this underground parking garage. So, so much of this entire plan
10 hinges on an effective way to accommodate parking. Not to mention the fact that Arlingtonians
11 are all gonna be looking for an easy way to drive to the Courthouse to pay their bills. 'Kay, go
12 underneath if it's easy. Park on top if it's not. And figure out a way to work--do the--have the
13 interactions with the county that they so desperately need and expect to be easy. So, I strongly
14 believe that the parking piece should be prioritized. With respect to underground circulation, I at
15 least want to raise from my colleagues' conversation tonight the whole question of underground
16 pedestrian circulation. This plan goes further than the draft went in suggesting that the
17 underground circulation will be built into this. It says that, "Underneath the promenade, there
18 will be a pedestrian pathway that parallels the promenade." It, you know, so much, you know,
19 the real question that I have is with the extent to which we really believe that that's a desirable
20 feature of this plan. The question is do we wanna make it easy? And let's be clear about this. We
21 are planning a place that should be activated by human beings. Do we wanna make it easy for
22 them to not activate the surface? Activating the surface has so many benefits. It has the benefit of
23 encouraging use of the retailers on the surface. It has the benefit of activating the park space. It
24 has the benefit of making people sensitive to their county government in a way that they won't be
25 sensitive if they're underground. There's so many benefits to activating the surface. And the more
26 we make it easy for people to avoid that, they'll do it. Now, we reco--I certainly recognize that
27 this is a huge residential area. And from people moving from the--passing through the southern
28 end of the square, and the Courthouse Square area, to the metro is a huge river a couple of times
29 a day. I understand that. And the question is, should there be a separate treatment for those
30 people that addresses those people's need to move quickly to and from their homes or not? I don't
31 know. But I wanted to at least put it on the table. I think, and I'm interested in the conversation,
32 and my other, my colleagues' views on this because I'm prepared to not make a motion or make a
33 motion on the circulation piece. So I'm interested.

34 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Sockwell, then Commissioner Harner.

35 **Commissioner Sockwell:** Yeah, I was just gonna ask Commissioner Cole for clarification. I
36 don't really see the sort of language he's talking about. I'm looking at "Pedestrian Connections"
37 on page 29. Is there a separate section that you think activates underground pedestrian activity,
38 28?

39 **Commissioner Cole:** There is.

40 **Commissioner Sockwell:** Or are you abstracting this from the map?

41 **Commissioner Cole:** Maybe staff can quickly point us to the place where it describes this, a
42 parallel path underground, because it's in there.

1 **Commissioner Sockwell:** Yeah, and I guess I would like to ask Mr. Krider to respond to this,
2 about whether we're, you know, what is the purpose of your pedestrian--?

3 **Commissioner Forinash:** Can you first direct to the part of the document that Commissioner
4 Cole was referring--?

5 **Mr. Krider:** Yeah, I believe we're speaking about on page 28, there is a, to the left side of the
6 G1 level parking garage, there is a striped section that shows vehicular routes and pedestrian
7 routes. The purpose of that is to note the fact that when people arrive with their car, they need to
8 have a logical process to get out into the square. When people return from whatever they're doing
9 to their car, they need to have a logical, and safe, and clear path to their car. Many people do not
10 like garages because there are not clear and safe paths through the garage for pedestrians. What
11 we're trying to acknowledge is that people will use the--as a pedestrian, they have to use the
12 garage to access their vehicle. We also think it's important to note that if people are going
13 underground, then we've failed aboveground. And I think that's very important, that we cannot
14 allow the type of development that would encourage people to use ground-floor access. And I
15 think that's one of the problems that we have currently. When Veitch Street was vacated, that
16 was an error. Because people continue, and I've seen bicyclists go through, I've seen vehicles
17 drive through the garage and use Veitch Street as a through street. So what we're trying to do is
18 acknowledge that people will--water will flow the easiest path, right? So we need to
19 acknowledge that people will use the underground access for specific purposes. But we've also
20 introduced elements, such as the Veitch Terrace, that will encourage people to get up onto the
21 Plaza, and not go through the garage. But we cannot deny the fact that some folks will wanna
22 walk through a garage. And so we are trying to acknowledge the presence of pedestrians. We're
23 not encouraging the use of the garage for pedestrian access, we're just acknowledging that it's a
24 natural function of the motorists' experience, that they have to find their way in and out of the
25 garage. And that's the entire point of this, is just to make sure that people have a strong sense of
26 orientation to how to get into the garage and out of the garage, both as a vehicle and as a
27 pedestrian.

28 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion. Commissioner Brown, and then Commissioner
29 Siegel.

30 **Commissioner Brown:** I'm gonna have to agree with the staff on this one, in terms of safe
31 garages. There's nothing worse than a garage that leads to nowhere, or--so clear paths in and out
32 of a garage I think are really important. [inaudible]

33 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Siegel, then Commissioner Iacomini.

34 **Commissioner Siegel:** Yeah, I think I'd go along with that. I think if people, busy people, in the
35 mornings, at night, have a destination, if underground is the most--the quickest way to get to the
36 metro, to get home, they're gonna use it. And no amount of interesting features at the top, or even
37 scary and ugly things underneath, are gonna stop them. This is my view.

38 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Iacomini, and then Commissioner Harner.

39 **Commissioner Iacomini:** I will say, during our working group discussions, that the
40 neighborhood does feel strongly about keeping underground access. And I completely
41 understand that, that there is a great desire many times--and I'll admit, I will do it too. If I can
42 find a way to move on unmoistened foot during a storm to get to a metro, or to get someplace for

1 transit, I will do that. I know a great route from the capital all the way through the Canon
2 Building to get out really close to Capital South. You wanna talk about a subterranean
3 experience. So, I think it is prudent for the neighborhood, or a kind thing for the neighborhood,
4 to have the underground connections. And it is, as Mr. Krider said, we want the garage to be
5 used. And we are finding, in a lot of places in the county, that people simply are not using
6 parking garages. And there's probably a variety of reasons, but not ease of pedestrian access
7 through them is probably one of them. And we have underutilized garages everywhere in places
8 where we have businesses that desperately--that say, you know, need patrons. And patrons say,
9 "Well, there is no parking." We say, "But there's a garage." So maybe if it was a better garage, it
10 would be a good thing. So I have no objections to the underground circulation.

11 **Commissioner Forinash:** I'm gonna preempt Commissioner Harner for a moment and offer my
12 own comment. I find the most effective parking garages are the ones, I'm thinking of the one
13 under Pentagon Row right now, where it's clearly marked where the exits are. And most people
14 try to park as close as they can to the exit, meaning not the vehicle exit, but the elevator and
15 stairs to their destination. I don't find that the most effective garages are the ones that have large,
16 straight pedestrian pathways through the garage so that you can spend all your time underground,
17 and then come up closest to your surface destination. I'm troubled by this. I don't think that
18 having an underground promenade competing in any way with our very carefully detailed, and
19 very significantly--we're investing a lot of hopes, dreams, and funds in the aboveground
20 promenade. To detract from it by having an underground equivalent strikes me as repeating
21 Crystal City all over again. So I'm not interested in anything other than a safe garage that allows
22 you to quickly move to the surface and enjoy the wonderful surface environment we're creating.
23 Commissioner Harner.

24 **Commissioner Harner:** Thanks, Commissioner Forinash. This is an interesting conversation.
25 And I actually think it's pretty important. I'm almost off the Planning Commission, so you guys
26 won't have to hear this little story much longer. But you know, my experience in analyzing
27 public squares in Mexico, you know, the thing that I learned is that the church is on the square,
28 or the police station is on the square, the jail is on the square, the big mansion is on the square,
29 and there's retail on the square. And those things work all times of the day because everybody
30 has a purpose and a reason to go there. If somebody said to me, "I want to put an underground
31 circulation network underneath this perfect Mexican square, or think of the square in Sienna, or
32 any square you want to," we would all say, "You're crazy. Why would you ever take all that
33 activity, and all that life, and all that conglomeration of uses, and throw it underground?" I think
34 this is actually pretty important. And if you look at the ramifications of this, and say, on page 28,
35 where note 2.15 is, "What would we do with an underground entrance to the Landmark block?
36 What would we do with an underground entrance to the Strayer lobby?" You know, all of this
37 starts to lead to an entire underground network that really does bleed the activity off street level.
38 And I actually think we ought to take a strong position and say, "Get rid of the connection north
39 that goes underneath Clarendon Boulevard." Do not encourage an underground network that
40 doesn't bring people to the street. And we ought to adopt what Commissioner Forinash has
41 recommended, which is just a very clear single exit from the parking structure that gets you up to
42 the street. And I think we're fooling ourselves if we think that this underground network will not
43 detract from the place making. Because there's no doubt that it will.

44 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further comment? "Bicycle Accommodations," the last noted topic
45 under "Circulation." Commissioner Cole.

1 **Commissioner Cole:** It comes as no surprise at this point that the Planning Commission thinks
2 that accommodating bicycles is very important. And we appreciate very much your effort to do
3 that in the circulation. Recommendations, particularly recommendation--help me find it 'cause I
4 wanna talk about it. The one with the new bike parking facility. It's 2.9, is what it is, "Short and
5 Long-Term Bicycle Parking." This is mostly comments just for you. I don't plan to make a
6 motion on this in particular. But the notion of short and long-term bicycle parking, I would
7 frankly change that to "Hourly and Daily." You know, short and long-term reminds me of
8 airports, where you're going away for 3 weeks, and you wanna park in long-term parking 'cause
9 it's cheaper. It's not that I don't want daily parking to be cheaper than hourly parking for bicycles,
10 it's just I think it communicates better what we're really trying to achieve here. You know, again,
11 the notion of underground, in the parking garage, I think it's here that it can be considered. I
12 think that when you think about this, you shouldn't be thinking about 12 bicycles, or 25 bicycles,
13 or 50 bicycles. I think you should be thinking of hundreds of bicycles. And so, putting it next to
14 the kiosk probably won't work. So, I strongly--you know, to the extent that we accommodate
15 bicycles better, people will use them. And getting them out of the rain, getting them in a place
16 that's secure, it's a hu--goes a long, long way to getting people to ride bicycles. So I think that's
17 really important. The second point I would make about bicycles, where it gets virtually no
18 attention, is in sustainability. You know, sustain--the whole--and we're gonna talk about
19 sustainability later, but I'm gonna talk about bicycles now. The "Sustainability" section is almost
20 entirely resource utilization, both energy and water resources on site. Bicycle use is key to
21 reduction of greenhouse gases. It's key to reduction of use of petroleum products. So that, to the
22 extent that we can put this in the "Sustainability" section and, you know, applaud ourselves for
23 trying to do better at accommodating it, we should do that, I think. So, I think we've done a lot
24 here. And again, I don't expect to make a motion on it. You know, you hear what I'm saying. If
25 my colleagues, on the other hand, think that this doesn't go far enough, you know, my
26 commitment to not make a motion goes away. So, with that said, I'm done with--

27 **Mr. Krider:** If I may, the definition of the difference between long and short-term parking is
28 really a definition used in the industry, that long-term parking needs to be covered. Short-term
29 parking does not need to be covered. It's your typical bike rack out in the open. So that's what
30 we're trying to distinguish, is that long-term parking is the type of parking that an employee
31 might use, or a resident might use. Whereas short-term parking is something that someone might
32 use for an hour or two on--

33 **Commissioner Cole:** Okay, then say that. Say, "Short-term, parentheses, an hour or two. Long-
34 term, an employee used for the day." You know, so there's no confusion about what you're
35 actually meaning. So the notion is, "I'm not going away for 3 weeks, and I'm not taking my
36 bicycle to this place for long-term parking."

37 **Mr. Krider:** Right, I also might add that bringing your bike down into the garage will require
38 either rolling it down the stairs or taking it on the elevator. So that's another barrier to using the
39 durational parking.

40 **Commissioner Cole:** Or riding it down the ramp. So, again, we both have watched the Delft,
41 Netherlands video. If you haven't, I assume you have, that comes down from the street. It's not as
42 steep as you might imagine this would be. But it's certainly--and how you design the
43 underground garage matters. I mean, so if the first level is a relatively modest trip down, and it
44 mostly accommodates bicycles, you know--

1 **Mr. Krider:** Next thing you know, people will be using the garage for bicycle circulation.

2 **Commissioner Cole:** I mean, you know, imagine how--the praises that Arlington will sing about
3 itself if half the garage ends up being used by bicycles and not cars.

4 **Mr. Krider:** That wouldn't be a bad thing.

5 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further comment, discussion? All right, are we done with the
6 "Circulation" topic? "Open Space, Including the Memorial Grove." Commissioner Harner, and
7 then Commissioner Ciotti.

8 **Commissioner Harner:** I'd just like to thank the staff for working with the recommendation to
9 orient the Memorial Grove for screening function, and of the detention facility.

10 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Ciotti.

11 **Commissioner Ciotti:** A little facetious, but I have a question. You know, through this there was
12 a lot of reference to Bryant Park. So I had to take myself to New York City and go to Bryant
13 Park, which I did about 2 weeks ago. And I had lunch in Bryant Park. And I really studied it, and
14 took notes, and you know, "What was making it work? Why was it so successful?" The trees, the
15 two rows of trees, which you have planned, all around it. And the different programming, and,
16 okay? Three days later, a tree falls in half and it clobbers five people sitting right where I was
17 sitting a few days ago. What can we learn from this so that--? And now there's like five other
18 trees. What can we learn? Is it the type of tree? That--do we need to--? Is there a lesson to be
19 learned so that we don't wind up front page of "The New York Times"?

20 **Mr. Krider:** Well, I think it's important. And our urban forester has worked with us on this. It's
21 important, when we do design the park, to look at the species of tree and make sure that they're
22 urban tolerant, that they're a native species, that they're not the type--you know, Willow Oaks are
23 not good street trees, for example. They far outgrow whatever capacity you apply for them. So,
24 yes, we will certainly study the tree type. And in reference to the Soldier's Tree, and the Mother's
25 Tree, you know, they're getting older. So our strategy was is to supplement the planting of those
26 trees. Because some--they will not live forever. And that we want to maintain a grove, a canopy
27 there, that we need to actually add additional trees, and to create a more holistic environment.
28 The reasons for the grove were not just to highlight those two important trees. The reasons, as
29 Commissioner Harner pointed out, was to screen the detention facility. We also noticed it's the
30 hottest part of the square. It creates a different, more relaxed environment. So the benefits of
31 trees are very important. But we certainly need to look at the particular species. And also, the
32 maintenance of the trees. But those trees in Bryant Park will not forever, and they, I'm sure they
33 think about that. And the beautiful canopy, and the height that they have today, will not be there
34 forever. So in 30 or 40 years, as those trees may die and come off, they're gonna have to plant
35 others. And it may be another 100 years before we have that type of canopy. But that's the nature
36 of working with the natural environment.

37 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Siegel.

38 **Commissioner Siegel:** How many of those trees are London Plane trees, and can grow to 120
39 feet in height?

40 **Commissioner Forinash:** We should all stay in the garage where it's safe. Further discussion on
41 "Open Space." Commissioner Cole.

1 **Commissioner Cole:** Just one point about "Open Space," which is on this map, and on your
2 other map we've seen to date. It shows that the space that's being protected underground is the
3 space at the north end of the parking garage, so that the trees there are best protected. If in fact
4 we're really going to plant a grove that goes along Courthouse Road on the east side of the
5 square, the underground garage probably needs to--the underground--the impl--what it's implied
6 to be underground need to be changed so that the root growth that occurs can be best
7 accommodated where the grove is gonna be. And if it's on the east side of the square, the yellow
8 color that's at the north end here just should be moved over. And that's a simple thing to do
9 between now and the board, I assume.

10 **Mr. Krider:** That's correct. We caught that, and wanted to do that in the update, to reflect the tan
11 color that's shown on page 30 to work its way down North Courthouse Road. And in fact, we
12 wouldn't probably want a grove of trees in the vicinity of the mid-block crossing of 15th, in front
13 of the Metro Plaza. So we did recognize that. And you know, as we've said many times though,
14 that this is a conceptual plan. And that the open space design would look into that. The important
15 was is that we're trying to create three different, sort of, open space experiences. One in the
16 grove, to the lawn, and third, the plaza down on the south end. But we do recognize the shading
17 should be--and we can alter that to reflect the--

18 **Commissioner Cole:** Just one other comment related to "Open Space." And that is just a
19 reflection on the lack of effectiveness of the city square that's created at Alexandria City Hall.
20 There is this very, very large plaza there. And it's virtually empty all the time. The Farmers'
21 Market doesn't succeed as well there as our Farmers' Market does, which is in 14th Street. I think
22 one of the reasons for that is that they made a design decision which was a mistake. And this, I'm
23 just speculating here, but I think the design decision that they made that was a mistake was they
24 elevated the plaza above the street level. And then they pierced it with garage entrances at
25 different places. No doubt that was penny wise and pound foolish, because they probably saved
26 some 'cause they didn't have to excavate as deeply. But they created a plaza that people--it's
27 much harder to see. So I strongly encourage you to say that the open space there, the plaza, needs
28 to be at ground level, at the level of the street.

29 female: [inaudible]

30 **Commissioner Cole:** No, that's--it depends where you're coming from. Actually, if you're
31 coming from the library, or if you're coming from 5th Avenue, it's sort of elevated. But if you
32 walk out the library door and go in, it's not elevated.

33 female: [inaudible]

34 **Commissioner Forinash:** We can criticize Alexandria during daylight hours. [laughing] No, you
35 can leave it in. Mr. Krider, does--I actually thought I remembered something, but I could be
36 thinking of a different plan entirely that speaks to the level of the plaza compared to the street. Is
37 there anything in the document that speaks to that?

38 **Mr. Krider:** That's an excellent point. And I do not believe anywhere in the document, except, if
39 you look at the sections, the cross sections, we show, on 15th, being flush with the park. The
40 cross section for North Courthouse Road shows being flush with the park. Fourteenth Street, so
41 that the general slope, the intent is that the whole park slopes gently from north to south and
42 follows the existing topography. But it, for example, if the Civic Building is put on the south

1 end, if there is a desire to raise up that building so that we allow Farmers' Market activity to do,
2 or if there are steps leading up to that to give it a more monumental type of feeling, that could
3 happen. But our intent that the balance of the square is at grade, at the existing grade.

4 **Commissioner Forinash:** And is that, apart from the cross sections you mentioned, is that
5 reflected as a design intent explicitly anywhere in here?

6 **Mr. Krider:** No, and if we were to change anything, it would probably, in the introductory
7 paragraph on page 31, "Courthouse Square Open Space Recommendations," you know, we could
8 potentially add something there that the intent is that the park will remain at grade, flush with the
9 street.

10 **Commissioner Forinash:** Great, thank you. Further discussion on "Open space?" All right, item
11 four, "Cultural Resources, Including Historic Preservation and Cultural Facility." And
12 Commissioner Cole, you had included under "Other Topics," "Performance Venue." Should we
13 speak about the performance venue in this topic? All right, so "Cultural Resources."
14 Commissioner Iacomini.

15 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Thank you. I wanted to start with the "Cultural Resources." And thank
16 you [inaudible] for being here, and talking about the performance venue. During working group
17 meetings, we talked about a lot of different things. We had lots of letters from folks who wanted
18 the History Museum to be here, the Arlington History Museum. We had, you know, theaters,
19 even whether it would be an art cinema, live performances, music, quite a variety. And staff
20 would remind us, and rightly so, that there is still a long-promised AED study on the type of
21 culture--an inventory of cultural resources, meaning performance spaces, and other art spaces,
22 as--and then an eye to thinking and identifying what we're missing. And what might best go in
23 places. And I think it was our feeling that we just, we use the word, "Cultural Resource," and left
24 it very open, waiting for the study, to see what would happen. Not that we didn't have--had very
25 good representation of Leo being at the table and reminding us about it. But at the end of the day,
26 it is hard to know what might work best here, and what the county actually needs. Because we do
27 have a lot of competing cultural requests. But the very notion that it must be cultural, it must be
28 open to the public, and it would be a draw, is one of the central features of this plan. And it will
29 remain so. And I think you can rest assured that it's highlighted. Just exactly what form that's
30 gonna take is yet to be determined.

31 **Commissioner Harner:** Could I follow up, Commissioner Iacomini?

32 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Certainly.

33 **Commissioner Harner:** Commissioner, Forinash, could I ask--? Since Commissioner Iacomini
34 has referenced this study, could I ask Ms. Kopenhaver if she might give us a little information
35 about this study that has been long promised, and the Arts Commission's deliberations or
36 advocacy for the study, or what your current thinking or knowledge of this is?

37 **Ms. Kopenhaver:** Yeah, we are in, or the staff is in the midst of a strategic plan. And as part of
38 that, we have been told they are doing a survey on facilities needs. Right now, we have a
39 facilities crunch. We, as I mentioned, we lost the black box, that artist theater, which was the
40 only black box on the metro line. They're doing major work, or renovation, at 3700, which is our
41 other black box theater, which we don't know if that will actually be closed temporarily or not.
42 And the remaining black boxes or other theaters are in middle schools, which it's--I mean, take it

1 or leave it. It's not the theater ambience or night out that you would expect when you go to the
2 theater. So we, and I think I've said this to somebody who made a presentation at the
3 commission, we are anxiously awaiting this survey on facilities needs. We know we need some
4 facilities. We know that if we're gonna compete with DC, Fairfax, Alexandria, we have got to get
5 in the game, and we've gotta up our facilities. 'Cause right now, you know, it's middle schools.
6 It's, I mean, when we had an instance over the summer where it was the opening weekend for a
7 theater group, and one of the hottest weekends of the year, and it was Friday, so they shut the air
8 conditioning off. They couldn't reach the emergency person, so they had, you know, people
9 leaving at intermission. They had a woman pass out. I mean, that's--it's not a theater experience.
10 And we just think, you know, these are not stand-alone theaters. And that's what we think we
11 need. Because you have theaters in what they call "found spaces," so it's not--it's a school, or it's
12 a somethin' else. If we have a stand-alone, state-of-the-art theater facility, flexible space, that you
13 can use a lot of for--in different ways. It's just really, if we wanna be an arts destination, we
14 wanna offer that diversity to the young, the millennials, the families. We gotta step up our game.

15 **Commissioner Harner:** So has the Arts Commission discussed Courthouse site in particular, or
16 is there, are there attributes or characteristics of Courthouse's sector that offer a unique
17 opportunity? Say, it could be at Courthouse, it could be at Boston. Or is Courthouse--does the
18 commission have a position that Courthouse represents an opportunity that is greater than other
19 sectors in either from the ability to locate it here from a land perspective, or because it actually
20 makes sense as a location for the community?

21 **Ms. Kopenhaver:** I think it's a lot of things. Metro, obviously. If we wanted to get people D.C.,
22 it's gotta be--or Maryland, they gotta get over here. It's gotta be easy for them. Courthouse, since
23 day one, it's been said it's gonna be a cultural center. It's gonna be the cultural center of Arlington
24 County. Makes sense to us. We think it would be a great location. It's got restaurants. It's got
25 metro. It's got parking. It just seems like it's a good one. I mean, we'll take a black box theater if
26 you wanna put one anywhere else. But it just makes sense because of how they're billing it, and
27 you know, we do have an active and very diverse cultural atmosphere in the county. We've got
28 lots of heritage groups that are educating not only their own heritage communities, but others,
29 about the history of their heritage groups. So it would--we really do have this vibrant arts
30 community. But we're kinda gettin' behind the 8-ball now because our facilities are just not up to
31 speed anymore.

32 **Commissioner Harner:** Do you have any idea of the cost of a facility that you're talking about?

33 **Ms. Kopenhaver:** I do not, no. No. Because really, we don't even know what, you know, at this
34 point what we're lookin' at. Thank you.

35 **Commissioner Forinash:** Other discussion of "Cultural resources?" And I'll note this includes
36 "Historic Preservation" in the outline. Commissioner Cole.

37 **Commissioner Cole:** I feel so incompetent. I wanna talk about the historic preservation elements
38 of the plan. And I wanna share with everyone, to begin with, my surprise at sort of finally
39 understanding today what is being proposed for the Landmark block in particular. To my
40 surprise, all but one building on the Landmark block are being proposed for façade preservation
41 or relocation. The only building that's not being proposed for that is the building adjacent to the
42 Simmons Building, which is where Jerry's Subs is today. And that's a building which is relatively
43 newer than many of the older buildings. It's a red brick building with two bay windows on the

1 first floor, and I think a set of six double-hung windows on the second and third floors that have
2 substantial white mullions. And it's the only one. And if you have your phone with you, you can
3 look along through Google Street View. As you go around the block to the east, on 15th Street is
4 the building which is referred to as--I'm sorry, it's referred to as the "Investment Building" I
5 believe, which is the old homeless shelter. And I certainly recognize that what we did on the
6 [inaudible] was recommend preservation of the Investment Building and the First Federal
7 Savings and Loan Building because those were on the HRI. I honestly believe that the
8 Investment Building is of questionable value at this point. I personally don't believe it's a
9 particularly attractive building. And see the kind of place making that it could create as not
10 necessarily being desirable. Going around, you have the Cosi Building, or the--what's the First
11 Federal Savings and Loan Building. A couple of issues related to that. One is the JBG, which is
12 the--has the rights to develop the Landmark block, has written, and Mr. Krider indicated that this
13 was the case today, that the buildable site area at least extends--is different than where the Cosi
14 Building is located today on the northwest corner where that building is located in this block.
15 And we certainly could have a situation where the façade could be removed from the existing
16 buildings and placed on the new building. We also have a recommendation that has existed from
17 since before the RTA, that the terrazzo floor, as well as a wall clock, I believe it's a wall clock, in
18 the Cosi restaurant be preserved as well. All that can be done. But they're not trivial efforts
19 required to do that kind of thing. Next to that is the Boston Market. My best assessment from
20 looking at today is that is a concrete block building that has a completely new front on it that
21 says, "Boston Market." And if you were to remove the contemporary Boston Market front, you
22 would have very little there that anyone would agree, I think anybody would agree is worth
23 saving. To my surprise, to the east of the Boston Market is a USA Copy Center, which is
24 completely unremarkable, and which is not shown here at all. But that's in the category at the top
25 of page 45 which says, "2042 and 2044 Clarendon Boulevard." The 2044 is the Copy Center
26 building. I believe that that leaves the only other building on the block, which is Summers
27 Restaurant, which I believe is probably 2042. But if you look up Summers Restaurant on the net
28 you find that 2042--Summers Restaurant actually has an address on Courthouse Road, not on
29 Clarendon Boulevard. But I don't know where else 2042 could be. But the notion is that all of
30 these facades should be preserved, and/or the Simmons Building relocated, except for the one
31 building on the 15th Road. And I begin to ask myself, "What are we doing here?" We're creating
32 a place where we want a new building that's 210 feet tall, and yet we're just--my words, my
33 thinking, we're sticking all these disparate facades on them. To me, that's an undesirable
34 outcome, an outcome that discourages redevelopment, discourages community benefits,
35 discourages all kinds of things that have the potential to add so much good to this place. So the
36 result of this is, you know--in the final analysis, my personal view is that I probably wouldn't
37 preserve anything here. I'd be completely satisfied with a new, well-designed, architecturally
38 distinctive building. That said, I am willing to support preserving the First Federal Savings and
39 Loan, but only the First Federal Savings and Loan. I think it is the only building that has
40 architectural merit worth preserving. And everything else discourage--is a strong disincentive to
41 redevelopment, which is one of the reasons we're doing this.

42 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion? Commissioner Iacomini, and then Commissioner
43 Gutshall.

44 **Commissioner Iacomini:** So, point, counterpoint.

45 male: [inaudible]

1 **Commissioner Iacomini:** We did, we rehearsed this afternoon.

2 **Commissioner Forinash:** [inaudible]

3 **Commissioner Iacomini:** [laughing] Just, if I could have the image. This is a somewhat of a
4 imagined thing, if you will, that a type of building in the background that JBG has been known to
5 produce, since we're talking about the company that has the block under control. And this just
6 has somewhat cleaned up of the façade that Commissioner Cole was talking about, the First
7 Federal Building, which is Cosi now. And then the Boston Market, which may or may not be
8 concrete block. We'd have to look at it because sometimes the limestone block actually looks
9 like concrete block when it's been painted over and crudded up many hundred--I shouldn't say
10 hundreds, many tens of years. So and as we have--we've seen that this, you know, has been done,
11 the removal of facades and replacement, very well in Clarendon. And Margaret, if you just
12 wanna remind us by hitting the next picture in the file. So, just to say that it's not outside of the
13 realm of possibility, there's the facades on the Penzance building, which were removed and
14 replaced. There is also the option--here they were replaced where the original buildings were so
15 the sidewalk was reduced. It doesn't have to be that way. They can be put on in the building line
16 that is desired. You know, it's interesting that this is put in to "Cultural Resources" because I
17 think, for myself, these buildings aren't precious objects. It's--they're not the Glebe House that
18 we have in Waverly Hills. And you know, some of the other resources that--built environment
19 resources that we have in Arlington. But they're part of a neighborhood. They're what's, if you
20 will, left of a neighborhood. They have a dialogue with the buildings that are across the street,
21 right outside of the study area, that include Four Courts, to which neighborhood members of the
22 working group had expressed very strong desire to keep those buildings, that street feel. And also
23 expressed, mostly, as Commissioner Cole did, for the Cosi building façade to remain, and not so
24 much the others. It is, as I said, the sense of place making and bringing the old into the new as
25 we continue, and we essentially redevelop Courthouse. It also provides some different
26 materiality, and some clues maybe for some architecture. But it certainly also provides some
27 difference at streetscape. And now, you know, from the Urban Land Institute, you know,
28 creating authenticity for retail. And you know, JBG certainly has been good at this. In downtown
29 D.C., their new buildings, I think, are talked about. And as you can see, there's a heavy emphasis
30 on place making, or trying to create a distinctive localized atmosphere that differs sharply from
31 cookie-cutter regional malls. And you know, those kind of places are the kinds we see in
32 Clarendon, and the kinds that you get from mixing old and new. You don't get the same old same
33 old glass facades, window this wide. You get something that's a little different, and that
34 millennials seem to be, and something that people are calling "authentic." I think we've probably
35 heard that word with Ballston Quarter. I've heard it at a retail presentation for Lee Highway.
36 That's the new buzzword. And it's always funny to me that we create authentic new as opposed
37 to authentic old. But I guess that's sort of the way it is. So I make my pitch for leaving all of the
38 recommended buildings in the plan. But noting that staff has, in response to the Planning
39 Commission, put in the language of 5.4, which clearly talks about the other goals that are in this
40 plan, economic feasibility, analysis, redevelopment goals. And that, indeed, the preservation be
41 considered in the final Site Plan application process. And then the subparagraphs 5.4a, b, c, d,
42 talk about preservation, but they say "façade preservation." It's a hierarchy of when you talk
43 about them for preservation, this is what we're talking about. We're not talking about a whole
44 building, except, of course, for Simmons. That, you know, this is what you're thinking about. It's
45 not saying--it's not giving it more emphasis. It's trying to say, "This is what you're workin' with."

1 'Cause the controlling paragraph is the 5.4 above it. You know, if I had my druthers, would I not
2 have all those lines in 5.4 about the Site Plan and all the rest of it? Yeah, I'd just say we keep 'em,
3 work with it. But you know, in the plan, and in bringing together other viewpoints, this is what
4 staff has proposed. And I think it's workable from several points of view.

5 **Commissioner Forinash:** Oh, there are others. Yes, Commissioner Harner, I saw--
6 female: [inaudible]

7 **Commissioner Forinash:** I said Gutshall first. All right, Gutshall, go.

8 **Commissioner Gutshall:** Thank you, Mr. Cole. Okay. I actually, a fairly quick question of Mr.
9 Krider. So in your slides, where you're reviewing our motion at RTA, and the County Board's
10 guidance, you have here listed "distinguished buildings on HRI from other existing buildings on
11 the Landmark block." Can you explain what that means to me? And I realize that means I'm
12 asking you to--say what the board said, but you have it in your slide.

13 **Mr. Krider:** During the board discussion, there was recognition that while some of these other
14 buildings may be eligible for the HRI, they are not on the HRI. So they just wanted to make sure
15 that there was recognition of the buildings that were, and asked us to distinguish those that are on
16 the HRI, and those that are not. And I think it's important, as Commissioner Iacomini said, is that
17 there's an overarching guidance here. And as we've said many times, this is a document that has
18 guidance. One of the things that we're hearing though, is that just because a building is on the
19 HRI does not necessarily mean it's the right building to save. And in particular with the
20 Investment Building. Perhaps it would help to prioritize those buildings which you wished--you
21 know, what we've heard that Cosi is probably the top priority. So if you're gonna save 'em, start
22 in this order. And perhaps that would add some clarity to the document to say, "While this is
23 guidance, if you are looking for a prioritization, this is where we stand."

24 **Commissioner Gutshall:** I thought the HRI was prioritized.

25 **Mr. Krider:** It is in the plan. But that does not--HRI is because that building happens to have
26 been listed. I think, as preservation staff looked at this, they really recognized that the Simmons
27 Building, in fact, recalls the importance of Lawyers' Row, which is it's the only remaining
28 building that does so. So they suggested that this would be an eligible candidate for the HRI. So
29 when you do these Sector Plans, sometimes you uncover things that you didn't realize in the past.

30 **Commissioner Gutshall:** I will very briefly just reiterate what I think the comment that I made
31 at the RTA, which is I find it--we're creating here the opportunity just for more argument down
32 the road. And rather than settling, sort of, what is the direction? What is the policy guidance?
33 Where's the--what does the community desire? What does the county desire? We're, you know--
34 and historic preservation, as we can see from the debate that we're having, is one that, I think,
35 there are deeply held views from, you know, different folks in the community. And it's always
36 gonna be that way. And that's largely a healthy thing. But what's not healthy is that we have to
37 keep having the same debate over and over every time, you know, Site Plans come forward. And
38 I thought that part of the role of the HRI was to establish the priorities of where the county was
39 to go. And now, we're sort of, we're fine-tuning it, or adjusting it. You know, that gives me
40 pause. So I would say that I'll leave it at that. Thank you.

1 **Commissioner Forinash:** I had already recognized, I think, Commissioner Harner to go next.
2 And then--

3 **Commissioner Harner:** Thanks, Commissioner Forinash. I think that actually the commission
4 should be reasonably careful with this issue. There's some real important things to consider here.
5 There's this whole gamut of issues. Number one, the HRI was a survey and an identification of
6 buildings in Arlington that were deemed worthy of saving, or considering saving. And so, we--as
7 a first principle, I think the commission recognized that, in the RTA, that that, the two HRI
8 buildings made sense. It's adopted policy. And I think the board actually agreed with that in their
9 consideration. I think that we have to be careful about this because the commission's been under
10 a lot of fire for being impractical, or not business friendly. And to not--I think the
11 recommendations we make about historic preservation are very much a part of the whole issue of
12 allocation of resources, of facilitating redevelopment, of balancing different goals. And if we end
13 up recommending that every building on the block is worthy of façade retention, it's, you know, I
14 think we would be susceptible to the arguments of not being business friendly, of being
15 impractical, et cetera. So I think that's very important. In terms of just pure historic preservation,
16 I think Commissioner Iacomini has outlined issues about scale and materiality. If those are goals,
17 they can certainly be achieved through the design of the building. There can certainly be scale.
18 We've seen fantastic--in fact, the commission--the photo illustration Commissioner Iacomini, the
19 buildings that were new, actually had better scale and materiality than the preserved ones on that
20 photo montage. So if that's the goal of scale and materiality, then that in and of itself is certainly
21 laudable and something that we can achieve through design guidelines and Site Plan review.
22 Normally, in historic preservation, you know, you look to preserve buildings that have merit, that
23 have some kind of architectural or historical merit. And the fact that these were not on the HRI,
24 and just, you know, looking at them with the naked eye or walking around the block a couple of
25 times, you know, you have a hard time finding the merit in the building is troubling. But just in
26 terms of the pure architectural, and the design issues, about preserving the facades, it's easily
27 technically possible. But a lot of architects would argue that we have a word for façade
28 preservation, and I can't use it because it's now transcribed. But it's, you know, we would say
29 that actually this is not authentic at all. That this sort of preserving of the skin with a big
30 behemoth behind it is quite the opposite of being authentic. It's really a meaningless and hollow
31 gesture about historic preservation. So that notion of being authentic by preserving those thin
32 skins is really questionable. It seems like if there's a Sector Plan, we're certainly--a reasonable
33 proposition is to look at preservation of the two HRI buildings. But once you start talking about
34 preserving all but one buildings on the block, you really, I think, run into the argument of
35 development feasibility. And you really start to question what is the real intention of that
36 preservation? Are we trying to show that this was an extremely humble block of nondescript and
37 unremarkable buildings, and that's Arlington's heritage? I mean, I think that's--look, it's the truth.
38 It's the reality of those buildings. There's just nothing about them that is great. It does show that
39 we had this simple, kind of run down, you know, Courthouse District. So, I'll just try to bring this
40 to a close. But I think that I would, if Commissioner Cole doesn't make a motion, I would make a
41 motion that we stick to the same recommendation that we had in the RTA discussion.

42 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Iacomini, and then Commissioner Hughes.

43 **Commissioner Iacomini:** I'm fine if Commissioner Hughes wants to go first on this topic.

44 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Hughes.

1 **Commissioner Hughes:** Thank you, Commissioner Iacomini. I know each night we look at a
2 specific target. And sometimes we don't necessarily think carefully about all the other things that
3 we do. And I do think it drives perception in the community. And so I wanna just step back for a
4 moment and say, you know, a recommendation to relocate an undescrpt masonry building built
5 in 1941, when last night we voted, because we basically don't have money, to sell a beautiful
6 white farmhouse, just seems to me to be disingenuous. I just, I have to be perfectly honest with
7 you, the scale and effort required of anybody to move a solid masonry building is--and a
8 remarkable undertaking of engineering that is a wonderful opportunity that we can do it. And I
9 can tell you a lot of places that I can go find you some really beautiful buildings that we can
10 bring up here that are really run down across the state of Virginia. I've got some beautiful
11 courthouses I know of that are falling down. What I'm trying to say is, is that I love history, and
12 we have a remarkable capture of history. But I think we have to be careful about how we're
13 perceived. Because last night we voted basically to approve the first step in selling a beautiful
14 historic property. But tonight we'd be okay with asking someone else to more or less pay for
15 moving a nondescrpt brick building that's one story tall.

16 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Iacomini.

17 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Okay, so, and it's an interesting point about Reevesland. I hadn't really
18 thought of it. Although I--to me, the notion of selling the farmhouse was because of its local
19 historic district over it, that it actually would remain and get fixed up as opposed to what it's
20 doing now, which is moldering. But you know, that's sort of a different thing. I appreciate
21 Commissioner Harner's notion about, you know, that the Planning Commission can be seen as
22 not business friendly, and the notion of doing some façade preservation or restoration just goes to
23 prove that. And apparently none of our discussion about limiting heights or anything else would
24 maybe make us seem business unfriendly. I mean, there's tons of things that we do as a Planning
25 Commission, and the values of the community that we reflect about limiting density in certain
26 places, about height, about the rest of it, that is said to be business unfriendly. I think to sort of
27 call out historic preservation is, you know--it was a good rhetoric point, but I don't think, you
28 know, that's the only thing in this--that we've discussed tonight that businesses had a little bit of
29 chill go up their back. I doubt that very much. It is--we, in Arlington, have a lot of buildings that
30 are simply hometown buildings. You know, Arlington grew as an extension, a suburb, of D.C.,
31 when the rail lines went in. Where the funeral home was, now a parking lot, on Fairfax Drive,
32 where we will have a black box theater, it is in the approved Site Plan, was actually a small
33 bungalow community called "Utopia." So, we've been a place to live, we've been a suburb, we
34 have suburban buildings. But it's a hometown. And what we--and we see in a lot of successful
35 places with old Main Streets, we see the parts of the past carried into the future. Not everything.
36 You know, not everything in Arlington is precious. Are these particular facades precious? Oh,
37 probably not, although I do think Cosi has some to say for it 'cause it's one of the more unique
38 ones left. But it is about a sense of place, and trying to encourage that. I think when we--and in
39 fact, I, you know, I hesitate to say it, but I think that Ballston has really suffered in comparison to
40 Clarendon because it is a place that got just completely mowed down and recreated, and it has no
41 soul. I just used the Senator Gillibrand word, and I don't know if I meant to do that. But it is a
42 place where it's really hard to feel. Pedestrians go, there's a lot of reasons for it. But when you
43 compare it to the success that we've had with Clarendon in the built environment, it's really stark.
44 And I think that the part of the plan here, thinking and looking at some, what few resources we
45 have in Courthouse, wants to sort of channel more of the Clarendon model than the Ballston

1 model. So I perfectly understand the commissioners sticking with the HRI. And in fact, all the
2 buildings that HRI just consists of commercial buildings and garden apartments, up to, I think,
3 what, 1950 was the cutoff date. So it wasn't every building. And they are arranged in, you know,
4 some merit, not merit. But it's used as a complete tool. You know, at one point, I think the
5 County Board just wanted a list of, "Just give me the list of the 20 best buildings." And staff said,
6 "No, you can't do that. We gotta look at everything as a whole." So, I'll stop with this because I
7 could just go on for hours, and there's no point. I think that--I support what's recommended in the
8 plan 'cause I think it--Site Plan is when we have the discussion. Just like we have a lot of other
9 hard discussions apparently we will be having about height and some other things when Site Plan
10 comes along, and retail frontages. So it might as well just join the group.

11 **Commissioner Forinash:** I will point out, Mr. Cover, that this morning you stood in front of 120
12 people and talked about streamlining the Site Plan process. And that now we're pushing a whole
13 lot of major decisions out of the plan and into the Site Plan process. So that's going to work
14 contrary to that goal of streamlining going forward. I'm gonna let Commissioner Iacomini's
15 comments be the last on "Cultural Resources." We have to get moving. We have to get to a
16 motion soon, or we're not gonna have any capacity left to be coherent. We may be in the danger
17 zone already. We had five other topics. I didn't mean that as reflecting on anybody's comments,
18 just my own capacity. We have five other topics still laid out for discussion. Those are under the
19 other topics, the section of the last page of Commissioner Cole's outline. "Priority Concept
20 Recommendations," "Guiding Principles," "Sustainability," "Implementation," and "Community
21 Benefits." Let's move through them very quickly. Very quickly. As quickly as possible. I won't
22 repeat that again. Number one, "Priority Concept Recommendations," referencing pages 16 and
23 17. Discussion. Commissioner Schroll.

24 **Commissioner Schroll:** I just would like to make a quick comment about what Commissioner
25 Cole said previously about pulling out the undergrounding of the parking and that being the, kind
26 of, the first item. I would support that. And Commissioner Cole, if you are making a motion on
27 that later, I would certainly support that. I have heard from community members in the
28 Courthouse area that they are concerned about how this unfolds. They like what they're seeing,
29 but they just kind of don't know how the chips are gonna fall. And if nothing goes underground
30 first, they're worried, you know, "Are we gonna lose this whole thing? And is this just gonna be a
31 vision that never gets realized?" So, I would certainly support that, Commissioner Cole.

32 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further comment or discussion. "Guiding Principles." I'll note that
33 they made you take out the, "Where the revolution starts." Good.

34 **Mr. Krider:** It's still in there.

35 **Commissioner Forinash:** Oh, there it is. Yes. Under Courthouse Square will be. Thank you.
36 Discussion. "Sustainability." "Implementation." Commissioner Iacomini.

37 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Thank you. I would like to talk a little bit about implementation
38 because that is how plans get done, right? We've actually got to do part of them. And I--as we've
39 been saying, I think, that the biggest feature is, of course, the open space. Which we get by
40 moving the parking underground. So, the three studies that are to come in the implementation
41 that I wanna highlight and talk a little bit about, is the number 12, which is "Undertake a Parking
42 Analysis," number 13--oh, not number--12, 19, about "Cultural Resources," and 14, "Open
43 Space." And for the parking and open space it says, "See IP." And I remember from the Wendy's

1 sight plan that we actually have a Courthouse Open Space Fund. And I'm not sure if they're been
2 other Site Plans that have had to pay into that, but I'm wondering, instead of letting the money sit
3 there, probably--I don't know if it's bearing interest some place, what it's doing, if we even have
4 it from the developer yet. Which, of course, from Wendy's we don't 'cause it's not built yet, but if
5 we had some others. Is it possible to use some other funding mechanisms to start both the
6 parking and the open space planning? 'Cause the parking isn't just--and the studies shouldn't be
7 just limited to how much parking, the right size parking. It needs to talk about the phasing, how
8 we go from zero, you know, no surface parking, what happens in the interim. All of those
9 questions are really important because, as Commissioner Cole and Commissioner Schroll have
10 said, you know, that's one of the central features here. And the sooner we can start looking at that
11 and figuring it out, we can also begin to see how much parking we need, and what are the
12 opportunities for having assistance with that by private development around the square? And in
13 fact, if we wanna talk and explore a public-private partnership, I don't think that's the way to go.
14 You know, I think we need to look at Ballston Quarter and figure out how we do that. Arlington
15 doesn't do that much. But if it wants to be part of the study, that's great. But again, it has to
16 happen now. The same thing with open space because that's the thing that is central here, and
17 that will really get the most people excited, is having planning for the open space. And thirdly,
18 really, really important, is the cultural resource study. And we hear that AED is looking at it, but
19 we're really not going to know much, even about how to design the square a lot, if we don't
20 know, "Will we maybe have, use the first floor of the building in the south for performances, or
21 what we do?" They, all three of these, inform each other. And the sooner we can start on these, I
22 think the better we will be. And I know the board was interested in implementation. So I guess,
23 the question in there is, you know, how do we look at this to prioritize these studies as coming
24 first? And can we find other funding mechanisms for them?

25 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further comment on "Implementation?" I believe the last discussion
26 topic was "Community Benefits." Commissioner Sockwell.

27 **Commissioner Sockwell:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to ask Mr. Krider, there's a
28 reference on, I believe it's page 20 of the Staff Memo. In the comment matrix about the County
29 Attorney weighing in on the air rights issue. What's the status of that?

30 **Mr. Krider:** On--weighing in on what?

31 **Commissioner Sockwell:** Weighing in on the air rights issue. This would be the air rights above
32 the parking lot. Who owns it? Tornado or us?

33 **Mr. Krider:** Are you talkin' about in the Site Plan Memo?

34 **Commissioner Sockwell:** I'm actually not sure what I'm talking about. I believe it's the Site Plan
35 Memo. It's the comment number 89. In my draft--it's the comment matrix itself. In my draft,
36 there's a notation that the County Attorney's actually reviewed the Site Plan and has offered some
37 comments. Can you describe--?

38 **Mr. Krider:** Yeah, the memo that was part of the appendix, Andrew actually did the bulk of the
39 research, and showed extraordinary diligence in trying to get to the bottom of this. But staff has
40 determined, and if you read the memo, that the parking lot is part of Site Plan 231, that there is
41 remaining density on that because part of the parking lot at one time was a courthouse building
42 which was torn down. And that we have approximately 300,000 square feet of unused density

1 within Site Plan 231. And the County Attorney reviewed that and concurred based on the
2 information that we provided him, that that would be a--that's a good estimate of the remaining
3 GFA on that site.

4 **Commissioner Sockwell:** Okay, so the public owns that, the rights then, that's the determination.

5 **Mr. Krider:** This information has been posted online. We've notified people who have been
6 interested in the process that this information is available. And I want to acknowledge Ms.
7 O'Connell* because she was the one who actually encouraged us to dig a little deeper. And that
8 effort, I think, is rewarding. Because this will help us as we move to the next stage, when we
9 start talking about, "How do we create density for other sites?" You know, here's a pool of
10 density right there. This also gives us the ability to build our future county buildings with
11 existing density that exists.

12 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further comment on "Community Benefits?" Commissioner Cole.

13 **Commissioner Cole:** One of the elements that we commonly find in Sector Plans is a list of
14 community benefits that would be generated by the redevelopment of the area. Such a list is not
15 included in this plan. I would suggest to you that you consider putting in a discussion of
16 community benefits. The principal community benefit here is obvious. It's the creation of a
17 public square. And that's gonna require some investment. And to the extent that some of that
18 investment can come from and mitigate the consequences of the redevelopment of the private
19 parcels that surround it, we should do that. But there should be a discussion of the community
20 benefits that this plan generates, and how there'll be financed. And they should be listed as--

21 **Mr. Krider:** That was not part of the charge that the County Board gave us. So we have not--
22 we've stayed within the scope of the charge.

23 **Commissioner Cole:** All right.

24 **Commissioner Forinash:** I believe that concludes our discussion, outside of the context of
25 motions at least.

26 **Commissioner Forinash:** So let's move to a motion if we could. Commissioner Cole?

27 **Commissioner Cole:** Just as a preface, I'm going to start with a very general motion. I have here
28 I think 14 subsidiary amendments to the general motion. Maybe that's 15. I'm trying to reflect
29 both my own comments and those made by others during the discussion. So, my
30 recommendation to the chair is that we walk through each of these one at a time and vote on each
31 of them because it forces us--otherwise, we are forced to support or oppose things which we--in
32 a group that we may not in fact oppose, and the Board won't understand how we really feel on
33 each of the elements. So with that said, I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the
34 County Board that it adopt the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum as proposed by the staff in its
35 September 1 draft, as amended by--as amended. And I will--you know, with the following
36 proposed amendments. And I will come back to the amendments. I'll be happy to walk them
37 through one by one, but Mr. Chairman.

38 **Commissioner Forinash:** So, you've made a clean motion. You're looking for a second, correct?
39 Seconded by Commissioner Hughes.

40 **Commissioner Hughes:** Seconded.

1 **Commissioner Cole:** Then you may want to come back and vote on that as part of the entire
2 package at the end.

3 **Commissioner Forinash:** So, you're suggesting that the further things you wanted to move
4 would not be moved as amendments, but would be separate motions? I think they should be
5 moved as amendments.

6 **Commissioner Cole:** Fine, okay. Okay, do you want me to go to amendment then?

7 **Commissioner Forinash:** I don't think there's any point in discussing the main until we do.

8 **Commissioner Cole:** Okay, I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the Board that
9 it include substantially more specificity in the plan with regard to building heights, streetscape
10 dimensions, and other design elements so that the community's expectations for the build out of
11 the plan are clear, and that developers' expectations for the limitations that they face are also
12 clear.

13 **Commissioner Forinash:** Amendment--motion to amend has been made. Do I hear a second?

14 **Commissioner Siegel:** Second.

15 **Commissioner Forinash:** Okay, I heard the second from--was it--we'll go with Commissioner
16 Siegel. Discussion of the motion. Commissioner Siegel?

17 **Commissioner Siegel:** Very, very quickly, I do support this and I do believe that something can
18 be crafted in a way that allows for the pursuit of extraordinary buildings, creativity, but gives the
19 community certainty. I also want to support your comment that we are in a phase, a period where
20 we're looking for a streamlined process for site plan. And we have to be cognizant of how much
21 work we're going to give site plan because the flexibility that you are suggesting we need will
22 add the time to discussion and site plan and difficulty to resolving some of those issues.

23 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Gutshall.

24 **Commissioner Gutshall:** Just to clarify so I understand, in our letter for the RTA, our main
25 motion noted there were two things that we supported that was already in the RTA. One was the
26 proposed heights as included in the June 12th, 2015 draft. So, are we now--are you suggesting
27 that the September 1 has significantly changed from the June 12th?

28 **Commissioner Cole:** Indeed I am. It has significantly changed by adding to it the notion that
29 bonus density can be granted above the maximums, and therefore heights are imprecise.

30 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion?

31 **Commissioner Cole:** Another motion on heights to come, so.

32 **Commissioner Forinash:** Hearing no further discussion, I'm calling a vote on the motion to
33 amend. All those in favor, raise your hand. Opposed? Abstain? Motion carries ten to zero to one.
34 Further discussion or amendments? Commissioner Cole.

35 **Commissioner Cole:** I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board
36 that the--that the Addendum clearly define architectural distinction and identify those buildings
37 for which architectural distinction is an expectation, both public and private buildings. And that
38 architectural distinction not be the basis for bonus density.

1 **Commissioner Siegel:** Can you repeat the last few words? I didn't hear.

2 **Commissioner Cole:** That architectural distinction not be the basis for bonus density.

3 **Commissioner Forinash:** Motion to amend made by Commissioner Cole, seconded by
4 Commissioner Harner. Discussion? I see querulous looks. Somebody must have a question.
5 Commissioner Schroll.

6 **Commissioner Schroll:** Question for Commissioner Cole. Do you have a sense of how one
7 would go about defining architectural distinction, how we would know if we saw it, or how
8 would staff would know?

9 **Commissioner Cole:** That's pornography.

10 **Commissioner Schroll:** Right, that's kind of why I asked the question that way.

11 **Commissioner Cole:** We all agree that we could identify pornography, so.

12 **Commissioner Schroll:** I'm just wondering if it becomes sort of architectural distinction to one
13 person and not to another.

14 **Commissioner Cole:** I don't disagree with you. I'm certainly willing to allow staff the freedom
15 to seek to achieve a clear definition.

16 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Harner and then Commissioner Sockwell.

17 **Commissioner Harner:** Thanks, Commissioner Forinash. I wasn't going to bring this up earlier,
18 but since you asked the question, it was pretty well documented in the 80s, I think, and 90s in
19 San Francisco, there was a lot of--the zoning allowed for increased density and height with
20 architectural distinction. And it quickly became known as the beauty contest, and the community
21 eventually abandoned that. And correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Krider, but it's my recollection that
22 they abandoned that notion of trying to grant extra height on distinction because one person's
23 distinction is another's displeasure such as with historic buildings that may or may not be
24 distinguished. So, it is treacherous ground to walk.

25 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Sockwell?

26 **Commissioner Sockwell:** I was just going to note that in other sector plans, we have noted from
27 time to time that we expect buildings of architectural distinction and let it go at that. And that
28 seems to be working perfectly well.

29 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Cole.

30 **Commissioner Cole:** If my seconder here would agree, I would modify the amendment to
31 eliminate the definition of architectural distinction and just identify those particular buildings
32 where architectural distinction is expected, and leave it at that.

33 **Commissioner Ciotti:** I don't understand the motion.

34 **Commissioner Cole:** It suggest in a less that precise way, unfortunately, that the expectation for
35 the design of a building is somewhat higher in certain locations than in other locations. For
36 example, the civic building on the south end of the square would be a perfect example where we
37 expect a really, truly outstanding design. But I can't tell you how we will define what that is.

1 Similarly, on the Landmark block, on the Strayer block, we might similarly expect pretty darn
2 good design because the Strayer block is at the visual end of a very long drive. The Landmark
3 building will be the central building and Courthouse seen from a distance, so you may want to--
4 you know, I just--please?

5 **Commissioner Ciotti:** A point of clarification. What I heard you say is that you--the motion was
6 to de-link bonus density with the requirement for architect. So, but now you're--

7 **Commissioner Cole:** I'm not changing that part at all. There was three parts to it before. Part one
8 was define architectural distinction. Part two was identify the locations where we expect
9 architectural distinction. And part three was decouple bonus from architectural distinction. Parts
10 two and three are still part of the motion. Part one I am jettisoning if my seconder will concur
11 with it, which he's shaking his head and that he will. Am I clear?

12 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Harner?

13 **Commissioner Harner:** I'm so sorry, I know the hour is late. You know, one way of handling
14 this which would be typical is that architectural distinction may not just be a building, but you
15 would have--for instance, the slide we see now, you might say that there should be architectural
16 distinction on the northeast corner of building four, that that's a place-making* opportunity. Or
17 there might be smaller features where there's a tower, or entrance, or special feature. So, it's not
18 necessarily just sort of the gross standard of a single whole building, but it's more of the fine-
19 grained pattern making of distinction. So again, I concur with Commissioner Cole's motion
20 because it's a rather crude marker to just say the whole building is distinguished or not. And also,
21 if you're not getting extra height, that means I guess you don't have to be distinguished in any
22 way, so it's again a problematic idea.

23 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Cole.

24 **Commissioner Cole:** I mean, just very quickly, the Wendy's--the new Wendy's building is a
25 perfect example where, looking at it from the west, it does have an element that is distinctive.
26 The rest of the building is pretty unremarkable, frankly. So, that's one person's opinion only.

27 **Commissioner Forinash:** We need to get to a vote on this. Does anyone need the motion
28 restated?

29 **Commissioner Harner:** I would like it just to make sure it's clear that the bonus density is not
30 linked.

31 **Commissioner Forinash:** I'm sorry, can you repeat that audibly?

32 **Commissioner Harner:** Please restate the motion.

33 **Commissioner Forinash:** Thank you. Commissioner Cole?

34 **Commissioner Cole:** I wish you'd listen the first time. I move that the main motion be amended
35 so the Planning Commission recommends to the County Board that it establish specific sites in
36 the study area where buildings are expected to achieve architectural distinction, and that the--and
37 that there is no relationship between earned bonus and architectural distinction.

38 **Commissioner Forinash:** All right, all those in favor of the motion on the table, raise your hand.
39 One, two, three, four, five, six, seven. Did you get the names? Opposed? Three. Abstentions?

1 Commissioner Brown abstains. Motion passes seven to three to one and is added to the main
2 motion. Further discussion or amendments? Commissioner Cole.

3 **Commissioner Cole:** I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the Board that the
4 Sector Plan Addendum identify maximum heights--maximum allowable heights that are
5 achievable without bonus, as well as maximum allowable heights that are achievable with bonus
6 density.

7 **Commissioner Forinash:** Seconded by Commissioner Schroll. I don't think this one's going to
8 require restatement. That was very succinct, thank you. Commissioner Hughes is waving
9 goodbye? No. Discussion? All right, all those in favor of the motion to amend, raise your hand.
10 Opposed? Motion carries unanimously. There were no abstentions, right?

11 **Commissioner Cole:** I wanted just to clarify and point out that motion. That is on a site by site
12 basis, not a single maximum height for the entire study area.

13 **Commissioner Forinash:** That's certainly the way I understood it. Did anyone want to change
14 their vote? Okay. Further discussion or amendments? Commissioner Cole.

15 **Commissioner Cole:** I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the Board that the
16 sector plan explicitly clarify the relationship between the retail action plan and the courthouse
17 sector plan addendum, and provide clarity with respect to which standards apply in which
18 circumstances.

19 **Commissioner Forinash:** Seconded by Commissioner Siegel. Discussion? All those in favor of
20 the motion to amend, raise your hand. Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries unanimously.
21 Added to the main motion. Commissioner Cole?

22 **Commissioner Cole:** I apologize for the complications of this one. I'll try to make it simple. I
23 move that the Planning Commission recommend to the Board that the Sector Plan Addendum
24 limit 15th Street North to pedestrians, bicycles, and transit. However, if the County Board
25 decides that motor vehicles shall be allowed to use 15th Street North, that the design of 15th
26 Street North--and in addition, the design of 14th Street North, segments of 14th Street North
27 adjoining the civic building, that those segments be designed in a way that constrains motor
28 vehicle speeds to a very modest level.

29 **Commissioner Forinash:** The motion's been made. A second?

30 **Commissioner Cole:** Now just very quickly, to sort of say that more simply, and I apologize for
31 the seeming complexity, the first part says we still believe that 15th Street North should not have
32 motor vehicles on it other than transit. The second part basically says in the segments of 15th
33 Street North and 14th Street North adjoining the study area, and that's in the maps, that those
34 areas--if there are going to be vehicles on them, they should be designed in a way to discourage
35 speeding. And when I say speeding, it's anything over 15 miles an hour. But I didn't define that
36 and I realize that.

37 **Commissioner Forinash:** I'm not going to ask a question of staff, but I'm fairly certain that their
38 design intent as conveyed in the document is to limit those speeds with appropriate techniques.

39 **Commissioner Cole:** That may be true, but they show a simple cross-section for the design.

1 **Commissioner Forinash:** I'm torn on this one because I'm virtually certain that the Board has no
2 interest in entertaining the first part of this amendment. That said, I supported it before and I'm
3 inclined to support it again, fall on that sword one more time, make sure I'm dead. Further
4 discussion? All right, all those in favor of the motion to amend, raise your hand. Opposed?
5 Motion carries nine to two. Further discussion or amendments? Commissioner Cole.

6 **Commissioner Cole:** I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board
7 that it amend the priority concept planned recommendations by removing the sentence relating to
8 parking from the proposed recommendation regarding the 21st Century Civic Square, and
9 establishing new first principle or first recommendation on parking that reflects the foundational
10 nature of parking in the plan.

11 **Commissioner Schroll:** Seconded.

12 **Commissioner Cole:** Seconded by Commissioner Schroll. Discussion?

13 **Commissioner Siegel:** I couldn't hear it.

14 **Commissioner Forinash:** Could you restate that, please, into the microphone?

15 **Commissioner Cole:** I recommend that the Planning Commission recommend--I move that the
16 Planning Commission recommend--I hate these things. I recommend to the County Board that it
17 amend the priority concept planned recommendations by removing the sentence relating to
18 parking from the proposed recommendation on the 21st Century Civic Square, and develop a
19 new first principle on parking that reflects the foundational nature of parking in the plan.

20 **Commissioner Forinash:** Seconded by Commissioner Schroll. Discussion? I'm seeing
21 querulous looks from some corners. Am I right, Commissioner Cole, that the intent of this is
22 simply to elevate parking to its own priority rather than subsuming it in the square? Not literally
23 subsuming it in the square. You got it. All right, let's call a vote. All those in favor of the motion
24 to amend, raise your hand. Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries nine to two. Is this called a
25 voterama on the hill?

26 **Commissioner Iacomini:** It would be.

27 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion or amendments? Commissioner Cole?

28 **Commissioner Cole:** I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board
29 that it amend Figure 2.16 to remove the underground pedestrian promenade. And further, I
30 recommend that Section 2.16 dealing with north-south be deleted from the report.

31 **Commissioner Forinash:** Second. Discussion? Commissioner Siegel.

32 **Commissioner Siegel:** I just want to say that I really was persuaded by some of the comments to
33 change my point of view that I had expressed, and I feel I must express that.

34 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion? All those in favor of the motion to amend, raise
35 your hand. One, two, three, four, five. I count five, keep them up. All those--excuse me, all those
36 in favor of the motion to amend, please raise your hand and keep it up. One, three, three, four,
37 five, six, seven. Thank you for correcting my counting. Opposed? One, two, three. Abstain? One,
38 Commissioner Schroll. Motion passes, carries seven to three to one, and is added to the main
39 motion. Further discussion or amendments, Commissioner Cole?

1 **Commissioner Cole:** I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the Board that it
2 directs staff to identify the land use tools that might be employed to increase density on the
3 Verizon Plaza site in a way so as--site period. I move that the Planning Commission recommend
4 to the Board that it directs staff to identify the land use tools that could be employed, that might
5 be employed to increase density on the Verizon Plaza site.

6 **Commissioner Iacomini:** I'll second.

7 **Commissioner Forinash:** Seconded by Commissioner Iacomini, thank you. Further discussion?
8 All those in favor, raise your hand. One, two, three--raise it and keep it up, please. I count nine.
9 Up, Ginger, all the way up. Michelle's counting. Opposed? Two. No abstentions. Motion carries
10 nine to two. Further discussion or amendments? Commissioner Cole.

11 **Commissioner Cole:** I move that the County Board amend the plan to require that the design of
12 the square locate that square principally at grade.

13 **Commissioner Forinash:** Motion has been made.

14 **Commissioner Sockwell:** Seconded.

15 **Commissioner Forinash:** We have an audibility problem. Please repeat the motion into the
16 microphone, Commissioner Cole.

17 **Commissioner Cole:** I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board
18 that it amend the plan to require that the design of the square be principally at grade.

19 **Commissioner Ciotti:** I have a question.

20 **Commissioner Cole:** Sure.

21 **Commissioner Ciotti:** I thought staff said that's what they intend to do.

22 **Commissioner Cole:** I heard staff say that with respect to the civil building, it was not going to
23 be at grade.

24 **Mr. Krider:** No, no, the intent is to keep it at grade. I was just saying that if the civil building is
25 built in such a way that there's access to an upper level, then you are going to have some
26 elements that are not at grade.

27 **Commissioner Cole:** So I didn't think this was objectionable. It just tries to put this in writing so
28 that some future generation could come along and say, "Let's build it up."

29 **Commissioner Forinash:** Motion has been made. Is there a second? Seconded by Commissioner
30 Sockwell. Further discussion? All those in favor of the motion to amend, raise your hand. I count
31 nine. Opposed? Two. Abstentions, none. Motion carries nine to two. Further discussion or
32 amendments? Commissioner Cole.

33 **Commissioner Cole:** I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board
34 that the Plan be amended in Section 5.4 to recommend preservation only be considered for the
35 First Federal Savings and Loan and Investment buildings by the Planning Commission, and its
36 site plan review committee, and the Historic Affairs Landmark and Review Board, in
37 consideration of a final site plan for the Landmark Block application, site plan application.

1 **Commissioner Forinash:** Seconded by Commissioner Harner. Discussion? Commissioner
2 Hughes.

3 **Commissioner Hughes:** I just want to make sure I'm clear that Commissioner Cole, your intent
4 is that the First Investment Bank is the only façade to which is being recommended as being
5 considered?

6 **Commissioner Cole:** No, it's First Federal Savings--First Federal Savings and Loan, and the
7 Investment Building. There are two buildings. Those are the two buildings as Commissioner
8 Harner pointed out that are on the HRI. None of the other buildings are on the HRI.

9 **Commissioner Hughes:** Okay.

10 **Commissioner Forinash:** And those are also the same two as shown on the graphic on-screen,
11 correct? No?

12 **Commissioner Iacomini:** And the Boston Market. The other building is on the 15th Street side.

13 **Commissioner Forinash:** I withdraw my comment. Further discussion? All those in favor of the
14 motion to amend, raise your hand. Opposed? Motion carries nine to two, added to the main
15 motion. Commissioner Cole?

16 **Commissioner Cole:** I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board
17 that the addendum include a priority list of community benefits that could result from
18 redevelopment of privately owned parcels in the study area.

19 **Commissioner Siegel:** Question--sorry, it's going to be a second.

20 **Commissioner Forinash:** Unless it's a clarifying question about what the motion itself is.

21 **Commissioner Siegel:** It is a clarifying question. Such a list, do you envision it to be illustrative
22 or complete?

23 **Commissioner Cole:** I don't envision either of those. I just--I would like some thought be put
24 into what are the community benefits that could be generated. I certainly don't expect it to be
25 complete--

26 **Commissioner Siegel:** Okay, that helps. That's fine.

27 **Commissioner Forinash:** Is there a second for that motion?

28 **Commissioner Siegel:** Then I'd second it.

29 **Commissioner Cole:** I don't see it as limiting in any way.

30 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Siegel seconded. Further discussion? All those in favor
31 of the motion to amend, raise your hand. One, two, three, four, five, six. Opposed? One, two,
32 three, four, five. Motion carries six to five, and is added to the main motion. Commissioner
33 Cole?

34 **Commissioner Cole:** This is the last one. I move that the Planning Commission recommend to
35 the Board that it prioritize parking, open space, and cultural resources studies in the
36 Implementation Plan, and direct staff to identify resources needed to conduct and finish the
37 studies within 2 years following adoption of the Plan.

- 1 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Seconded.
- 2 **Commissioner Forinash:** Seconded by--seconded by Commissioner Iacomini. Discussion? All
3 those in favor of the motion to amend, raise your hand. Opposed? Motion carries ten to one, and
4 is added to the main. Further discussion or amendments to the main motion? Commissioner
5 Iacomini?
- 6 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Mr. Chairman, I move that the County Board recommend to the--the
7 Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that on page 38, add the following
8 sentence to the end of Section 4.3.6: if the theatre site is developed as a unified site with the
9 Court Square West site, the northern entrance to the combined site be designed with a prominent
10 civic entrance.
- 11 **Commissioner Forinash:** Seconded by commissioner Harner. Discussion? All those in favor of
12 the motion to amend, raise your hand. Motion carries unanimously.
- 13 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Mr. Chairman.
- 14 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Iacomini.
- 15 **Commissioner Iacomini:** I have another amendment. I move that the Planning Commission
16 recommend to the County Board that the following language be added to Section 2.17, page 29,
17 a new Section 2.18, north and south square: in the future design of the north and south square,
18 allow for pedestrian paths both east and west across the square, as well as on the diagonal.
- 19 **Commissioner Forinash:** You referred to that as a new Section 2.18, is that correct? Or did I
20 miss something?
- 21 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Yes, 2.18 at the end, at the bottom of the page on the section of--for
22 clarification about pedestrian.
- 23 **Commissioner Forinash:** Motion was made.
- 24 **Commissioner Harner:** Clarification.
- 25 **Commissioner Forinash:** Please? Commissioner Harner, the microphone.
- 26 **Commissioner Harner:** Is that a sub-heading, though, under underground circulation
27 recommendations? At the top of the page. On page 29.
- 28 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Oh, you're right.
- 29 **Commissioner Forinash:** You're suggesting that it should go somewhere else.
- 30 **Commissioner Harner:** Yes.
- 31 **Commissioner Forinash:** Anyone who has the eyes and sees where it should go. You can
32 certainly say in the appropriate place and save us the hunting.
- 33 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Nope, it's okay. I withdraw--well, I don't--I withdraw that motion. I
34 move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that language be added on
35 page 27, new bullet 2.12, North and South Square: in the future design of the north and south
36 square, allow for pedestrian paths both east and west across the square, as well as on the
37 diagonal.

1 **Commissioner Harner:** Second.

2 **Commissioner Forinash:** Motion has been made and seconded. I'll just point out that there is a
3 2.12 on the next page, so for now let's call it after 2.11. After 2.11.

4 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Right.

5 **Commissioner Forinash:** Motion has been made and seconded. Is there discussion or need for
6 clarification? All those in favor, raise your hand. Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries nine,
7 one, one. We're all calling 911. Further discussion? Amendments? All right, before I call the
8 main motion, I want to say a couple of things. One is a thanks to all of you who participated;
9 Commissioner Iacomini who led the work group, and a huge amount of work in that; the
10 commissioners who came to the LRPC and participated, which was many of us; Commissioner
11 Cole for working to marshal our discussion tonight and obviously carrying a lot of load in
12 turning our discussion into a motion on the fly, which is a huge challenge and one I would not
13 have been up for tonight; and to the staff who have led this with the exception of Mr. Beske, who
14 deserves a shaken fist from all of us, I think. And especially you, Mr. Carter. But thank you to
15 you and your team, both within your department and across the other departments you worked
16 with for everything you've done to help put this vision together of the future of the heart of
17 Arlington. You know that I've made the comment in public and in private that I think this is
18 among the most important things we'll deal with, so thank you for all the work. Further
19 comments before we call the main motion? Commissioner Harner.

20 **Commissioner Harner:** Yeah, I'll just keep this brief, but thank you Commissioner Forinash. I
21 would like to thank Commissioner Iacomini, especially for your good-natured entertaining of the
22 historic preservation conversation. I actually think it's important and it's good to discuss these
23 things. In terms of staff, I really would like to thank staff and

24 **Commissioner Iacomini** for continuing to work on the plan. I know some of these conversations
25 are arduous and irritating to some people, but you know, perhaps it's a messy process that helps
26 us get to a result that is better in some ways. And I think I've seen this plan move across the
27 course of time as to become a very solid plan. And I think it actually is a really good framework
28 for us to move forward on. Hard to get here, but really appreciate all the hard work, and I'm
29 excited by this.

30 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Mr. Chairman?

31 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner, do you want to go last? Because Commissioner Siegel
32 also asked to be recognized. Commissioner Siegel?

33 **Commissioner Siegel:** I also wanted to just thank everybody. It's really been--I haven't been
34 deeply, deeply involved, but it's been fascinating. And it's an honor to work on a project like this.
35 I only want to add that I was really fascinated by the two perspectives. One, the flexibility
36 versus specificity. I am convinced that we can have both. I'm not sure we're quite there yet, but I
37 do feel we can have both if we work a little further to craft a template that can really, firmly
38 reassure community, and have good and constructive discussions, and SBRCs with developers. I
39 don't think we're quite there yet, but I'm convinced we can get here.

40 **Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Iacomini.

1 **Commissioner Iacomini:** Thank you. And thank all of my colleagues on the commission for a
2 really good discussion, and for your thoughtful comments and motions this evening. And I think
3 the working group members would thank you all as well. And I agree with Commissioner Siegel,
4 I think there's a way for us to have buildings that are malleable. I'm not going to use the F word.
5 And we need to have that discussion, and I'm really glad and I think we will--I hope we continue
6 this discussion because there is a way forward. There's a way not to have chaos. There is a way
7 to keep a compact with the community as well as with the development community. So, I think
8 that that's a good thing. I will say to my colleagues that my hand is not going to be able to go up
9 to vote for the final motion for a couple of reasons, but that it's just a small idiosyncrasy with me
10 that I just disagreed with one or two of the parts, and I just don't want to vote to support that. But
11 that doesn't mean I don't appreciate everything that you've done this evening.

12 **Commissioner Harner:** Are you recommending that we all vote against the motion?

13 **Commissioner Iacomini:** You know, it would be fascinating if we all abstained, but I don't think
14 that works. Thank you.

15 **Commissioner Forinash:** Further comment? All right, all those in favor--well, all right. The
16 main motion has been amended 14 times. I do not have the language of each of those
17 amendments, so I'm not going to read down and even try to describe them. We're going to have
18 to trust our memories at this point, so I'm going to move us to a vote on the main motion. All
19 those in favor of the main motion to recommend adoption of the plan as amended? The main
20 motion to recommend adoption of the plan as amended, please raise your hands. Opposed?
21 Abstain? The motion carries ten to zero to one. Thank you.

22