



# ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

## ARLINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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



CHRISTOPHER FORINASH  
CHAIR

NANCY IACOMINI  
VICE-CHAIR

MICHELLE STAHLHUT  
COORDINATOR

GIZELE C. JOHNSON  
CLERK

November 10, 2015

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

**SUBJECT: 3. SP #193, Ballston Quarter**

- A. SP#193 SITE PLAN AMENDMENT** Ballston Air Rights Acquisition Company, LLC, to permit modifications to façade, streetscape, landscape and the addition of approximately 14,838 square feet of office GFA with modification of use regulations for density and other modifications as may be necessary to achieve the proposed development.
- B. SP#193 SITE PLAN AMENDMENT** FC Ballston Common, LLC to permit modification to the façade, streetscape, landscape and the addition of approximately 11,854 square feet of retail GFA with modification of use regulations as may be necessary to achieve the proposed development.
- C. SP #193 SITE PLAN AMENDMENT** Ballston Acquisition Company, LLC to permit construction of approximately 406 residential units and 66,475 square feet of retail GFA with modification of use regulations for density, height, parking, penthouse uses, and other modifications as may be necessary to achieve the proposed development.
- D. Enact an Ordinance of Vacation to Vacate:** 1) a Portion of an Easement and Right of Way located at the southwest corner of Wilson Boulevard and N. Randolph Street, Parcel "A-1" Ballston Common (Ballston Quarter) and 2) Portions of an Easement and Right of Way located along the northwest side of N. Randolph Street, south of Wilson Boulevard, Parcel "A-1" Ballston Common (Ballston Quarter).

**RECOMMENDATIONS: The Planning recommends that the County Board:**

- 1. Adopt the amendments to Site Plan #193 as recommended by staff in the manager's draft memorandum to the County Board dated October 29, 2015 with the following amendments:**
  - a. Prioritize renewal of the garage entrance and the garage façade, as well as the landscaped area in the streetscape surrounding the garage in the Capital**

P.C. #41.A-D.



## **PUBLIC SPEAKERS**

There were two public speakers for this item.

Tina Leone, Ballston BID, spoke in support of the project and the need for a successful shopping destination in order to revitalize the greater Ballston area.

Jim Richardson, Ashton Heights Civic Association, spoke in support of the project but highlighted concerns including community benefits and how they relate to the amount of density and height requested. His civic association, he noted believes the details of the public-private partnership details need to be made available to the public. In addition, in the view of Ashton Heights, there is an insufficient amount of open space being created; the reduced parking ratio for the residential building is not sufficiently justified, and the four curb cuts on N. Randolph St are too many.

## **REVIEW PROCESS**

Commissioner Schroll reported the Transportation Commission (TC) discussed circulation during construction and related phasing, conditions for access to the bridge after Metro closes, streetscape, sidewalks, the parking ratio and associated Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies. TC unanimously supported the project.

Commissioner Cole reported the SPRC met five times on the proposal and made several accommodations in response to the request from the County Board for a speedy review.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

The Planning Commission reviewed all three proposals, site plan wide issues, and the related Vacation. A summary of major topics is included below. A full transcript of the discussion is appended to this letter.

### **Residential Building**

The Planning Commission discussed the relatively low parking ratio of 0.7 for the residential building, whether there is sufficient space in the proposed additional parking located in the Ballston Parking Garage, and whether residents can be assured County garage access if needed. Staff reviewed the availability of spaces and percentages of committed parking contracts in the County garage to show there is sufficient availability and said that because it is County-owned, legal agreements for monthly allotments could be adjusted if needed. In response to questions about the safety of entry and exist for the residents at the Randolph Street entrance, staff clarified there are no additional curb cuts on Randolph Street but there will be analysis of the existing signal to adjust the function as needed to minimize conflicts between pedestrians, and entry and exit from the residential and County garages. The Planning Commission reviewed each of the community benefits listed in the staff report and discussed including the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge in the public access easements.

### **Office Renovation**

Regarding the office building renovation, the applicant described the proposed enhancements and the division between office improvements and the Macy's store below. There was discussion of whether staff should have further encouraged the applicant to incorporate the Macy's store into the site plan amendments. Staff clarified that applicants are generally encouraged to

consolidate and/or cooperate when there are multiple owners; however, the County cannot control this. A Commissioner noted the lack of consolidation should not be considered a community benefit for which bonus should be considered. The applicant said they had worked with Macy's since 2007 on a variety of site-related efforts, and while Macy's continues to be a valuable part of the site, it is not part of the redevelopment.

### **Ballston Mall**

Planning Commission comments on the design of the mall included a suggestion that there are too many stairs in the design of the West Plaza and it should be made more accessible. In response to questions regarding facade design, the applicant clarified that materials other than brick were chosen specifically to bridge a modern aesthetic and bring a more industrial aesthetic to the site. The Commission reiterated the significance of the hours of operation of the pedestrian bridge and securing easements.

### **Site Plan Wide Issues**

The Planning Commission discussed the pedestrian bridge, streetscape, garage improvements, bike parking, site plan conditions, and construction phasing.

Commissioners emphasized that the pedestrian bridge is a vital component of the project, the existing public art on the bridge should be reused, and easements should ensure 24/7 access including to atrium doors, possibly with minimal time closed for maintenance. Staff responded that easements for 24-hour access is still under negotiation with the applicant. The applicant responded they cannot control property they do not own but continue to look at 24-hour access wherever feasible and practical.

Regarding street cross-sections, the Commission asked about street widths on Glebe Road, whether two turn lanes into the parking garage were necessary, and if staff had worked with VDOT to narrow Glebe Road. Staff said they would look into the widths and necessity of the two turn lanes and described an ongoing multi-year effort to work with VDOT to improve accessibility and streetscapes along Glebe Road. It is unlikely VDOT will entertain any narrowing of Glebe Road along the frontage of this project. In response to community concerns regarding jaywalking on Wilson Boulevard, Commissioners asked if there were data collected on jaywalking and if the proposed cross section of Wilson at Randolph meets or exceeds the 65 feet called for in the Master Transportation Plan(MTP). Staff responded the proposed cross-section is 59 feet and does comply with the MTP.

Regarding the streetscape, there was concern expressed about the lack of streetscape improvements around the Ballston parking garage and the need for improvements to the façade entrance of the garage to compliment the proposed development. There was significant discussion regarding the County, while not participating in the revitalization, doing its part to improve the Ballston Parking Garage and Glebe Road. The garage and road need to match the mall in terms of level of improvements and the County needs to take care if its part of the site. It's an opportunity for placemaking, which needs to include the garage and Glebe Road. It should be part of the discussion for community investment now without a hard line dividing the garage and the mall.

The Planning Commission discussed the multi-modal bike parking facility at Metro plaza, and suggested this site plan is the ideal location for a centralized bike parking facility.

**PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION**

Commissioner Cole moved the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that it adopt the amendments to Site Plan #193 as recommended by the staff in the manager's draft memorandum to the County Board dated October 29, 2015 with the following amendments:

1. Prioritize renewal of the garage entrance and the garage façade, as well as the landscaped area in the streetscape surrounding the garage in the Capital Improvement Program so as to include the work on this renewal in time for the opening of the new mall in 2018.
2. Direct the County Manager to initiate a study under which staff would work with the Transportation Commission to develop a long-term vision for a humanized Glebe Road between Henderson Road on the south and Fairfax Drive on the north and that this vision be accompanied with a plan to achieve it.
3. The plan for the Ballston Corridor incorporate into the Ballston Garage a central bicycle parking facility for the Ballston Metro Station area that would provide a secure covered storage for daily usage and mall--of daily usage by commuters and mall customers as well as others who may wish to use it. Considerations should be given to including showers and changing rooms in the design, as well as space for a bicycle service operation.

Commissioner Harner seconded the motion.

Commissioner Hughes made a motion to amend the main motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that a condition be added to each of the three site plan amendments so as to link all three site plans' completions. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gutshall.

The motion to amend failed 2-9 with Commissioners Hughes and Sockwell in support, and Commissioners Forinash, Iacomini, Harner, Gutshall, Cole, Schroll, Brown, Ciotti, and Siegel opposed.

Commissioner Ciotti made a motion to amend the main motion that the Planning Commission recommend the County Board direct staff to work with applicant and other relevant parties to ensure benefits of new bridge and associated easement be guaranteed by establishing a documented unencumbered path of travel all the way to the metro. Commissioner Gutshall seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted to amend the main motion 6-2-3 with Commissioners Siegel, Ciotti, Sockwell, Gutshall, Schroll, and Hughes in favor, Commissioners Iacomini and Harner opposed, and Commissioners Forinash, Cole, and Brown abstaining.

Commissioner Ciotti made a motion to amend the main motion to add to Condition #50 to include snow removal from the pedestrian ramps. Commissioner Schroll seconded the motion.

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

Commissioner Ciotti made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board to direct staff to mandate recycling throughout the project, including restaurants and the food court. Commissioner Gutshall seconded the motion.

The motion failed 1-9-1 with Commissioner Ciotti in support, Commissioners Siegel, Iacomini, Forinash, Sockwell, Gutshall, Schroll, Brown, Harner, and Hughes against, and Commissioner Cole abstaining.

Commissioner Gutshall made a motion to divide the issue of the bicycle facility from the main motion. Commissioner Brown seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission voted 8-2-1 to support motion with Commissioners Forinash, Iacomini, Ciotti, Siegel, Gutshall, Hughes, Brown and Schroll in support, Commissioners Harner and Sockwell opposed, and Commission Cole abstaining.

The Planning Commission took up the divided item that was a recommendation to the County Board the plan for the Ballston Corridor incorporate into the Ballston Garage a central bicycle parking facility for the Ballston Metro Station area that would provide a secure covered storage for daily usage and mall--of daily usage by commuters and mall customers as well as others who may wish to use it. Considerations should be given to including showers and changing rooms in the design, as well as space for a bicycle service operation.

The Planning Commission voted 10-1 to support the bike parking facility as part of the main motion with Commissioners Forinash, Iacomini, Sockwell, Cole, Harner, Ciotti, Siegel, Brown, Hughes, and Schroll in support and Commissioner Gutshall opposed.

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

## **VACATION**

Linda Collier, DES – Real Estate described the proposed vacations as an ordinance of vacation for three very small areas, mostly along Randolph totaling 13 square feet.

## **PC Motion**

Commissioner Cole made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that it enact the attached ordinance to vacate portions on an easement and right of way to certain utilities easement located along the southern side of Wilson Boulevard and along the western side of North Randall Street, on parcel A-1 Ballston Common, comma, RPC number 14-059-028, property of Ballston Acquisition Company, LLC, RPC number 14-059-028, with conditions, and to authorize the Real Estate Bureau Chief, Department of Environmental Services, or its designee, to execute on behalf of the County Board the Deed of Vacation, all other documents or deeds necessary to effectuate the ordinance of vacation, subject to the approval, as to form, by the County Attorney.

Commissioner Cole moved that that the Planning Commission finds that the requested vacations are in accord with the Comprehensive Plan, or applicable portion thereof.

The Planning Commission voted 10-0 to support the motion and finding 10-0 with Commissioners Forinash, Iacomini, Ciotti, Cole, Hughes, Schroll, Siegel, Gutshall, Sockwell, and Brown in support.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Arlington County Planning Commission  
Christopher J. Forinash

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

**Ms. Stahlhut:** It looks like we have two public speakers this evening.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Great, and would like to hand those to Ms. Johnson so she can call the first speaker. Up to y'all how you want to do this.

**Ms. Stahlhut:** The first speaker is Tina Leone, followed by James Richardson.

**Tina Leone:** Good evening, I'm Tina Leone. I'm the CEO of the Ballston Business Improvement District. And it is a great pleasure to be here tonight. I want to thank this commission, and in particular Mr. Steve Cole for an excellent, excellent SPRC process. And thank you for having us be involved in that as well. As you know, our Sector Plan was created in 1980. And it achieved its goal. We have a 50/50 mix of residential and commercial properties in Ballston. It's quite active and vibrant. Ballston has also been transforming itself over that time. We talked about how Parkington turned into the Ballston Common Mall, and how now we're going through another transformation. And this has been especially true over the last 10 years. We've seen Glebe Road developed. We've seen a lot of redevelopment happening in Ballston. And more coming, as you know, both on the residential and the commercial side. A key element right now is to ensuring Ballston's success and commercial and commercial revitalization. And that includes this project. This is an absolutely vital to Ballston's sustainability and its long-term competitiveness. And we of the Ballston--and Ballston, and the Ballston BID in particular, are not afraid of being bold and kind of testing the limits. And you may find some part of this projects that do that. But that's what's needed to remain competitive in this world right now. As to reiterate, we've lost Fish and Wildlife. We've lost--we're losing National Science Foundation. We remain very optimistic though, 'cause we know Ballston is a great place. But we do need to take these bold steps to keep Ballston on the short list of places of where companies wanna locate and where people wanna live. Our vacancy rate has actually dropped in the last year from about 19.6% to 18.3, which is very strong. But we have not absorbed NSF yet. And so, with this project, it's an amazing answer to NSF leaving, as we see it. This is an amazing cat--it will catapult us into another level. This transformation will, of course, transform Wilson Boulevard and Glebe Road physically. We really believe that this project is in harmony with the BID's overall vision for those streets, the streetscape. It's contemporary, it's vibrant, attractive, it's active, and it's engaging. And it truly enhances the character of Ballston. But it will also, more importantly, transform people's lives. Right now, Ballston is a wonderful place, as Rosemary knows, to live, and work, and play, and even learn. But shopping's been a little not there yet. Well, now, with this transformation, you won't ever--you don't have to leave Ballston and you don't need a car. You definitely don't. We surveyed over 600 employees. And to note, about 20% of those actually live in Ballston. And their number one most important priority is Ballston Quarter. They want to see this redeveloped. They want--they also do align very well--and I know we don't get this granular here, but the tenant mix that Ballston Quarter is recommending was very much in line with what these people are looking for, national chains and curated independent retailers. This also, most importantly, creates more public spaces for us, places for people to convene and connect. It will enhance our social life, and maybe give us a little more night life in Ballston, a little bit more. And we really look forward to partnering with Ballston Quarter and their marketing group on the programs and events. We so wanna see that film, to be able to do outdoor films, to have kids gaming and events out there, art, fashion shows, holiday activities. There's just so much that we can do now. And we love Welburn Square. It's a great public space. But this is gonna bring us to a whole 'nother level with our abilities to program. And finally, I just wanna thank Forest City. It's been a great partner for the BID, and for Ballston, and for bringing this stellar project to us. We at the BID, and the membership, strongly support this project. We look forward to working with the Forest City team to create this much anticipated and much desired project. Quite a valuable asset for Ballston, and to creating and activating these new and exciting public spaces. Thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Thank you. Our next speaker?

**Ms. Johnson:** Mr. James Richardson.

**James Richardson:** Good evening. My name's Jim Richardson. I'm Co-Chair of the Ashton Heights Civic Association's Development Committee. And I thank you for allowing us to give you our perspectives on this

development. Our membership has generally been very supportive of the mall renovation. We like what we see. We like what we see in the mall renovation itself. We participated throughout the SPRC process, and before that, with meetings with Forest City. So the five issues I want to talk about tonight have evolved over a period of months, and in fact, have changed over that period. The first of these areas are community benefits. I briefed our Executive Committee on a couple of occasions on this recently. And no one could understand exactly how the community benefits that we see listed compensate for the 177 apartments and 6 stories. They look--normally, this is an opportunity for the County to demand community benefits to compensate. But we remember Mosaic Park was largely an outcome of negotiations on Founders Square height and density waivers. This time, however, instead of open space, offices for community meetings, or other common-good benefits, the benefit seems to be in the redevelopment itself. And maybe what we need is a sort of an accounting, what's on the left column, what's on the right column, how they come together. In Mosaic Park trade-off, we knew exactly what we were trading off because it was all reduced to dollars and cents. This is not true here, and we have a very hard time understanding how they compensate. Public-private partnership I know is not your bag, but we're very concerned about it. In particular, about the subsidies and waivers that can come through a partnership like this. We don't know very much about it. I guess nobody does. The negotiations aren't going to take place until after your deliberations are over. So we--it's difficult to understand what we're getting here and what it's going to cost the taxpayers. We recommended slowing the process down until some of these unknowns were understood. Open space, both [inaudible] areas claimed as open space are really already open to the public. Granted, they're not open exactly. They've got roofs over them. The pedestrian bridge is already there. So this is not anything new. We don't think that there's enough additional open space generated in this plan to compensate for the 406 apartments going in, plus the added interest that people are going to have in coming to this brand-new and much better facility. Parking, we've talked about parking a lot. We're concerned about the parking ratio waivers. One is the County's requirement. It's now down to much less than that. And we don't think that--we're concerned that we're gonna get an overflow into the neighborhoods. And the 0.1 space per apartment through the County garage didn't seem like a very good solution. That may be changed now from what I saw. Transportation, we believe that four major parking garage curb cuts will result in significant traffic congestion on Randolph Street. The street is poorly designed to accommodate this number of cuts, particularly since each will service large buildings. County and tour bus stops along Randolph Street will exacerbate this situation. We don't agree with the elimination of drop-offs, such as a curbside on Glebe at Macy's, and on Wilson in front of the mall entrance. There is presently no drop-off planned for the residential buildings. Surely, this is an oversight. We also object to the elimination of the center medium shrubs, trees, and fence along Wilson Boulevard because it will dramatically reduce greenery and encourage jaywalking. Thank you. Thank you so much for your attention.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Thank you Mr. Richardson. Ms. Johnson, was that our final speaker? Thank you. All right, the matters now before the commission. We'll first turn to Commissioner Schroll for a report on the Transportation Commission's consideration of this.

**Commissioner Schroll:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. On Thursday, October 29, the Transportation Commission considered this item. Discussion centered around the circulation during construction and the phasing of that. There was an update from what we had heard previously, I think in our last SPRC. It seems as if now there will be access to Wilson Boulevard. We can have Mr. Voegelé maybe go over that. But it was different than what we heard in our last SPRC, and improved, which was good to hear. Some discussion about the conditions for the access to the bridge after Metro closes, something that Commissioner Ciotti raised in the last, I think, in the last several SPRCs. Some discussion about the streetscape sidewalks. And a little discussion on the parking ratio and the associated TDM with that. The commission did vote unanimously to support the project. I'm happy to answer any other questions.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Were any of those discussion topics that you listed incorporated into the motion, or was it within--

**Commissioner Schroll:** They were not.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Recommendation of approval?

**Commissioner Schroll:** No, they were not.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Thank you. We'll turn now to Commissioner Cole for a report on the SPRC consideration, and to [inaudible] for our discussion of this item.

**Commissioner Cole:** Thank you, Chairman Forinash. I'm gonna reserve the majority of my comments for wrap-up on this and not make them now. So I'm gonna present a rather dry SPRC report. I provided you all with a written report. You should have that in front of you. As Ms. Byrd said, the SPRC Committee met on five occasions, including a site tour. I would note that we made several accommodations at the request of the County Board. It's important to note that the County Board directed us to review the applications with as much speed as we could. And we made a number of accommodations, including holding 3-hour meetings, limiting participation by organizations to a single representative, to treating 3 applications in a single review. So we made a number of accommodations. We also made some process changes with respect to this particular application. Commissioner Forinash and I met after each Site Plan Review Committee meeting with the applicant and with staff to process, to review what was, you know, what the outcome of the meeting was. And we met again before the subsequent SPRC meeting to review the presentations and to provide feedback to the applicants so that we all knew exactly what was happening as we entered each meeting. One of the small changes that was made, but I think perhaps the most important process change from the Chair's point of view, was the introduction of this sort of roundtable approach to comments. We have often had a general open discussion. In my view, the roundtable discussion that we had contributed very greatly to the speed at which we were able to process the information. Everyone knew when their turn was gonna come. If someone else had said something that they were going to say, they didn't always feel a need to say it a second time. And everybody got a chance to say what they wanted to say. And then, if there were still questions or comments from anybody following the round--going around the table, there was an opportunity to do that. I would commend that to my colleagues for consideration for future site plans. In any case, you know, what I've done in my report to you is to lay out issues for discussion. It's quite extensive, as you can see. And I've broken them down into the major categories for: the residential building, the office building, the mall, and then site-plan wide issues. And I suggest that we take them in turn, and make comments following the discussion. I would be happy to make a motion if the Chair so wishes. And I won't review the report anymore. Thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Thank you, Commissioner Cole. I just want, folks, before we get into questions, to make sure everybody sees all the materials that are in front of us. In addition to what was in our packet, there's a new set of presentation materials that was here at the dais, the large size, plus a copy of the staff presentation. And I note that attached to the letter from Chairman Hynes that I referenced earlier, there's written comments from the Ashton Heights Civic Association. So we have Mr. Richardson here. We also have a written copy of their position. And also, Ellen Armbruster's thoughts. She participated in the SPRC as, I assume, a representative of the Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Her detailed thoughts on the public realm and pedestrian issues, and transportation issues associated with the site. I had not seen those before. So, Commissioner Cole?

**Commissioner Cole:** Chairman Forinash, we also received a letter, a copy of a letter, from Bill Staderman, who's the Chair of the Disability Advisory Commission, earlier. I did not see a copy at our place, but it was distributed electronically today. I got it.

**Commissioner Forinash:** That wasn't concerning this project. I think that was concerning the general, the topic of the County Board--

**Commissioner Cole:** No, actually it was concerning this project. Because I think I got two separate letters.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Oh, I did not.

**Commissioner Cole:** I apologize.

**Commissioner Forinash:** If you could dig that out, maybe forward it to Ms. Johnson. She can send it around to all of us now, and perhaps we could even bring it up on the screen if it warrants. So, Commissioner Cole did prepare an outline for discussion, as did our SPRC chairs for the projects we heard on Monday. My intention is to go through that at least, let's call it, segment by segment. So the residential building, office building, mall, and then site-plan-wide issues, in that order. You'll also note that Commissioner's Cole's outline includes bullets within each of those areas. I'm somewhat less inclined to go point by point through those. Or at least let me encourage everyone, you don't have to speak to every point. Let's be expeditious about this. We're fortunate that almost all of us were able to dedicate time during the SPRC process to really dig into the meat of this. We know that many of these issues have been discussed, and in many cases resolved to the general satisfaction of the SPRC. So let's not belabor trod ground in our discussion tonight. With that said, let's start with--well, as is my habit, let me first make sure. Are there other topics that folks want to add to this list? And here I'm talking about, again, the top-level organization of the discussion: residential building, office building, mall, and site-plan-wide issues. That would seem to me to capture the full range of things we might talk about. But if there are other buckets that people want to make sure to put on the list, let's try and get those now. Commissioner Iacomini.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** I just probably will have one or two questions to staff about the garage.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Let's, shall we put that after the site-plan-wide issues, then?

**Commissioner Iacomini:** Sure.

**Commissioner Cole:** It's part of the site-plan-wide issues.

**Commissioner Forinash:** It's part of the which?

**Commissioner Cole:** The site-plan-wide issues.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Sure, so in that section. Fair enough.

**Commissioner Cole:** Part of the site plan, but--

**Commissioner Forinash:** All right, let's dive in. Commissioner Siegel.

**Commissioner Siegel:** Is there--? As I read through this, it didn't pop out at me that sort of circulation through the site.

**Commissioner Forinash:** I think that's--

**Commissioner Siegel:** Can we cull that out, or did I miss it?

**Commissioner Forinash:** I think the intention is to handle that under pedestrian flow, which is part of the site-plan-wide issues, the fourth of our four general discussion topics.

**Commissioner Siegel:** Okay, okay, great.

## **RESIDENTIAL BUILDING**

**Commissioner Forinash:** So, on the residential building. Commissioner Cole, while you were speaking to Ms. Johnson, I had noted I'm not sure we need to go through bullet by bullet, but I do want to encourage people to, you know, raise issues, or ask questions, clarifying questions, as well as raise issues for discussion related to any of these aspects of the residential building. So let's dive in. Questions related to the residential building, or areas for discussion? I'd like to speak briefly to the parking. This came up in the context of the Carpool site plan review on Monday of this week, that we are certainly trending in our residential buildings with good access to Metro rail in particular, but transit in general and other forms of travel, we're tending towards encouraging, or at least allowing, developers in site plan to propose what seemed to be ever lower parking ratios. I think all of us know my general support for that, or for movement in that direction. But I raised on Monday a concern that we have a

residential parking study that is pending, or is underway. And yet we seem to have made a policy change, essentially, to allow smaller parking ratios. In the Carpool example, there was an adjacent garage that the developer essentially guaranteed extra parking available if the building's demand--if the occupants of the building demand it. We have a similar case here with access, potential access, to the County owned garage. Can you describe in a little more detail, because I think it has evolved since the end of SPRC, what the arrangement is for access to potential additional parking in the County-owned garage, if demanded and the residential building warrants it? Ms. Gabor, please.

**Ms. Gabor:** I guess let me just mention first of all with the associated 0.7 parking ratio that's proposed, the applicant is proposing enhanced TDM. They are--we have condition for two car-share spaces would be in the residential garage. And those would be accessible 24/7. And then we have also the option of the car-share, the bike-share, the \$65 Metro card for all of the tenants that are less the ratio of 1-to-1, and that would be every year for 30 years. So I don't want to say it's standard enhanced TDM, but what we have done on a number of projects. In terms of the County garage, as we all know, the County garage does about this project. And from our perspective, we do feel this does provide a unique opportunity where you can reach the garage without even going on to the public sidewalk, if you will. And so, again, as I briefly touched on, what we've looked at is there are a number of legal agreements that are already in place in terms of the garage. So there are, again, some that are monthly allotments to the office buildings, and then there is legal agreements about a minimum number of spaces being provided for the daily parkers. In terms of condition-wise, at this point we have not provided additional conditions that do require the developer to purchase monthly permits for the residents. Something that, if you're a resident of the building and there isn't any room in the garage, or if for whatever reason you don't want to park in that garage, you would then contract directly with the operators of the Ballston Mall for a monthly permit. And that's where we are at this point. I'm not sure what other questions you had about the garage.

**Commissioner Forinash:** You described, if I remember the numbers right, approximately 50% of the garage capacity is part of--is committed to existing tenants of the block, I guess, is the right way to put it. And that another--under monthly contracts. Another 40% is committed to be held available for day use parkers. So, is it that remaining 10% that could be accessible to somebody who wanted to purchase a monthly contract who lived in this building?

**Ms. Gabor:** So, I would say there are actually two pots. So if we say that the daily parkers have 40% and the monthly allotment is 50% that does provide us a 10%. And again, if we just sort of round it off, we have about 3,000 spaces, so that's 300 spaces. But with the monthly allotment, that means, for example, the 4200 Wilson office building legally has an allotment of, you know, let's just say 100 spaces. If they only use 40 of those spaces per month, then those additional 60 spaces could then be purchased by other individuals. And that's--I don't think I explained it very well, and I apologize. But of the 50% of the total garage monthly allotment, we are seeing about 60% of that being utilized. So that does provide a larger amount of spaces that potentially are available for monthly permit holders, or monthly people who want--

**Commissioner Forinash:** So my math would say then that if 30%--so 30% of those spaces--30% of the spaces in the building are used by monthly contracts right now.

**Ms. Gabor:** Based on our recent survey, yes.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Another 30% are available for monthly contracts.

**Ms. Gabor:** That's correct.

**Commissioner Forinash:** And this extra 10% floating around. So let's say 40% of 3,000 spaces, so 1200 spaces are currently available for monthly contracts. We certainly anticipate that the mall redevelopment and the activity it brings will attract some more both monthly and daily parkers. But it seems unlikely that it would be 1200 spaces worth, at least in the near future. So my conclusion from that is there's certainly ample availability in the

County-owned garage for any, you know, surplus demand from what's being provided by the applicant in their garage. Is that reasonable?

**Ms. Gabor:** I agree. And I'll also just add on, in terms of the numbers, if we look at the number of spaces that the parking is less the units, it's about 120. So if we're saying there are 1200 spaces available, and to get to the 1-to-1 we need 120. Again, it's where, as staff, we feel very comfortable that this is something that is plausible and realistic, realizing all the existing legal agreements that are in place.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Great. Further--? Let's say Commissioner Cole and then Commissioner Hughes.

**Commissioner Cole:** Ms. Gabor, I want to focus on the policy question on hand, which is what--which is really the mechanism that's being used to assure that there's adequate for the residents of the residential building. As Chairman Forinash noted in the Carpool, it is the obligation of the applicant to assure that there are sufficient spaces. And they must, in fact, make them available in another adjacent building in the event that the residents in the Carpool, residential building utilize more parking than the building itself has. In this particular case, you're not--there is no requirement, no condition on the applicant to do anything to assure that their residents have adequate parking. And I'd like to understand what the difference, and how we should think about this for other projects going forward. Because there seems to be a very different application of--it's not policy because the Board hasn't made any decision on this. But application of the practice here. Help us understand what the thinking is and why it's different in one circumstance where the applicant's required to do something, and in other circumstances they're not.

**Ms. Gabor:** I guess one thing to think about is because this building, while it is not on top of the Metro, it does have access to the Metro. Does one--

**Commissioner Cole:** As does the other one, which is equidistant from the Metro to this, as this is.

**Ms. Gabor:** Well, it is equidistant. This also does provide the pedestrian access. So you actually don't need to go down to street level at all with the maintenance of the pedestrian bridge. So, again, one could argue that this has better access. But we don't need to have that discussion at this point. I think the key point here thought is because it is a County-owned garage that we are a party to a lot of the legal agreements. Because it is between the County, and for example, the 4200 Wilson Boulevard building, or the County and some other building that controls what these agreements are for the allotments. And so because we do feel comfortable with the 0.7 in this instance, additionally, and I mentioned in the staff report, we have shown through some of our TDM studies that are completed that, in the R&B Corridor, we have seen utilization ratios between 0.7 and 0.84, I believe it is. So that also makes us feel that this is a ratio that's acceptable. But the bottom line is that--

**Commissioner Cole:** I'm not arguing the ratio. I'm happy with the 0.7. Let me be absolutely clear about that. The only question I have is whether the apartment building is in some way being harmed by the fact that there's no guarantee of parking availability for them. And in the event that the mall is wildly successful, and any other circumstance might happen. I mean, I've watched over the years lots of people count parking in this garage as available to them that are not related to the mall, and are not related to the office building. So my only concern is the applicant's not making any guarantee that the spaces might be available, and the County's not making any guarantee that the spaces might be available. And yet, that's different than another circumstance, where someone is making a guarantee that the spaces will be able. And there's no reason to believe that they'll be less park--you know, everyone would believe that the parking in both places will be underutilized. But if it's not, the question is who guarantees potential tenants that they're gonna get a parking space if they need it?

**Ms. Gabor:** I think this is a different situation than in Carpool, because again, this is a County-owned garage. And it is an asset that we do have control over. So it is something--I'm not a fan of coming up with hypothetical scenarios because there are a lot of 'em. But generally speaking, because we have these monthly allotments that are legally agreed to, it is something that we could look at in the future, you know, 10, 15 years from now, if we need to have further discussions. We could do that at that time with the developer. But County staff doesn't feel

that it's something that we need to do at this point, 'cause we are comfortable with the ratio. And because there is already in place a mechanism for residents to obtain monthly permits in the abutting garage if they want to. And I believe that's not something that is an option in the Carpool scenario, well, let's say with Carpool, if somebody wanted to get a permit in the Web building, I don't--again, I don't know. I don't think that's something they could do today. But because that mechanism's already in place, it's not something we feel that we need to condition at this point.

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

**Commissioner Hughes:** Just a real quick question, and a follow-up, just a thought out of Commissioner Cole's from the response I heard from staff is that street parking across this County is a County-owned asset, for a thought in the future. 'Cause the argument I'm hearing from staff is that because it's a County-owned asset, in the Web Carpool example, so my thought there is that street parking is a County-owned asset across the County. My question with staff was based--is there any concern that the price for parking in the applicant's building for the 177 spaces will be similar? Do we know if it will be similar or comparable more than for the County spots?

**Ms. Gabor:** I'm gonna let the applicant speak to that question.

**Mr. Voegele:** The parking rates are similar. And obviously, we will be looking at the relationship between the two and doing what makes sense in order to incentivize the right use of parking.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Schroll, and then Commissioner Sockwell.

**Commissioner Schroll:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Quick question based on Mr. Richardson's presentation to us this evening. He mentioned the lack of pick-up and drop-off space along North Randolph. I know that there are parking spaces, obviously, in the cross sections shown. Wondering which, if any, of those would be temporary pick-up/drop-off along the residential building.

**Ms. Gabor:** While the applicant is pulling up the Randolph cross section, I just do want to mention that, again, because the street parking is within the public right of way, and it's County controlled, it is something that, if the applicant does choose to have some short-term loading, or that is what they propose, that once the building is completed, they would come in and apply to the County for the short-term loading spaces. As the applicant has shown here, they have shown three yellow cars. It's basically right in the middle--yes, thank you. And that is what the applicant is proposing as loading. I'm gonna let the applicant add anything that they would like to to their proposal.

**Mr. Voegele:** That is correct. You're seeing the three cars in the temporary loading zone. We think that's adequate. We also benefit from the, you know, the flexibility that some adjacent parking represents. But in our experience, the proximity and the number of spaces in that area are adequate.

**Commissioner Schroll:** Okay, that's helpful, thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Sockwell.

**Commissioner Sockwell:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I tend to agree with Mr. Richardson that Randolph is not a particularly well-designed street. And that's at present. So if we add additional residential units in, that's one aspect. But as I see the applicant's presentation, one of the most attractive things is that Randolph Street will be transformed as you add retail space. And if it works, and it should work, you'll have a lot more pedestrians too. So assuming a net increase of some vehicles, plus a lot of pedestrians, the question is really for staff. Do you have any contingency plans about the Randolph Street design?

**Ms. Gabor:** In terms of for vehicles, or pedestrians, or--?

**Commissioner Sockwell:** Just in terms of making it a successful street. I mean, at present, as you probably know, at the garage there are routine vehicle-pedestrian conflicts at the entrance of the garage. And my guess is even

with this helpful crosswalk to the Mews, those kind of conflicts, or the potential for those kind of conflicts, are just gonna increase and not decrease. So I think we can expect additional cars in the future, Ms.--

**Commissioner Forinash:** There was a reference made in, I think, the staff presentation to significant improvements to the garage. So if that's where you're going, I'd like to hold that until we get to the garage discussion later and separate that from the residential building.

**Commissioner Sockwell:** Okay, I was actually just focusing on the street itself, and the street design itself, but if the answer is garage improvements, then that's helpful. So let the staff run with it.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Are there other aspects you'd like to offer?

**Ms. Gabor:** I was gonna say, if you don't mind, there were a couple of remarks I did want to make to that. Just to clarify, there are no additional curb cuts that are proposed with this proposal on Randolph Street. The residential tenants would utilize the existing loading entrance and exit that is in place today. So the mall and all the office building loading, and the residential loading and residential vehicles, would utilize that existing entry and exit. What we have talked with the applicant about, and looked at from, you know, a signal perspective, is there will need to be some additional phasing added to the signal at the garage at Randolph Street. Because currently, loading is not part of the signal phasing. But because the loading is not heavily utilized, it has not been an issue. But because there are, as you mentioned, gonna be increased pedestrians and increased cars, we want to make sure that is safe and that we do minimize any conflicts between pedestrians and then folks coming in and out of the residential, and then also folks coming in and out of the County garage. So while there is no proposed changes to Randolph Street in terms of width of number of travel lanes, we are gonna make changes to the existing signal at this location to make sure it does function the best it can.

**Commissioner Sockwell:** Okay, I think I understand where you're going. So there's no proposal for a formal study or follow-up, it's just you're gonna make some improvements as part of the project and see what happens.

**Ms. Gabor:** I guess I would characterize it as we are gonna maintain the existing cross section of Randolph, realizing that the northwest corner of Founders is not completed. So the ultimate streetscape of the building, that is not completed, has not been completed to date. I do believe when that is completed and provides a pleasant pedestrian environment on both sides of Randolph, you will significant improvements, and that the vehicle travel will be better.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Have we exhausted the topic of parking related to the, and streetscape related to the residential building? Other aspects of the residential building that people have questions or would like to discuss? Commissioner Gutshall.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** In the outline, would community benefits come under bonus density for the residential building?

**Commissioner Forinash:** There, or site-plan conditions, yep, since the community benefits are mostly specified through site-plan conditions. So, sure, have it. Go ahead.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Okay, thank you. And so a question for staff, please. If we could look at--can you bring up slide 26?

**Commissioner Forinash:** From the staff presentation?

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Sorry, from the staff presentation, yes, thank you. Great, so I just wanna kinda understand and make sure I'm following along between the staff report and the presentation, kind of, the math. And we did have a public speaker tonight who talked about the units. So, as I understand, we have a--there's 174 units above the zoning ordinance, so 174 units that are based on the community benefits. So I would like to just sort of walk through this list, if you don't mind. So for LEED silver certification, that accounts for 23. That's a very straightforward math equation, right? The Energy Star building certification, that's just 0.10 for the office?

**Ms. Byrd:** Correct.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So that's not part of the 151 remaining residential units. The creation of open spaces, that's referring to, like the Mews and the Plaza. So where we take a roof off?

**Ms. Byrd:** Correct.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** And is that embedded in--? I know we have a Public Spaces Master Plan, we've got other--is that embedded in County policy? Sort of, I'm struck by the notion of that if something has a roof over it, it's not a community benefit, and if something--if you take the roof off of something, it becomes a community benefit. Is that embedded in policy anywhere, or are we just--? Because this is an innovative kind of project, we're deciding that this is new and cutting edge?

**Ms. Byrd:** No, I don't think that's the notion. The notion is that they're currently, those spaces are closed. With taking the roof of 'em, they become a different type of space. So it's that open space plaza that they're proposing. So it's not just that, you know, it was once enclosed and now it's open so it's a public space. But also what makes that, the easements that are proposed to make it accessible to the public for public use and access, I think that is where the focus is.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So it's based on the easement that we would now have, and which I understand is, from the staff report, is a 24/7 easement. So the middle of the night, somebody's walking home somewhere, they're gonna be able to use this to walk through.

**Ms. Byrd:** That's correct.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Okay. So then the vertical circulation improvements and connections between the mall and the garage, that's primarily related to the blade and the elevators, and those improvements. I think I understand those. There was--well, we're gonna talk about the garage improvements later, you said? Yeah. The Randolph Street Corridor.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Well, certainly since it's listed here as a public--a community benefit associated--if it's associated with earning the residential density, then if that's one, if you want to ask about, go ahead. I was speaking--

**Commissioner Gutshall:** It is, kind of, I'm, I just wanna be very clear and understand, yes, what community benefits, what exactly they are, and the policy behind it, to get the 151 units. That's what the goal of my question, Mr. Chair. So, let's just continue, if we will, on the Randolph Street Corridor. So, as I understand, this is--and I was actually kind of surprised to read in the staff report that some discussion of that the GLUP has a--the series of the Founders Square block, of green spaces, provides for a soft transition between higher density and mixed-use development north. There was something in there about sort of a greenway that comes into--where did I read that? Through an interior corridor. Do you know what I'm talking about?

**Ms. Byrd:** I do. So--

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Can you explain that to me? That was somethin' that I wasn't very familiar with.

**Ms. Byrd:** Visually, on the GLUP map, if you were to look at the GLUP, you see, kind of, around 9th Street, you see a series of, kind of, a greenway that forms this soft, kind of, transition. So it's between the higher-density development and lower-density development north and south. And it's just been established over time through a series of parks, open spaces, spaces approved with site-plan developments. For instance, the Founders Square development has that east-west connection that kinda provides for a pedestrian connection. So that kind of completes that. So that's what the reference is to there.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Who would be the intended users of that space?

**Ms. Byrd:** Public. I know, for instance, the Founders Square project, there's an easement over that east-west space. We would have an easement also over the Randolph Corridor space. So the public. It has access and use of those spaces.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Okay, so, I'd like to turn to the applicant, if I may, on this decision. So, I was curious, in your presentation you noted that the entrance to the Mews at this location in this corridor, this green corridor, might be, you know, more appropriate for sort of the educated user. I'm curious how that reconciles with the notion of that this is a more common, generally available community benefit to the community?

**Mr. Voegel:** Well, I think, again, I prefaced that with the idea that, as developers, we love to see people walking on sidewalks and along storefronts. But, you know, whether it's the educated patron, or someone who simply wants to enter the project from that entrance, it provides a very viable, meaningful way to get in and out of the project. And it is a public access easement.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Okay. So, moving along, the new pedestrian bridge. I think I understand that one pretty clearly. There's gonna be a public process to determine the design of that. I was wondering if staff, though--and I know we talked about this at SPRC, but just so I'm clear in my mind. The notion that density was provided previously for the original construction of the bridge. And so, from some members of the community who have questioned whether or not this is not sort of double dipping and providing additional--can I just get staff's, sort of, take on how we can provide still further density to replace the bridge that's there.

**Ms. Byrd:** I guess one of the things to note about the bridge that exists today is that even though it was provided, and it was required by this site plan, it does not have any easement over it. So while it's available and accessible to the public, that's just because they are continuing to allow people to use it. But I think one of the things that we do get with this that it improves upon that is one, you get a new, redesigned bridge, as that bridge is older and dated. But also you get access that's guaranteed through an easement that you don't have today.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So the primary benefits of the new bridge are a redesigned bridge, presumably 'cause it's a newer structure, so maybe it's gonna last longer, I guess. I don't know if that's what you're getting at. And the fact that there's an easement over it. Okay.

**Ms. Byrd:** That's correct.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** All right, the Wilson Boulevard redesign, I think I understand that fairly clearly as well. We're removing the median. I will say that Ellen Armbruster's letter I thought actually laid out some pretty clear questions, which maybe I might follow up separately. But as far as community benefits go, I think I understand what we're doing there. And now we get to the Ballston Parking Garage improvements. Could you tell us what those improvements are, specifically?

**Ms. Byrd:** I'm gonna have my colleague, Joanne\* Gabor, speak to those.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Thank you.

**Ms. Gabor:** The parking garage improvements are, you know, it's also mentioned in the vertical circulation, 'cause the big benefit is essentially it improves the pedestrian pathways from the garage to the mall. If you have ever parked in the garage today and tried to go to the mall, it is not intuitively obvious how to get between the levels of the garage and the mall. Some have stairs that go to the mall. Some you have to go upstairs. Some downstairs. Some you only have elevator access. This does provide, as the applicant mentioned, it does provide elevator access on all three levels of the mall. It also provides stair access that will now allow you to take the stairs all the way from mall level 1 up to garage level 5. So it will be a continuous stair all the way up, which is not the case today. And additionally, you will be able to have an express elevator that will take you right to the Iceplex, and that will be from mall level 3. So you have, again, while you can reach the Iceplex today, you can reach all the mall levels, it takes a little bit of work and a little bit of knowledge of how to do that. So this does greatly improve it. It also improves not just the circulation, but also the functioning of the elevators. The elevators

today, again, if any of you have used 'em, are a little slow. This will improve the speed of them. It'll also modernize the elevators to bring them up with the new safety features, to meet some of the new requirements. We'll also be updating the lobbies on the mall side, or I'm sorry, on the garage side to make them a little brighter, a little more open, try and update some of the signage. So a lot of it is giving it a general facelift, but also the functionality is gonna be greatly improved between the garage and the mall.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So I appreciate that. But actually every--just about everything you said I thought was part of the vertical circulation improvements and connections between the mall and the garage. So going back to slide 26, I was just trying to discern the difference between the two bullets there.

**Ms. Gabor:** I guess the reality is there isn't a lot of difference over the two bullets. Suffice it to say we are gonna be completing all that work. I guess you could categorize it as vertical circulation or parking garage improvements. I'm sorry for the confusion on those.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Okay, thank you. And then, the last one there, public use and access easements. Are those above and beyond what we've already talked about with the bridge, and the Mews, and the creation of open spaces there?

**Ms. Byrd:** In addition to the Mews, and the Plaza, the Randolph Corridor, the bridge, also providing for easement the retail concourse area inside of the mall as well. Which, again, today is open to the public for certain hours. But there's no easement over that space today.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Do we have any kind of graphic that shows with the easements, what will have easements? Maybe the applicant knows that.

**Ms. Byrd:** Did you bring it? You didn't bring it? We do have one that we are reviewing so that we can put the details of that language in the condition. As you know, condition number 41, we don't have it available. We don't have it with us tonight, but we do have an exhibit that will make clear what those easement areas are, their square footage, as well as the dimensions.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Is it fair to say that the easements are a significant part of the extraordinary community benefit package for the 151 units?

**Ms. Byrd:** Yes.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Yeah, thank you. That's all the questions I have, Mr. Chair.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Great, thank you. Other questions? Let's finish this particular subtopic on bonus density, additional units, and community benefits. Yep, Commissioner Ciotti.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** I have to commend Commissioner Gutshall for drilling down. Very, very well done. And I'd just like to build on some of the things he asked. The easement, public use and access easement, since it's being culled out as extraordinary benefit, will that easement carry over the new bridge as well as the 9th Street side?

**Ms. Byrd:** We had not, I don't believe so. We had not talked about that--

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Because that will be--if we can't organize this and--that's not going to be much of a benefit because it will stop. That easement will simply stop at the beginning of NSF. If we are trying to make this a real community benefit, you can't get to the mall--you can't get to Metro if we cannot include the 9th Street Bridge in this easement.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Ms. Byrd, is the County a party to the bridge agreement over 9th Street?

**Ms. Byrd:** No, and that's one of the reasons why it's not. We are not a party to the bridge agreements between four individual private property owners. So that would need to be somethin' incumbent upon them that they would do.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Well, I need to call this out because this is huge. It's not a major contribution if you can't get all the way to the Metro. You will only be able to get to NSF, and then you're done, if this easement isn't continued. And then it's really no benefit. That easement is meaningless.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Other questions on community benefits?

**Evan Pritchard:** Mr. Chairman--

**Commissioner Forinash:** Oh, yes. Don't forget to identify yourself first.

**Evan Pritchard:** Thank you, Evan Pritchard with Walsh Colucci for the applicant. Just want to clarify that, as Ms. Byrd noted, we don't have control over those other properties. But I want to remind you that the other properties that you get you to the Metro still remain subject to their own site plan conditions that do require them to maintain the 9th Street Bridge and continue that access. For Citi\* as well as Dweck\*, and now Jamestown, they're all still party to this omnibus agreement that's not going away. It's gonna modified to allow this project to go forward. But the commitment to continue to have this network remains in place. And so what we're doing on our site is bolstering that with actually, in the land record, the public easements that are gonna encumber the site, and the bridge over Wilson, and the other public areas Ms. Byrd laid out. When those projects to the north of us redevelop at some point, that should be part of the community conversation there, if they should do the same thing and formalize some of the agreements that are already in place, record these easements.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** So, thank you for that. But to reiterate, we can, for the record, say that when this is said and done, this will be a contiguous path of travel that will be open the hour before--we can talk about the hours that were listed. But I'm gonna have more to say about that at the appropriate time. But the easement and public access will continue from Ballston Corridor all the way to the Metro.

**Mr. Pritchard:** Correct, and on the parts of that network that we control, that access will be strengthened and reinforced, and the hours potentially expanded beyond what they are today to include the hour before and after Metro, potentially more. So it's trending in the more access, more comprehensive direction.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Thank you. And I do have one more about the parking garage. Will there be any improvements to the exterior to keep--we heard many times that we are going to have significant improvements to the garage. So I'm just trying to nail that down. Will the exterior, will there be any exterior improvements?

**Commissioner Forinash:** Fighting a losing battle to have this deferred until after we finish talking about the projects that are actually--

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Yeah, except that it shows up in so many places--

**Commissioner Forinash:** I understand, but I'm gonna have us defer that discussion.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Okay.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Thank you.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** We'll take that up—

## OFFICE BUILDING

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further questions or discussion on any subtopic related to the residential building, except the parking garage? All right, let's move on to the office building, by which we mean the Air Rights

building atop the Macy's. I'm gonna start off with one here, and it's for the applicant team. And Commissioner Cole notes in his write-up that, "Despite your explaining over and over that the Macy's is not part of this, we all want the Macy's to look better, if not function better." Could you describe where the dividing line is, and the enhancements that you are able to make to the Macy's itself so we can get that out of the way?

**Kara Lathan:** Yes. If you go to slide, let's see, that one works. So if you look at both on this slide as well as the next slide, you can see the red line which identifies where the improvements begin, approximately. So the Macy's which remains below, you can see in the image on the right-hand side, is the more solid piece below the glassier top inside and tower. That will remain stucco. That will be refinished and re-stuccoed in colors that are complementary to the colors of the building. So the colors that you see in the existing Macy's and the finish on the existing Macy's will be refinished and changed to blend more easily in with the new building. And then if you look on the next slide, you can see also how that is impacted in this slide. So taking away this sort of flesh-colored stucco and replacing it with a color which works more easily with the metal and the wood in a way that blends more with the office tower itself.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Thank you. Questions for staff or applicant on the Air Rights redevelopment? Commissioner Siegel, and then Commissioner Iacomini.

**Commissioner Siegel:** I just want to talk a little about the trees along Glebe. Is this appropriate time to raise that now, or is there another basket? Shall we wait?

**Commissioner Forinash:** Yeah, let's hold that for streetscape please, so we can deal with it just once. Commissioner Iacomini.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** For the Macy's building, have there been internal discussions with Macy's about, "Please, please, please, let us do something else to the façade"? If I may ask.

**Ms. Lathan:** Sure, there have. This was an extremely difficult negotiation already. So our client feels, and the applicant feels, that they've done everything they can to do as much improvements of the existing Macy's that will remain with Macy's.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** And I understand that. I lament it. You know, even just putting some glass panels that are backlit on the solid wall to at least make some light and vibrancy on that façade would help it and would transition up perhaps to your glass, and that Macy's won't do that is odd. Well, that--and it's also funny, thinking historically that department buildings always wanted to have big glass windows on the bottom so that they had displays. And now, we're seeing the opposite here. And it's just, I know, everybody's nodding. That's a tough nut to crack. I'm sorry that you had to deal--I wish that we could all have been more successful with this.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Let's see, Commissioner Gutshall.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Follow up on this, please, Mr. Chair. Thank you. So, since we brought it up, I did want to ask about the relationship of the Macy's to the community benefits. So a question for staff. On page 23 of the staff report, you describe how part of the community benefits is in recognition, and the bonus density, is in recognition of the considerable costs and constraints partially resulting from the lack of consolidated ownership and legal agreements that impact Macy's department store adjacent buildings, et cetera, et cetera. So, do I understand correctly that the fact that the adjacent buildings that are not part of--that are part of the site plan but are not part of this applicant, that part of the bonus density is given in consideration of those, of the fact that they weren't able to bring together--or not that they weren't able to but that the other parties chose not to come be part of this?

**Ms. Byrd:** This just really denotes, I think, just the difficulty or the struggle in trying to provide for a comprehensive redevelopment of a site where there are multiple owners, and they are not all key players in the development, and not necessarily willing to make improvements. So they may have had to make some

modifications, or request some modifications to their plan as a result of not being able to have the improvements overall that maybe we would have wanted, or seen, or somethin' of that nature.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So that only relates to requested modifications, not to the bonus density.

**Ms. Byrd:** No.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So that's not part of, on page 22, the staff report, the 151 units, "to be achieved as bonus density under the following provisions of the zoning ordinance: particular construction problems and techniques"?

**Ms. Byrd:** I think it's more of just another element or provision in the ordinance under which the Board could consider modifications. And one of those modifications would be, if it's appropriate, you know, modifications to height, or to density, or to parking, or what have you.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So the Board could consider them as staff recommending to the Board that they consider these?

**Ms. Byrd:** Yes.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So, I'm confused then. And so just make--so I understand very clearly what staff is recommending. Staff is not, from your answer, what I think I heard is that staff is not recommending that the Board consider the fact that adjacent properties, the cost of construction resulting from adjacent properties not being part of the application, you're not recommending that the Board consider that in their consideration of the 151 units of bonus density?

**Ms. Byrd:** No, I actually, at--I'm sorry. Let me just clarify. I think that when we're talkin' about modifications, if we're talkin' about one of those modifications being bonus, then I think that, yes, that could be considered, sorry.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** All right, thank you for the clarification. My follow-up to that is what is staff's position on how with, when you have an existing site plan like this with multiple properties--and I'm--I guess, so the first question is how prevalent is that around the County? How many sites do we have that have sort of diversified ownership?

**Ms. Byrd:** I can't give you an exact number. I only--

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Is it a small handful? I mean, we're up to, we have 400 and some site plans, right? Do you--? Maybe you could characterize?

**Ms. Byrd:** I think a small percentage. I don't--I think it's a very small percentage. I think typically most of the site plans that we see there is at least some, either whether it's contractual or full ownership, that usually most of the parcels have been assembled. And they do have some interest, or ownership, or contract in all of 'em. So I don't think this is very prevalent.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Okay. So, sometimes--if there was not an existing site plan. We have plenty of applicants that come forward, at least to my knowledge in the history of working here in Arlington on planning issues, where we actually, we strongly encourage applicants to go back and consolidate blocks, right? Where we've, for the greater good, for the common good, expect that, and ask applicants to consolidate properties. So here we have a site that is already under a consolidated site plan. Do you think, is it fair for the County to expect an applicant to, in effect, consolidate with other parties to the site plan to try to come and come to the table with a greater package, right, for all the same reasons that we like to see a site that's not under site plan yet be consolidated, a whole block consolidation, that we would like to see that happen in this case, where we have an existing site plan, but under different ownership?

**Ms. Byrd:** I don't think that that's somethin' that we actually can control or require, and/or even speak to actually.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Cannot speak to that?

**Ms. Byrd:** Because I'm not quite sure what exactly you're asking.

**Commissioner Cole:** Commissioner Gutshall, it was my understanding that the applicant actually tried to work with Macy's. That's what I've heard.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** And I absolutely take them at their word for that, and I believe that they did. So the question is, is what is staff's position--? You know, it's oftentimes when we're talking about consolidation of a block, very frequently, the first answer is, "We asked them. They didn't wanna sell." And it takes a little pressure. And sometimes, lo and behold, I mean, how many times have we seen, often after the first one or two SPRCs, suddenly, somebody comes to the table? And my impression, and this is what I'm asking staff to speak to, is that staff is very encouraging to the applicant to bring the other parties to the table. And I guess I'm trying to ascertain, is there some part of that that would apply in this case? And if the answer is that, "Yes, staff strongly encouraged this applicant to get the other parties to the table. They believe in full faith that the applicant did the very best that they possibly could and they weren't able to achieve that. And so this is why we ended up here." Then that's somethin' that I think that I would like to know. And I think it's very germane, because we are talking about the fact that they weren't able to bring the other parties to the table. As if that's now a justification for bonus density. So we're offsetting the cost of not having Macy's at the table with some additional units of bonus density.

**Ms. Byrd:** So, yes, staff does encourage where there are multiple owners for them to work together and to come to the table. Whether or not we can actually control that, I think, is a different question. I think maybe the applicant want to speak to their efforts. But yes, we do encourage that where there are multiple owners and different interests that they work together to provide for a consolidated approach to the redevelopment.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Sure, would the applicant like to respond?

**Mr. Buch:** Can I just--? Okay. Let me just--

**Commissioner Forinash:** Please identify yourself when you start speaking.

**Mike Buch:** Sure, my name's Mike Buch, with Buch Properties, and we own the office space above Macy's. This whole process started in 2007 with Macy's. And I spent probably, what, 5 or 6 years working with Macy's to not only buy this office space, but also to free up the Home Store space to convince them to move their furniture store to the lower level of their existing store. So many trips to Cincinnati, New York, Cleveland. I mean, this has been goin' on for a long time. So to say we haven't made an effort to try to bring the other parties to the table, that is very--I know you're not tryin' to say it's not truthful, but that is so far from the truth. It's been a long effort with Macy's to get 'em to this point tonight. So, I don't know if that answers your question, but--

**Mr. Voegle:** Well, and I would add to that. In conjunction with Mike's efforts, we negotiated with Macy's for years to acquire the Macy's furniture store, and it was really the effort of Forest City and Buch Development that allowed the consolidation, and the aggregation, and ultimately, the ability to do a much bigger thing than otherwise could have ever been done. So there was a significant effort on the part of that. And this idea that Macy's, as a department store, is not a player, isn't meaningful. They're still the department store. They're still an anchor. They don't have a role in our redevelopment. They just stand as an anchor to an existing development. And that continues.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Will Macy's benefit from the redevelopment of the mall?

**Mr. Voegle:** Clearly, Macy's would expect that the redevelopment of the mall is gonna drive traffic. And as a prudent retailer, I'm sure they'll take the appropriate measures.

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

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further questions or discussion around any topic related to the office space part of the project? All right, let's move on to the mall. Oh, excuse me, back to the office building--

**Commissioner Iacomini:** I'm sorry, I just wanted to say this. Because we had forgone the opportunity for a small office building such as this will be with very interesting space in Virginia Square with the Latitude. And so I'm really happy to see this type of product being able to be brought to Arlington 'cause I think it would be--it's going to be an important part, I think, of revitalizing Ballston, offering this different type of space. So, thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** That almost makes it sound like it's good that Macy's didn't want to play ball. Because otherwise, it would have been a new building there.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** Almost.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Hughes, you had your hand up. Commissioner Hughes, you had your hand up. Oh, for the mall, great. Any last comments on the office building? Thanks.

## MALL

**Commissioner Forinash:** Off to the mall. Commissioner Hughes, you had your hand up. Do you want to go first?

**Commissioner Hughes:** I do want to make this comment, only because I saw the presentation. I think I made this comment at SPRC, or [inaudible] I did, or I did at [inaudible] too. But and so I apologize. And I know that this design is nearly at the final stage. And the only way I'll be able to convince you of anything is for it to be in your own economic best interest. And so, I wanted to say the following about the West Plaza. And I'm looking at slide 44. I have--I'm new to the Planning Commission. I live in communities. And I look at this, and I heard you say, "Accessibility," I don't know how many times. And I want to be clear that I really am indifferent to the word, "Accessibility" in my conversation to you, because I want to focus on your clients. And if you walk into our community, and communities are dependent on the clientele around them, I will you tell you if you go down to Old Town, you go down to Clarendon, and you go down to Georgetown, you'll find one thing in common. There's not a single step in any of those three locations. If you go out to Reston, Reston Town Center, you will find this exact same plaza. It is nearly exact same plaza. It's in a big square. They did the step seating with the grass. And they have the stairs. The funny thing about it is not a single mother with a stroller walks through it. They walk around it. And you're trying to bring people into your retail space. I think you can do it with angles, that it's there's not a single step there, and it has nothing to do with accessibility. And I noticed that the BID president wouldn't walk down these stairs today 'cause she's got a boot on. She's gonna have to go somewhere else. But if she's with her friends, she'd walk at angles. So think about it. That's all I want to say on it. But I don't want to talk about accessibility. I want you to think about your clients. And go to Clarendon, think about those strollers, and see if you were the mom, what would you be doing? And where would those kids be sitting for that outdoor movie you want? I think angles, ramps, and the same design is possible. And that's all I want to say about the mall, thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Mr. Voegele, do you want to respond?

**Mr. Voegele:** Oh, I think it's a phenomenally good observation about how to create public spaces. And I think in every situation you look at what you can accomplish. And in this case, we did actually study, and I personally visited the High Line and I saw exactly what they did there. The geometry that we have here doesn't provide for the ability to do a switchback ramp. And so our focus was to create the most accessible environment around that between the escalators and the new elevator that we added. And frankly, the extension of the plaza out onto the flat area of Wilson Boulevard. So I clearly appreciate the idea that in an ideal world with a completely different and larger configuration, you could incorporate the ramps. In this case, we think we accomplished a great thing and still provided for the right kind of accessibility.

**Commissioner Hughes:** I'm happy to know the applicant did research that switchback. And I tell ya, if I were you I would try to see if there's some better person with geometry than the person ya got, but I wish you could find a way.

**Mr. Voegele:** Thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Other comments on the mall redevelopment proposal? Commissioner Brown.

**Commissioner Brown:** I just actually have a question, 'cause I'm wondering if I dreamed it, or if it changed. On page 10, you--I feel like we had talked about, or you had shown us photos of different materials on the bridge part. Is this what you ended up with? Or is this--? Or was it the--? Or am I thinking of a different section?

**Mr. Voegel:** Yes, you didn't dream that. If you go to slide 8, you'll see a treatment shown in the Mews that will be repeated in the interior view. So this focus on bridges as completely materials bridging two buildings will in fact exist on the interior as well. Good catch.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Other comments? Commissioner Ciotti.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Thank you. Just a point of clarification. If we can go to page--it's the Randolph Street entrance. Where were--? I just had it.

**Commissioner Forinash:** In the applicant's presentation?

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Yes. Okay, 22 and 23. It could be an angle. But I was wondering, which one of these most closely resembles what it will actually look like when you build it?

**Commissioner Forinash:** I think it's just lighting.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** And then look at 23. Is it--?

Unknown: So you're looking at 22, 23?

**Commissioner Ciotti:** And 23. They're depicting the same entrance, but to my eye, they look very different. And I was just wondering which one is it gonna look like when it's done?

**Mr. Voegel:** Unknown: And the focus is on the entrance on the left, in terms of the--?

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Yeah, the Ballston Corridor Randolph Street entrance.

**Mr. Voegel:** You know, I don't believe there's a difference at all. These are views taken from the same virtual 3D model. In one case you're just much, much closer. And for effect, sometimes the renderers will use certain magnification techniques to make storefronts look bigger and more vibrant. But--

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Okay, it'll--but you can see, it looks more narrow on that one picture. It looks like just a little space, like a little door. And the other one has a lot more side lights, and these, you know, the transparency over the door. It looks more--more of a street presence in the depiction on 23.

Unknown: Yeah, I would just say this. It is probably better depicted in 23. The door does have side lights. That is the design. It may not be as clear on the previous page.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Okay, so you think they'll have like three panels across the top, and windows on either side of the door?

Unknown: Yes. I think it may have gotten compressed in the way it was printed or rendered, but yes. This is an accurate view.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Great, thank you so much.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Sockwell.

**Commissioner Sockwell:** Yes, I do have a mall question. And it's an architecture question too. We don't generally get involved too much with architecture at this point, having--since the applicant's been through the SPRC process. But with respect to the facades along Wilson. And I guess I'd like to ask you about this, Steve. There was apparent disappointment that the façade materials are not being replaced. There's also a comment in the

staff memo suggesting that there will be sort of a warehousing theme that opens onto Wilson Boulevard. And I guess the question I have is, does this make sense in terms of, sort of, making Wilson a revitalized or exciting place? And these don't sound like the kind of details that actually lend themselves to additional pedestrian excitement to me. Can you justify that or mount a defense?

**Mr. Voegle:** Well, I see you looking at Steve. I'll speak on Steve's behalf--

**Commissioner Sockwell:** Okay, sounds good.

**Mr. Voegle:** And Steve, don't hesitate to come to the microphone. If it means anything, I am an architect, by education anyway.

**Commissioner Sockwell:** Well, you, then you know more than I do.

**Mr. Voegle:** Well, I don't necessarily share that. But I will say this. The brick is such a strong character of that building today. And there was a desire to keep that and to enhance that. But not just to have simply brick. But instead, to sort of add an overlay of this, kind of, grid of open c-channels that speak to a little more of articulated architecture. Our experience is that what makes great urban environments is building design that has different textures, different colors, a lot of articulation, a lot of light, and shade, and shadow. And so it was a very conscious effort to take a brick building, but to say that, "We are gonna make this have this sense of authenticity of being maybe something that you could have imagined as a warehouse someday." But done very tastefully, and in a way that opens the doors to much more retail expression. And to really use that framework to create openings that allow you to look in, and allow you to create retail expression and so on. So, and then we worked very hard to take those materials and wrap them around the other sides of actually all three other sides of that building. So it was very conscious and very intentional. But in our scientists' presentation, for instance, we showed other brick buildings where large letters are painted on top to create district identity. And that was some of the same inspiration that we drew from. So we, you know, Steve, I don't know. Would you add to that?

**Steve Jackson:** Sure.

**Mr. Jackson:** Oh, here we go. Steve Jackson with Cooper Carry Architects. One of the main charges that we had when we were looking at this building on Wilson was that we really wanted to open the mall up quite a bit. And the building has good bones, you know, good structure, and the brick, and so forth. And we were looking at ways of sort of punching larger openings into the building, and we did that at Wilson. And we've raised the height of the arcade quite a bit from what it is today. We've added new openings at the level 2, which is now just a brick wall. So we've added storefront type openings there, which will be backlit with graphics and so forth. We're also adding some light box type features at level 3, which is just now the sort of glass block openings, most of which have been covered and are very dark at this time. So we felt that with working with existing brick building, using the steel sort of trim work to kind of bring it into a more modern era was a good play. And it provides a really good contrast to the modern architecture. And it kind of gives you this sense that this place has evolved over time. You know, it just isn't one big mega-block. It has history behind it. And has sort of a what you might call a backstory behind the place.

**Commissioner Sockwell:** Well, I think those are all very good comments. I guess my concern is just that I don't personally want to see a boxy piece of architecture along Wilson Boulevard, particularly when you're doing such exciting things internally. But what I hear you saying is that this is a tasteful warehouse.

**Mr. Jackson:** Correct.

**Commissioner Sockwell:** Is that fair?

**Mr. Voegle:** Yeah. I would just say this. The warehouse is an analogy. If this was really a literal interpretation of a warehouse, I think you would have a reason for concern. It's a word for inspiration that we drew from. But the reality is we have something that does differentiate us from the pre-cast buildings, and the modern, you know,

curtain wall buildings around us. So we wanted to take that differentiator and accentuate it further. You know, to say it's a warehouse is probably not a perfect characterization. But it's a building that looks rich in history, and has some identity that's distinct. And distinction is what we wanted the district to embody.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further questions or comments, discussion relating to the mall? Commissioner Ciotti.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Under site plan conditions, we had talked about, at the site plan review, recycling. At this time, there is no recycling of any of the restaurants, of any inside or outside. And there was discussion that going forward, we would implement a robust recycling program throughout the mall, and as well as the outside. There's no condition, so I was wondering when it--would everybody be agreeable to add that condition when we're making amendments at the end? And was there a reason it was left off? It was just an oversight?

**Mr. Voegel:** Recycling, in terms of how we handle trash for tenants, is a normal part of our program. John, I don't know if you can speak at all to the current efforts that we make with recycling, but it's built into Forest City's, one of our core values is sustainability.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** But at all these many years, there's been nothing.

**Mr. Voegel:** Yeah.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** I just, you know, it's a new day going forward. But I think if we don't memorialize it--

**Mr. Voegel:** And again, the plan has recycling trash containers around the project that are part of the overall plan for the furniture and fixtures. But we--

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Down in the food court there's no recycling.

**Mr. Voegel:** There may not be in the common area today, but that won't be the plan in the future. All of our new projects, we build recycling containers next to trash containers. It is part of our method.

**Mr. Pritchard:** We'll work with staff on that between now and County Board.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Great. And then we're still in site plan conditions? And the issue with the bridge is so important. And I want to be on record with the concerns. And we did review the easement. Under site plan Condition 61, under the Mall, number D, it's on page 143. You talk about the bridge operation and maintenance. This has been a problem for the 20-plus years that I have lived attached to the mall. And there seems to be operational issues. If we say, "6 am to 12 midnight," or, "An additional hour beyond the hours of the Metro rail system," or, "The hours of the adjacent," it doesn't work. It is a major fail from the beginning. Dreck\* does not seem to be able to manage this, or the security systems that are programmed. I can only advise that we would need to come up with something simpler. And I suggest, having struggled with this for two decades now, that it needs to say something like, "1 hour before Metro, and 1 hour after the last Metro train comes in." Something really--if you go on like this, those--it'll be locked. It will be nothing but misery.

**Mr. Voegel:** We understand, and we're amenable to working with staff on language that would provide for--

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Or you know, and I will likely make a condition because it's so important. This bridge is so valuable and such an important part of the benefit package that if we don't nail down the things that we know now keep it from working, we're not gonna be able to realize the full benefit of it. And also, we have the movie theaters now. If we don't get this right, people come out of the movie theaters and they can't get to Metro because it's closed. So I think this is our chance to really set the parameters correctly in a user-friendly format. And then, while we're on conditions, we have conditions for snow removal at the mall. I would like support that--

**Commissioner Forinash:** Can you reference a page for the rest of us?

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Oh, let's see. I think I did write it down.

**Commissioner Forinash:** It's okay to say, "No." I'm sure Ms. Byrd can look it up.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** No, I did make a note--

**Ms. Byrd:** It's condition 50. So on page, I think, 141 or 142.

**Commissioner Forinash:** One-forty.

**Ms. Byrd:** One-forty, and it's in all of the conditions.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Yeah, okay, great. Thank you very much, Ms. Byrd. The problem is we're gonna be without that bridge for a good long time. And when we have the snow removal policies, it has historically not included the pedestrian ramps. And people cannot move back and forth to Metro and to shopping unless those are included in the snow removal of the entire block, from Randolph to--Randolph, Fairfax, I mean, Randolph, Wilson, and Glebe. So I would like to add that these pedestrian ramps are included in the snow removal for the life of this project. It really keeps people from being able to move about for a good long time if we get a significant snowfall. So, thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Ms. Byrd, I have a follow-up question on that snow removal condition. When it refers to, "All interior streets and sidewalks," that includes the public ways surrounding the site?

**Ms. Byrd:** Yes.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Or--? Okay. All the way up until what point? The midpoint of the street adjacent, or the curb? I don't know where that responsibility ends. Just pointing to Commissioner Ciotti's highlighting of the ramps as critical.

**Ms. Byrd:** Well, I would say that, likely, I mean, ramps would be part of that system. So when you're talkin' about streets and sidewalks, that would include the ramps.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** But it's never called out. And so we're left with this. And it seems that human nature, if it's not explicitly stated, we don't have any place to go to look at. And so, you know, "Belts and suspenders," as my good friend always says. Because we're not there yet in education.

**Commissioner Forinash:** So perhaps adding to streets and sidewalks.

**Ms. Byrd:** Staff will--yes.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Curb ramps, thank you.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Thank you so much for understanding.

## **SITE PLAN WIDE ISSUES**

**Commissioner Forinash:** Other mall-related questions, before we move into site-plan-wide issues? Nope, all right. These, I would like to tackle in some order so that we don't keep circling back from issue to issue. So let's take the order in which they're presented here. And first, the pedestrian bridge, if there are remaining questions. We've had some discussion about it already. If there are remaining questions or discussion we want to have on that topic. Commissioner Ciotti, excuse me, Commissioner Iacomini. The Italian section, yeah.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** [laughing] I just wanted to ask staff. And I think I had heard this at one of the SPRC meetings, that the current pedestrian bridge is home to a public art project, from what, 25, 30 years ago. And indeed, we're going, again, in the same process to design the new bridge. Are we, in that discussion, going to make any provision for some of the pieces, or some of the parts of the current bridge to be either reused on site or stored--somehow not lost entirely, since we got it as a benefit years ago?

**Ms. Gabor:** It's not something that we'd memorialize with the conditions, but it's something that, as we go through this design process we can evaluate and figure out what makes the most sense.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** I just don't want us to start down the notion that public art is able to be disposed of lightly. You know, that it is a community benefit. And it becomes a part of the community. And so I think if there is good reason why it needs to be moved or altered, that it just be treated with respect, and something else be done. And I--just as a general policy.

**Ms. Gabor:** Absolutely.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** That would be helpful.

**Ms. Gabor:** We understand your position, and again, as we go through the design process, that's something we can explore further and figure out what makes the most sense, to make sure we respect the public art.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further questions on the pedestrian bridge? Commissioner Gutsh--oh, specifically on the public art? Commissioner Hughes.

**Commissioner Hughes:** Just a follow-up to staff. I think that the Commissioner Iacomini's comment's worth even amplifying to say, even if it's not incorporate into the next public art process, to consider that the art, which is the colorful arches and things like that, be removed in a careful manner and set aside, and made available free for other artists to incorporate into their work. You know, those are the sort of things that I think, you know, you can talk with your Commission, and the Arts Commission, and to consider. But it's that little bit of extra effort that's not, you know, it's instead of just taking the dumpster and tossing it in there, putting it in a special box that goes to other artists at George Mason or other, Marymount, who may be able to use it in their status. They're creative people. I'm not, so--

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Gutshall.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Thank you. This is--I would categorize this question as for my education, for staff. So, condition number 61. It's actually the last paragraph of it, last sentence on page 144, which states that, "If the developer is not able to come to agreement with all the other entities with a legal interest in the existing bridge that they will not proceed with the site plan." So, this is enforceable?

**Ms. Gabor:** Yes, it is.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So we can have as a condition of site plan a requirement to enter an agreement with a third party?

**Ms. Gabor:** There exists an agreement today. So that is where this is coming from. Essentially, we want to make sure that this is something that is plausible based on the legal agreements that are in place today before that anything is commenced.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Okay, and I guess that's great. Thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Ciotti, you said you were done with the bridge.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** I know, I know, I know. But it's so important. For the record, when you come into the negotiations with all the other parties, it has to include the doors that lead to the escalators in the atrium. Any part of this that's not included, the whole thing falls apart. So be--and you would have no way of having a working knowledge of this if you didn't live this every day for more than 2 decades. So, it's up to me to make sure everybody knows that it's all parts make the whole. And if any of these pieces aren't included, it falls apart. And you can have the bridge open. And then they lock all the doors to and from the escalators to the Metro. So that has to be included, and that's part of Dweck. And it really needs to be culled out, every piece of this, to really assure

that the public, that this benefit really is gonna work. And so I'm gonna, hopefully, that's the last word. I think I got it all, thanks.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Is this a follow-up, Commissioner Cole? Please.

**Commissioner Cole:** This is a question for staff. One of the benefits that we are supposedly gaining from this is an easement on the bridge. Why couldn't this be a 24-hour, 7-day a week easement so the bridge is open 24 hours, so that it didn't close, so that there wasn't any issue whatsoever of--? In other words, why is the County willing to take the risk that the building owners will accidentally lock a door that shouldn't be locked? Why not just have a 24/7 easement? Is there a reason for not doing that? Either of you can answer it. Whoever will answer it in agreement with me.

**Ms. Gabor:** I guess what I do want to say is it something that we are discussing with the applicant. So I might let the applicant weigh in on this before staff does.

**Commissioner Cole:** Just, let's let the applicant answer.

**Mr. Voegelé.** We have had a fair amount of discussion on that subject. And not just with respect to the bridge, but the other easements in the project. And it's conceivable that we could end up at a 24/7 arrangement. We can't control what's not in our control, however, in terms of the other part of that network. And they are subject to the site plan covenants and conditions that exist today. But I do think, and we wanna continue to discuss this with staff, that where it's feasible and practical, if we can provide 24/7 access, then we will.

**Commissioner Cole:** Thank you, Mr. Voegelé.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Ciotti, follow-up to the follow-up.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Okay, so I wasn't done. So, one of the operational concerns is that, especially in the winter time, with homeless people sleeping in there. And the mall closes now, Mr. Moore, right? Like from 3 to 5. And it gives security a chance to sweep it and rouse anybody who they want to move along. And so that is part of the consideration, and that's realistic. And I could deal with, I think everybody for the most part could deal with it from 3 to 5, if it was closed for operational issues, and to do a security sweep.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further questions or discussion around the pedestrian bridge? Moving on. Let's focus on street cross sections next. Commissioner Schroll.

**Commissioner Schroll:** I have a questions for staff. I'm on page 63 of the staff report. My question is, it's starting at the bottom of that page and going over to page 64. So, it says in the underlined text starting on page 63 that, "The minimum streetscape width measured around back of curb, ranging from 6 feet at the western edge of the existing building to 14 feet at the eastern edge of the building." So my concern is on the page 64 you call out a minimum of 10-foot clear width. And I'm wondering if you could clarify for me how you can have a minimum of 10-foot clear width if the range of from back to curb is starting at the low end of 6 feet.

**Ms. Gabor:** It's something we can look at to clarify, but essentially, maybe Mr. Becca\* could pull up the Glebe Road streetscape to illustrate this a little more. But to continue, the existing--this is again, for the office only. And so on the west side there is a pinch point, it actually is 5 foot. There is a typo. See, that point right there is 5 feet. And then on the eastern edge, or I'm sorry, the southern edge--I guess that should be the southern edge of the Macy's building, it does--it is 14 feet, but we have the 10 foot clear. So we can go ahead and clarify this. But essentially, the goal is there will be 10 foot clear, minimum clear sidewalk where there is 10 feet. But we also acknowledging there is a 5-foot pinch point at the eastern edge. I can clar--I'll clarify it in the conditions, thank you.

**Commissioner Harner:** All right, that would be helpful. And I know that, obviously, Macy's is not part of this, and so we're not improving all the frontages. But that would, you know, we would want to have as wide a clearance we can around this block. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Hughes, and then Commissioner Ciotti.

**Commissioner Hughes:** So this is to the streetscape. Is there any thought from staff to actually discuss with VDOT maybe giving up 3, 4 feet right there while we're doing a lot of construction?

**Commissioner Forinash:** Mr. Leach, welcome to the party.

**Commissioner Hughes:** Sorry. First rule of business school, you don't know till you ask.

**Dennis Leach, DES-Transportation:** The County has been working with the state VDOT, it is on, for many years to try to improve accessibility, improve the streetscapes along Glebe Road. It is a state highway. It is considered a major arterial in their system. We spent approximately 10 years trying to upgrade intersections at Wilson, at Fairfax, and at Carlin Springs. And those improvements are finally coming to closure. The area where we've had most success is actually widening behind the curb and getting improved streetscape through redevelopments such as this. We have also been successful working with the state on managed parking, which in some blocks on Glebe Road have been very successful at changing the character of the street. But wholesale narrowing of the travel lanes of Glebe is a very long-term effort. I can tell you the state would not entertain narrowing for a short segment, such as the one pinch point where the Macy's store encroaches into the sidewalk. So that's what I can tell you. I mean, Arlington's interest is to promote complete streets, to improve pedestrian and bicycle transit accessibility, to make them attractive, to include better lighting, better streetscape in general. But we have limitations.

**Commissioner Forinash:** I have a specific question following up to that. Does the state require us to have two left turn lanes going into the parking garage?

**Mr. Leach:** That is something that we can look into. The state basically does require minimum travel lane widths of 11 feet.

**Commissioner Forinash:** No, no, two left turn lanes? Not the width of those lanes.

**Mr. Leach:** No, I realize that. We have not had an explicit discussion about the left-hand turn lanes into the garage.

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

**Commissioner Cole:** Mr. Leach, thanks so much for coming. Can you tell me, does the County have a design for a preferred cross section for Glebe Road in the area of the mall?

**Mr. Leach:** We do not at this time.

**Commissioner Cole:** Okay, thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Hughes.

**Commissioner Hughes:** So I just want to make sure I'm clear and I'm understanding. I guess, the road lanes all the way up to the curb, in the case of this part of Glebe, are travel lanes at some part of the day? Is that right, Mr. Leach?

**Mr. Leach:** That's correct.

**Commissioner Hughes:** And so that's the reason. It's not a parking lane or something like that. It's an actual active traffic lane.

**Mr. Leach:** Right, it was built widened by VDOT as a 6-lane facility with turn lanes. We spent 10 years negotiating a slightly reduced cross section at the intersections. And we did an experimental pilot with one block of Glebe Road with off-peak parking. It worked, and the state has allowed us to extend it. So the proposal here is to continue that on the small block.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Schroll.

**Commissioner Schroll:** One of the issues that was raised on the Wilson, amendments to the Wilson cross section was a potential for increased jaywalking. That's one of the concerns that has been raised when you take away the median and take away the fence that's there currently. Does staff have any data currently on existing jaywalking, or kind of jaywalking around this frontage over time? I know that's been a concern raised by those in the community. I'm just wondering if you know what it is now, and what it could likely be later.

**Mr. Leach:** Well, I think the--in the Wilson Boulevard frontage, they are large blocks. The reason we supported the installation of a traffic signal was recognizing that we have more than one--that the block size is large and that there is a pedestrian north-south travel path that's kind of setup by the blocks immediately to the north. So that's--as Wilson Boulevard is reconfigured, having signalized crossing is still going to be there. We are also improving the Randolph Street crossing, which needs some help. The Stuart Street crossing, which is the number one north-south pedestrian way, will continue to have the median.

**Commissioner Schroll:** Right. So, just to clarify, staff doesn't have data on either from the police, or otherwise, of jaywalking instances around this site?

**Mr. Leach:** No.

**Commissioner Schroll:** Okay, that's all.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further questions about the street cross sections? Commissioner Ciotti.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** About the jaywalking, the reason that Fairfax, and they put the fence up and everything, because there was such a big problem on Fairfax there at Stuart, in between Stuart and Stafford, with jaywalking. And first they put the berm, and then they put the fence up. So it was my understanding that it was a similar problem on Wilson. Hence, the same treatment of that fence to keep people from jaywalking. That's all I know about that. But my question is, I'm channeling Ellen Armbruster, who wrote. And her question is of the pedestrian element of the Master Transportation Plan, calls for a pedestrian refuge, 6-foot wide and ADA compliant if the street is over 65-feet wide. Wilson at Randolph is 66-feet wide, and not only do we not get the called-for median, but the developer proposes to remove even the small 1.5-foot wide median that exists there today. So I'm asking on her behalf.

**Ms. Gabor:** If I could answer that question for you. The 65-feet that Ellen is referencing actually includes the parking lane on the north side of Wilson. So because we are introducing the nub, the crossing distance is reduced to approximately 59 feet, which is less than the 65 in the Master Transportation Plan.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further questions on street cross sections? All right, streetscapes. I'm moving out of the street and onto the sidewalk. Questions or discussion related to streetscape? Commissioner Siegel, and then Commissioner Ciotti.

**Commissioner Siegel:** I wanted to just talk about the landscaping. A lot of it will be along the streets. I realize, I think, from condition number 20 on page 112, I think that governs here that you're not--that isn't coming to us tonight. That's post approval. But I'm wondering if you could--isn't that correct? Developer agrees to submit [inaudible] detailed final landscape plan prior to this, et cetera, et cetera.

**Ms. Gabor:** That's correct.

**Commissioner Siegel:** But can you talk a little bit about street trees? They can be very challenged. And I don't think I remember hearing much about that during SPRC. How do you plant and preserve trees, let them grow to heights that are needed to--

**Commissioner Forinash:** Can I direct that to staff, just for a second, because we have standard site plan conditions.

**Commissioner Siegel:** There are standards, but, well, maybe staff could clarify tree pits, lengths, continuous panels, silva cells. I've read through the standards, but maybe you can--

**Commissioner Forinash:** Where I prefer your focus is not on explaining the standards now. But if there are deviations from or enhancements to our standard tree conditions that are part of these conditions, I'd love some detail on that.

**Ms. Gabor:** So just to back up one step. Again, this is the, what I'll call "The conceptual landscaping plan." They will have to complete a final landscaping plan. So we'll get down in the nitty gritty, all the details. Make sure the utility conflicts, excuse me, remove any utility conflicts. Make sure the tree pits are appropriately sized. To Commissioner Forinash's comment, the one thing I do want to draw your attention to is [inaudible] volume. If you go to page 105, it's actually within the civil engineering condition. It's 19BAA4, [laughing]

**Commissioner Forinash:** The underlined.

**Ms. Gabor:** It is the underlined language, and I'll just read it to you. It says, "Exceptions may be made for features that are installed for expansions of soil volume, as shown in the civil engineering plan as approved by the County manager." And what this is referencing is, as Commissioner Forinash mentioned, the proposal to use some silva cells. You know, we've traditionally liked to have the 5-foot structure-free zone below the sidewalk area so that for any other utilities that want to come through, dry utilities, wet utilities, streetlight conduit, for County purposes. But we also want to make sure that we can provide the optimal landscape area for trees. So this is what we have added to provide that flexibility. You know, again, once we get through to the final landscape plan, we'll review it and make sure that where the silva cells are proposed, it's not gonna be detrimental to any future utility work that we are doing. Does that answer your question?

**Commissioner Siegel:** Yes, yes, to some extent. I wondered--it's not appropriate to have the applicant talk about experience with street trees.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Sure, we can ask them to talk about their experience with street trees. But I'd ask to keep it fairly limited.

**Commissioner Siegel:** Absolutely, not asking for a treatise.

**Mr. Voegele:** So we're happy to do that. And I'm gonna invite Kara from LAB, our landscape architect.

**Kara Lanahan:** Hi, this is Kara Lanahan from Landscape Architecture Bureau. The silva cells are really an important new feature that is being used in a lot of places. And basically, in urban conditions, the soil is really compacted, and the trees aren't able to get enough water, and their roots are really constricted. And that's a lot of times why they're not doing well. And so, Forest City is proposing to expand the amount of good soil by using silva cells underneath the sidewalk. And we're also expanding the amount of planting area. There's gonna be lush planting around the trees, more than you usually see, and a lot more than is out there now, which will also help to get water and nutrients to the tree roots.

**Commissioner Siegel:** I appreciate that, and I raised it because it there was a lot of discussion about the Glebe Road frontage. It's challenged because there's no really redevelopment of the building there, just the air rights. And it seemed to me that healthy, full street trees would go a long way to responding to that concern. So, thank you very much for that, appreciate it.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Ciotti, and then Commissioner Schroll.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Following up to some extent, right now I think there's five dead trees, or sort of empty tree pits along Glebe on this side. So, I share the Commissioner's concern about us getting some healthy trees and giving 'em the best chance to survive. If we look at the applicant's page 37, as just an example, I see that the trees, the landscape, seems to stop at the Kettler Center. And so I just wanted to clarify whether or not there will be a

continuous landscaping around the property, in front of Kettler or the parking garage, however, you know, all the way up to Randolph and Glebe.

**Ms. Gabor:** There are no streetscape improvements proposed with this project in front of the garage. So essentially, anywhere south of the parking garage entrance/exits.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Seriously? They're not--there's not--they're not gonna be asked to plant that?

**Ms. Gabor:** That is correct. It's not something that's within the proposal. Everything you see in green on this project is what's proposed as new street trees.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Even with the public-private partnership for this?

**Ms. Gabor:** That is correct.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Well, that's concerning.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Following up on that. You referred to parking garage improvements a couple of times earlier. And we'll get into the details of that. There's no proposed streetscape improvement around the parking garage as part of those improvements is what you're saying now. Correct?

**Ms. Gabor:** That is correct.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Okay.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** There are tree pits there that are empty.

**Commissioner Forinash:** I think we're at the point--I think we have the answer. And we might wanna act on that. Commissioner Sch--is this a direct follow-up, Commissioner Hughes? All right, Commissioner Hughes, and then Commissioner Schroll.

**Commissioner Schroll:** So, to Commissioner Ciotti's point. The success of the vibrant pedestrian entrance right now is rock bottom. And Union Jack--oh, no longer a Union Jack, but they were there. There's not a single picture of the Glebe Road entrance to the Ballston Mall. And if you look at the development we're proposing on 676 Flats, the Mazda site, the amount of people who will enter from that direction. I don't see a single image of the mall entrance on that side. And the street trees that go in that north-south direction. I encourage the applicant to consider whether it should be thinking about its site as a holistic approach. And that's the only thing.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Harner.

**Commissioner Harner:** Thanks, Commissioner Forinash. Is this the appropriate time to discuss this entrance area of the parking garage, or is that fall within another portion of the--?

**Commissioner Forinash:** Let's talk about the sort of exterior of the parking garage now in conjunction with streetscape, and then we can come back to other garage improvements separately. So, go ahead.

**Commissioner Harner:** Is that acceptable to Commissioner Schroll, who was ahead of me?

**Commissioner Forinash:** Schroll was on deck. All right, well, let's continue this discussion, and then we'll come back. Thank you, Commissioner Schroll. Commissioner Harner.

**Commissioner Harner:** Just to follow up on Commissioner Hughes. You know, the existing parking garage entrance does have some aesthetic degradation to it, with missing letters, and kind of a dated pediment of sorts. And pretty unfortunate experience. And so I'm just wondering if there's any way that this entrance can be significantly upgraded to match the super high quality that we have on the rest of the design, such that when the mall opens, we have a great new entrance to enter into. And I'm really interested. Not because I really care about the aesthetics that much. I actually think that it's economically important for the operation of the facility, and for

the people who will drive to the mall. And that will be their main entrance from a car, as well as the neighborhood entrance from Carlin Springs. So I'm just--I know it's very complicated with the ownership, and the County asset, and the design of it. But I'm hoping that there's a way that we can begin the design work to do more than just sort of Band-Aid this entrance. And I guess I'd invite both the applicant and staff to respond if they have an approach that might address that.

>> [03:11:11] Unknown: Well, Commissioner, the observation is spot on. Clearly there are weaknesses in the exterior façade design, or current condition. And specifically, just to the right of what you see in this view, where the garage entrance is off of Glebe. Our approach, in the context of this overall project, and again, in the context of the partnership with the County, was to identify improvements to the garage that, again, both parties felt were meaningful and contributed to the success of the garage and the project. Clearly, both are inexorably linked. And there was no way we could contemplate this kind of development and investment if there wasn't similar improvements made to the garage. The way we treated that particular condition was, in our mind, you know, an allowance that would provide for graphics and improvements to what was existing there today. Not just, necessarily, replacing missing letters and so on. At the same time, it wasn't a proposal to build in a, you know, a three or four-story screen wall or architectural façade that would somehow completely obstruct your view of the bridges and everything from Regal. We appreciate the value that could have. But again, this has been a collaboration with the County. And I think the goal is to identify things that are most meaningful and important initially, and maybe that could be the kind of thing we can explore as we get further down the road with the project. But at the beginning, this needs to be the safest, brightest, easiest to negotiate garage that we can possibly make it. And then I think some of the more aesthetic things that speak to the exterior are important considerations.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Did staff want to add to that? Nope. Commissioner Schroll.

**Commissioner Schroll:** Thank you, Chairman Forinash. I would like to associate myself with Commissioner Harner's remarks about Glebe Road. I do think that they're spot on. I did have a question just for staff, a clarifying question. Staff report page 27 and 28, I'm just wondering if you could clarify for me, are the street improvement--streetscape improvements, the \$1.8 million on page 27, are those--? Is that figure incorporated into the Wilson Boulevard streetscape improvements, the 2.2 million? Or is the 2.2 million in addition to?

**Ms. Byrd:** The 2.2 is in addition to. So these are just the estimated costs of what the standard improvements would be.

**Commissioner Schroll:** Okay.

**Ms. Byrd:** Around the site.

**Commissioner Schroll:** That's helpful. Thank you, Ms. Byrd.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further questions or discussion streetscape elements, the streetscape overall? All right, accessibility, the next topic on the outline. We've discussed that in several contexts here about the pedestrian bridge and path. Are there additional accessibility issues? Nope. Pedestrian flow, and so this, let's tackle under this, and general flow through the site, flow around the site. Again, we've touched on this issue at several points already. But if there are remaining questions or discussion about pedestrian flow routes, or quality of those routes, now's the time. All right, I'm gonna put--well, we have three more, well, I guess, four more, by my count. Interior garage improvements, which we'd put a placeholder down for before. Bicycle parking, construction phasing, and site-plan conditions. So, let's take 'em in that order. Back to the garage. There was a question earlier, or a suggestion earlier, to discuss the internal improvements. Anyone wanna pick that up? Commissioner Iacomini.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** Well, when we had added garage, it was garage in general.

**Commissioner Forinash:** That's true, it was. And then I peeled off the exterior, if you will, under streetscape. So, go ahead.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** And I just to continue just a little bit about the exterior, 'cause I realized that we did sort of link them. So there's no plan to even paint it, or do anything that's going to make the garage a little more aesthetically pleasing from the Glebe Road side?

**Ms. Gabor:** Not at this time, there is not.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** It's just astounding to me in some ways, that we would leave sort of such a big gap as we go around this project. Mr. Leach.

**Mr. Leach:** I would say that as part of this applicant's proposal, there is not a recladding of the public garage supporting this block. I think this is very much a subject for the County's upcoming CIP. We own and manage that garage. And we continue to make investments in it. For example, we have actually recently re-lamped the garage to brighten it. We've painted the interior. So we continue to look at what kind of investments need to be made. But that discussion really goes beyond this applicant's proposal. It's related. But the time for that discussion is really part of that biannual CIP process, which is gonna be upon us in the next couple of months. And I would say that one of the challenges is that the needs of the garage may exceed the funds that are generated from its operation.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** If I may follow. The door was sort of opened about this. And perhaps it was discussed a little bit at some of the SPRCs that I did not attend. But the proposal to redo the mall will mean, I think, in some ways, and I don't know if we'll measure this, a diminution perhaps of people who park at the garage either on a monthly pass or a daily. Because they can get easily from the garage through the pedestrian bridges to the Metro. It is probably a very desirable place to park for that reason. And I'm a little concerned, because the bridge will be gone. We'll have construction. It's very good that we've gotten to make sure that the sidewalks are intact on Randolph and Wilson. So that we actually maintain what is a good marketing feature of an asset owned by the County. So there's a little bit of me that's saying, "I am concerned that what the applicant wants to do," which is magnificent. I don't think that any of would deny that what's being proposed will ultimately be a huge asset to Ballston. But I fear that the County's garage and its revenue will be put at some risk and be diminished during this time. And so one of the things that might come back to us because of that diminution is a little more attention paid to the Glebe façade of this garage in whatever ways that could be commensurate. So I'm not talking a huge recladding, or grillwork to hide the ramping and all that. But something that could help offset that particular problem that I think is gonna occur.

**Mr. Leach:** I think we take your comments. I mean, the garage is an aging structure. It was, the first parts of it were built in the 1950s. And it's--

**Commissioner Iacomini:** I completely agree. I'm actually talking more cosmetic. And I know it needs more than that. I completely understand that. But I'm just trying to look at something that helps us along for a while. 'Cause you're right. The CIP is probably not gonna be able to bear the burden of everything that needs to be done with that garage. And if we can at least have it present itself well when the magnificent new mall is done, I think we'd do all of ourselves a favor.

**Mr. Leach:** But I think the timing of this is such that this applicant--the mall is going to be under reconstruction for a period of time. The County goes through its CIP and the Ballston garage has its own section of the CIP. So I think now is an excellent for the community to weigh in, in terms of the CIP, and the investments that are needed. I think that actually the timing works well, given that the Board will act on the County's CIP probably in the month of July. And this reconstruction could align, you know, with that.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Hughes, and then Commissioner Cole.

**Commissioner Hughes:** Thank you. I think of this project as a success, which I hope the applicant's able to receive. In my 8 years living in this County, I've been to Ballston Mall, not counting the times I go to the skating rink, three times. Once on a bus, and twice in a car. What I want to make sure that we realize as our fellow commissioners, and I just want to pull the letter Ms. Hynes sent each of us. Because Mr. Leach's comments make

me remember what she said in the thoughts regarding the façade, and the great place making, is, "We have a beautiful facility," to which I'm guessing somewhere in the neighborhood of 2,000 cars a day minimum, and hopefully more for the applicant, enter through the garage. And it says, "Is the array of proposed community benefits designed by the preliminary staff report aligned with creating a great place, regardless of the funding source?" And to that comment, I think--I'm not prepared to make a motion, but I hope somebody will regarding that we can't have a dilapidated garage sitting next to an incredible new mall development.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Cole.

**Commissioner Cole:** I had expected to make some of these comments sort of in closing, but in the context of this conversation, I want to begin by first of all associating myself with everything Commissioner Iacomini and Commissioner Hughes said. I think that, and I very much appreciate Mr. Leach's notion that the CIP is the appropriate funding source for this, potentially an appropriate funding source for this. And the cycle for the CIP is such that this could actually be done, potentially concurrently with the renewal of the mall. At the same time, I fear that we are losing sight of the value of our investment, or potentially we are at risk of not making sufficient investment to guarantee the success of this project for all concerned. And let's be clear. The success of this project is not just the success of the mall and how well Forest City does. It's not the success of the office building, or the residential building. It's really the success of Ballston, and more broadly, Arlington in general. This mall has always been spoken of as an engine of economic success for this community. I don't think it helps any of us to say that the public realm investments which contribute to the success of this should not be part of the discussion now, and the kinds of commitments that ought to be made by the community, and to do everything we can to assure that we're not throwing good money after bad. That is, that we don't have to come in later and try to save something that we could, if we'd done the right thing to begin with. So, the notion that there is sort of this hard dividing line between the garage and the mall is an illusion. They are connected. They are perceived as a single kind of entity. And to the extent that there are stains, and broken bricks, and missing letters, and it could--you know, the list of things that are wrong with the garage is significant. And I fully acknowledge that the interior of the garage is better than it was. I fully--and I use it frequently. What I'm concerned is that people who drive by the mall won't go there because the mall is not in an--because the garage is not inviting. It is a place, from the outside, that suggests that the inside doesn't work very well. And as a result, people won't go there. And that's what we depend on, people going there. So we absolutely have to make the investments to make sure that people don't turn away because it's an ugly, dirty, broken place. That said, and Mr. Leach, you and I have talked about this, that nature of Glebe Road is very much a part of this. In all the time that I've been on the Planning Commission, nothing we have done has involved place-making, in the context of site plans, the way this does. This whole effort is to remake a place. We as a community are tremendously expert at good bones. And you are owed a lot of credit for the quality of the bones in this community. We are not very good at making flesh, you know? One of the things I used to say when I was on the Planning Commission very early on is, "Name one delightful place in Arlington," you know? "Name one truly delightful place." Do we have anything that anyone would say is comparable to the High Line in New York City, for example? And I certainly recognize, we are not in the same league as New York City as a metropolitan area. But I'm just saying, where is our delightfulness? When do we dress the bones in places that people want to be? You know, the bones in Clarendon, where people apparently want to be, fall under the rubric of bars, you know, restaurants. They don't fall under the sitting outside. You know, we don't have really wonderful places. This is an opportunity to create a much better place. We won't know whether it's delightful till it's done. But to the extent that we can improve the garage, to the extent that we can improve the street that runs along it--and as I've said to Mr. Voegele on numerous occasions, "Twice as many people pass the mall on the street, Glebe Road, as do on Wilson Boulevard." Twice as many people every single day. And yet, the mall presents itself terribly on Glebe Road. Glebe Road is a very unfriendly environment. You know, as we both know, at the intersection where the garage and Carlin Springs and Glebe Road exist, it's fully eight lanes wide. And it's seven lanes wide almost everywhere else. So when the time comes, you know, it's my intention to include in a motion, at least a study of how we can make the road and the mall, and the garage, rather, complement the mall. We can't be spending the millions of dollars that we're spending of public money as part of the public-private partnership to make the mall better and not take care of our own piece. Plain and simple. So,

you know, I'll have more to say in closing remarks. But I just think it's--if we don't go--when the project started, someone quoted Barbara Donnellan and said that in a conversation with the folks from Forest City and Buch, she said, "Go big or go home." You know, because I think here view was at that time, and maybe you were in the meeting, was that the proposal was insufficient to warrant the kind of support that they were asking. Go big or go home. And in my view, that same view has to apply to what we do. If we can't go big on this, we are not doing what's necessary to make this successful. And so we are gonna throw good money after bad. And so that's the situation we face. And I strongly urge you to really think about what we as a community can do, and what kind of recommendations you will ultimately make to the County Board to help them get to a place where they understand and appreciate that. And no one--I'm not deluding myself. I understand how hard they've been working on this as well. But the advice that they get from staff perhaps is more important than anything else.

**Commissioner Forinash:** That did feel like wrap-up, but we're not quite there yet. Other questions or discussion around the garage and improvements to the garage, potential improvements to the garage? No. All right, bicycle parking. This, I know, came up in SPRC. And I believe, Commissioner Cole, you wanted to raise it tonight.

**Commissioner Cole:** As has become a tradition for me at major planning events, I want to at least start the conversation about bicycle parking by asking if there is an illustration or anyone knows the nature of the bicycle parking in the blocks bounded by Randolph, Wilson, and Glebe Road? What do we have today? And tell me what is proposed.

**Mr. Leach:** What I can tell you is that staff has been augmenting bicycle parking between the mall and the Metro station. We've added a lot of on-street bicycle parking. And we are currently at 90% design on an interior bicycle parking facility that will be operated by Metro.

**Commissioner Cole:** And how many bikes will that accommodate?

**Mr. Leach:** I do not have that number in front of me, but I'm told it's 120.

**Commissioner Cole:** A hundred and twenty, okay. And that's a block away from the mall, correct?

**Mr. Leach:** That is on the Metro Plaza, at Stuart and Fairfax.

**Commissioner Cole:** So it's two blocks away then.

**Mr. Leach:** Correct.

**Commissioner Cole:** Okay. Do we know how many street spaces there are for bicycles, how many racks there are for bicycles in the block today? In the three--in the superblock area?

**Mr. Leach:** We actually do have a diagram that captures all of the applicant proposed bicycle parking.

**Ms. Gabor:** So the applicant did prepare an exhibit. And what it shows is the existing racks. And again, this is along the frontage of the site plan proposal only. There are 16 total racks. And that has--

**Commissioner Cole:** Is that, each accommodates two bicycles, is that correct?

**Ms. Gabor:** No, that is--I'm sorry, 16 total bikes.

**Commissioner Cole:** Sixteen total bikes, okay.

**Ms. Gabor:** Sixteen total bicycle spaces. So there is one rack in front of Macy's on Wilson--

**Commissioner Cole:** You don't need to tell me the location.

**Ms. Gabor:** Okay.

**Commissioner Cole:** Okay.

**Ms. Gabor:** Suffice it to say, they are all on Wilson today.

**Commissioner Cole:** Are there any public bicycle parking spaces in the garage today?

**Ms. Gabor:** There are. There is a rack on the southern side of the mall, on the northern face of the garage. It's right where the intersection, right near the rock bottom, there is a curlicue rack there today. It holds probably eight or nine bicycles today. That is the only bicycle parking that I am aware of in the garage today.

**Commissioner Cole:** Okay, and can you tell me who's--is the bicycle parking that's planned for the Metro Plaza, is that funded out of WMATA funds, or is that funded out of County funds?

**Mr. Leach:** It is a County project.

**Commissioner Cole:** It is a County project, okay. As you know, and I expect to make a--include this in my motion again today, is to propose a centralized bike parking facility that will accommodate perhaps more than 120 bicycles. If we think the long-term, I think we have to do that. I think we have to have a facility that provides security, and a covered, protected secure place for many more bicycles than 120. I think 120 is two train cars on Metro. So I don't know what the right number is. Do you--? Was there a study done that indicated that 120 should meet the need?

**Ms. Gabor:** So let me just clarify a little more. So with the Ballston Metro Multimodal Station Project, there are gonna be a total of 80 bicycle spaces that will be in a shelter. It will be in something that is a controlled access with--it'll be a structure, but the structure will be see-through, so to minimize any security concerns. There will be an additional 24 racks around the outside. So a total of 48 additional spaces. So that total is 128 spaces will be provided with the Ballston Multimodal Project. When we did the study for the options of redoing this station, we did look at some proposed bicycle ridership data. And suffice it to say, there are some challenges of space in this location. We do have a large number of buses at this location. And we do have lots of the storefronts. So it was settled on the number of 128 to be built, and then we'll see from there what is the utilization, and then see if we can accommodate some other spaces. But this is--the space is based on the current study and the constraints we saw that we felt was appropriate.

**Commissioner Cole:** Okay, okay, thank you.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** Other questions about bicycle parking for staff? Okay, moving on. Construction phasing. Yes, Commissioner Schroll.

**Commissioner Schroll:** I would like to direct this to the applicant. I know Mr. Voegele, you described at the Transportation Commission last week sort of the difference in the construction phase and the maintenance of traffic form the last SPRC. Wondering if you could walk us through. I know that was a big issue at the last Site Plan Review Meeting, the concern about the Wilson frontage. If you would be so kind as to kinda walk us through where we are now and how it's changed from last time.

**Mr. Voegele:** Sure. We have hired Clark Construction as our construction manager. They have significant experience in the County. And they put together a very detailed maintenance of traffic plan and construction phasing plan. And safety was first and foremost their focus as they looked at this plan. The plan did propose, though, that the pathway along Wilson, especially specifically in front of the plaza, would be closed during construction. And through a lot of dialogue with staff, you know, we now understand, and now are working through a process that would provide for closure, but only when it specifically a function of public safety. But make every attempt to keep that area open. And that's an ongoing discussion that we're having with staff. So in essence, you know, this is plan now that does seek to provide as much access along the south side of Wilson as possible. But working with staff and working with Inspection Services Department, you know, to allow closure when warranted and merited.

**Commissioner Schroll:** That's helpful. Mr. Voegele, do you have a sense of, percentage-wise, what the times when the safety concerns would limit access? Not necessarily tryin' to hammer you down on an exact figure, but if you could maybe ballpark. In a construction project such as this, is it 10% of the time over the course of the project, or--?

**Mr. Voegele:** Yeah, it's a very hard question to answer. And it's not that I wouldn't like to give you a percentage. I just don't want to speak out of turn. And I think that it's a determination that we won't make alone. I think it's one that we'll do in conjunction with the County and in our discussions with ISD and staff.

**Commissioner Schroll:** And one more question for staff on that. Thank you, Mr. Voegele. If staff does reach an agreement with the applicant on this, and you're able to keep the Wilson frontage open, except for these situations, would there be any requirement to, say, post a sign, or reach out to the neighborhood, as there usually is on, kind of, maintenance of traffic, if there's a change? Like, if there will be a week when Wilson's clo--Wilson's sidewalks close, will that be communicated to Ashton Heights, Ballston, Virginia Square?

**Ms. Gabor:** That would be communicated. Again, as one of the standard site planning commissions, conditions, excuse me, we do have the community meetings. But the other thing I did wanna just address is we do have in the condition language, again, as Mr. Voegele mentioned, maintaining Wilson and Randolph, and also maintaining access from the garage through the mall to Wilson, Randolph, and Glebe. Through the final engineering site plan review, that is when we will develop the detailed MOTs that will take it phase by phase by phase, and that's when we'll understand a little more, and have a better handle on what is gonna be open when and what is the percentages that you're referring to.

**Commissioner Schroll:** Okay, that's helpful. I appreciate the applicant's willingness to kinda work through this issue. I know it's something that it's important to the community. And I would certainly encourage everybody to work with staff on trying to make this happen. I know this will be a long process. And so, to the extent that this can be an open--and as construction, as we know, across the street, across Randolph, so it's important to kinda keep this open. Thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Other questions or discussion around construction phasing issues? All right, site plan conditions that we haven't covered under the specific, excuse me, amendments. Yes, Commissioner Hughes.

**Commissioner Hughes:** Thank you. This is just a quick question for staff. Staff, I understand that there's three separate and independent site plans. And in the past, we've been told the 4.1 doesn't matter, only the site plan's conditions matter. And I apologize, I haven't read all this giant stack. But am I to understand, then, that the conditions of each one is contingent on the other? Are we--how are we linking them? And is it through the conditions?

**Ms. Byrd:** Just one clarification. The 4.1 plans actually do matter. They are part of what's approved by the County Board. It's covered in one of the conditions as well. So it's what's shown and provided on the drawings is approved, as well as the conditions that kinda help govern development. But in terms of how they all relate, it's still one site plan. But what we're showing is that for each of the amendments, those conditions would apply only specifically to that portion of the development.

**Commissioner Hughes:** So, let me rephrase my question. Because I understand conditions are what matters, and that they trump the drawing, based on earlier conversations. Is there a condition inside of the building of the residential that says, "One must rip the roof of the mall?"

**Ms. Byrd:** No.

**Commissioner Hughes:** So if the applicant were to build the building, could they do none of the mall improvements, in theory?

**Ms. Byrd:** Technically, I guess. But if they don't have to go forward with any of the development if they don't want to. But the conditions are in place that would govern if they--when they do or if they do go forward, how that it is to be done and what the requirements are.

**Commissioner Hughes:** So there is no link between the residential building being built and the mall redevelopment happening?

**Ms. Byrd:** The link is that they're all one site plan.

**Commissioner Forinash:** But there's no linkage in the permits or anything that would require--?

**Ms. Byrd:** No, they would all apply for their permits based on that development. So the residential building pursues permits based on the condition set that they have. The mall renovation pursues permits based on the conditions that they have. As well as the office. Now, if there are certain things like the condition that we have, for instance, related to fulfilling site plan conditions with the streetscape improvement because it does cover the entirety of the frontages amongst all of the pieces, there's nothin' to prohibit, say, the mall portion from completing the pieces related to the office or the residential, or what have you. So there are some conditions that are the same amongst all three sets to ensure that there is some consistency. In addition, in the site plan, the 4.1, as well as in the conditions, there's one related to phasing that shows the phasing for all three of these pieces and how they relate to one another. So there are some places where there are linkages. But in general, there are conditions with respect to permits, and timing, and how they pursue construction that do relate specifically to those particular project pieces.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Hughes.

**Commissioner Hughes:** So there is no condition inside of all three of them that says that, "For you to proceed with this, you must also do that"?

**Ms. Byrd:** Related to the other piece?

**Commissioner Hughes:** To the other three site plans.

**Commissioner Forinash:** I think she's answered that. There's not. If you want to articulate your vague disquiet and raised eyebrows in a motion or in an amendment soon, I think that would be fine. But let's move on. Any other questions or discussion around site plan conditions? All right. I want to move us to motions now. I want to ask a question of staff as predicate to that. Given the discussion tonight, I don't see any issues from our side with moving A, B, and C together as one. Is there any reason from staff's perspective that we would need to separate those three? I do think that dealing with the vacation separately makes sense. But A, B, and C together? Okay. That's helpful, thank you. So, Commissioner Cole, would you like to tee up a motion for us?

## **PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION**

**Commissioner Cole:** I will try. I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that it adopt the amendments to site plan 193 as recommended by the staff in the manager's draft memorandum to the County Board dated October 29, 2015 with the following amendments. One, that the planning commission recommends that the County Board, prioritize renewal of the garage entrance and the garage façade, as well as the landscaped area in the streetscape surrounding the garage in the Capital Improvement Program so as to include the work on this renewal in time for the opening of the new mall in 2018. And I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that it direct the County manager to initiate a study under which staff would work with the Transportation Commission to develop a long-term vision for a humanized Glebe Road between Henderson Road on the south and Fairfax Drive on the north, and that that vision be accompanied with a plan to achieve it. And I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that the plan for the Ballston Corridor incorporate into the Ballston Garage a central bicycle parking facility for the Ballston Metro Station area that would provide a secure covered storage for daily usage and mall--of daily usage by commuters

and mall customers as well as others who may wish to use it. Considerations should be given to including showers and changing rooms in the design, as well as space for a bicycle service operation. Period.

**Commissioner Forinash:** A motion's been made. Seconded by Commissioner Harner. Discussion of the motion, or amendments? Commissioner Hughes.

**Commissioner Hughes:** I would like to make a motion to amend the main motion. So I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that a condition be added to each of the three site plan amendments so as to link all three site plans' completions.

**Commissioner Forinash:** What was the last bit of that? To link--?

**Commissioner Hughes:** To link all three site plans' completion.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Okay, it's all the same site plan, but all three components that we're dealing with, A, B, and C here, okay.

**Commissioner Hughes:** So, so, one, two, and three, not a one, two, or three.

**Commissioner Forinash:** A second for Commissioner Hughes' motion? Seconded by Commissioner Gutshall. Discussion of the amendment. Commissioner Cole.

**Commissioner Cole:** Request for an explanation for the amendment.

**Commissioner Hughes:** Sure. I guess, in Arlington promises aren't broken. But in many other communities, and the applicant, I'm sure, won't break their promise. But in many other communities, projects get half built. And we, I think, are looking at this as an entire project, not three separate amendments are that are legally separate companies, that are legally financially completely independent of each other, in theory. And legally not required to care what the other one does because they are as different as yourself and me, Mr. Cole. So I think that we all look at them as one application, and one site, and we need to make sure that the legal framework around it makes sure that all three get done.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion. Commissioner Harner.

**Commissioner Harner:** Thanks, Commissioner Forinash. And Commissioner Hughes, I think this is actually a really good question. I can't remember if I asked this at site plan meeting, but my understanding is that the applicant has control of both the mall and where the former Macy's furniture is, and has control of both of those sites in their entirety. Just for my own standpoint, for me, those are the two most critical elements of the redevelopment. I wouldn't necessarily personally feel a need to link the Macy's piece as strongly as those two pieces. So given that those two pieces are integral, I believe, to the applicant's application, I've personally feel very confident that those key elements will be implemented together. So I think it's a great question to put forward. But I would not support the motion.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion. Commissioner Gutshall.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Clarifying question for staff on this. If the applicant came forward with some phase of--some part of the building [inaudible] that was demolition or otherwise, and I know they have a phasing plan, to only do part of it, would ISD have grounds, would the building official have grounds to not approve a building permit if it wasn't for the--if it clearly wasn't consistent with the full scope of the site plan?

**Ms. Byrd:** ISD would focus primarily on code-related issues. So--

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Well, so it has to go through zoning too. So I said ISD, but really it has to go through zoning. Could zoning withhold approval of a building permit application based on, you know, if they came in for some strange reason and wanted to--decided that they just wanted to start the residential building, for example,

and not do the improvements to the mall, would zoning have grounds to deny approval of that building permit based on the totality of the site plan?

**Ms. Byrd:** Not necessarily. If they have a phasing plan that allows for them to phase the pieces so that they could do the mall piece, or the residential piece, or separate, or together, then that's what would control that.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** The phasing plan is part of the 4.1, is that correct?

**Ms. Byrd:** It's a condition, yes, that they submit a phasing plan. So they have a phasing plan in concept here, and that would be finalized.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So if they are in violation of the phasing plan, then yes, then zoning--what I'm hearing is that zoning would be able to deny approval of a building permit that was not consistent with the phasing plan.

**Ms. Byrd:** It would depend on what the phasing plan shows.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Okay, I think that's good enough for me. Thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion of the amendment. All right, does anyone need a red back? All those in favor of the amendment to the main motion, raise your hand. One, two. All those opposed? Abstain? Motion fails two to nine. Further discussion or amendments to the main motion? Commissioner Ciotti.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Let's see if I can get this out. I would like to make an amendment that Planning Commission recommend to the County Board to direct staff to work with the applicant and other relevant parties to ensure that the benefits of the new bridge and its easement be guaranteed by establishing a documented unencumbered path of travel all the way to the Metro.

**Commissioner Forinash:** A motion to amend has been made. Seconded by Commissioner Gutshall. Discussion. Commissioner Schroll.

**Commissioner Schroll:** Commissioner Ciotti, could you just read that again, please?

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Sure. I'd like to make an amendment from Planning Commission to recommend to the County Board to direct staff to work with the applicant and the other relevant parties to ensure that the benefits of the new bridge and the associated easement be guaranteed by establishing a documented unencumbered path of travel all the way to the Metro from Ballston Quarters.

**Commissioner Forinash:** May I ask a question? What does "unencumbered" mean in that context?

**Commissioner Ciotti:** With--oh, no. It's not legal. It means that we don't just get the bridge over Wilson and we still can't get to the Metro. Because the easement, this easement only goes with the bridge. And we, this is a huge community benefit.

**Commissioner Forinash:** I know where it's coming from. I was just wondering about the word, "unencumbered." If that--

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Oh, it's not a legal--you want to substitute another word, that's fine. Establish documented path of travel, you know.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Further discussion? All right. All those in favor of the motion to amend, raise your hand. One, two, three, four, five, six. I'll give you a second. Keep those up while Ms. Stahlhut counts and gets names. Opposed? Two. Abstain? Three. Motion passes six to two to three. Further discussion or amendments to the main motion as amended? Commissioner Ciotti.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** I would like to include an amendment that Planning Commission recommend to the County Board to add to condition number 50 to include snow removal from the pedestrian ramps.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Is that--seconded by Commissioner Schroll. Condition 50, in which section? The mall section, the residential building section, or all three? I don't--give us a page number maybe. [inaudible] can find it.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Condition number 50 for both, is it, Ms. Byrd? For--?

**Ms. Byrd:** It should be 50 in all 3 sets.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Okay.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Thank you. Conditions 50 for all 3 prop--

**Commissioner Forinash:** Fifty, fifty, and fifty. Discussion or questions about that motion to amend? No, all right, all those in favor of the motion to amend, raise your hand. Opposed? Abstain? Motion carries ten to zero to one. Further discussion or amendments to the main motion as amended? Commissioner Ciotti.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** I'd like to make an amendment that Planning Commission recommend to the County Board to direct staff to mandate recycling throughout the project, including restaurants and the food court.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Cole has a question about the wording of the motion that I'll entertain before the second.

**Commissioner Cole:** Commissioner Ciotti, my concern is that staff doesn't mandate anything. Only the Board mandates something. And so if the Board wants to mandate recycling, the Board could--it may be able to mandate recycling. Staff is--it's much harder for staff to do that. Staff enfor--implements.

**Commissioner Ciotti:** So let me change that to the Planning Commission recommends to the County Board that a site plan condition be added to mandate recycling throughout the development, including restaurants and food court.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Second? I'm not seconding, I'm asking for a second. Seconded by Commissioner Gutshall. Discussion? Commissioner Gutshall.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** So, I appreciate the sentiment, where you're coming from. But I'm wondering if this is--is this really a site plan specific issue? Or is this a larger, kind of, policy issue? So, should, you know, why are we getting into it on this specific site plan?

**Commissioner Ciotti:** Oh, because this project, for its entirety of its existence, at least for a couple decades, has never participated in recycling. In spite of all the County's encouragement that everybody should, it doesn't. This is a chance to make sure the future is brighter.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** But we--is there a County policy on that?

**Commissioner Ciotti:** No, no, it just--I don't know. I asked staff. No policy. Multi-family dwellings, we participate. That's a County policy. We have to participate.

>> [03:57:04] Unknown: But I thought restaurants--

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Have we ever had a site plan condition of that nature?

**Commissioner Forinash:** You continue. I was giving Commissioner Hughes the wait--

**Ms. Byrd:** No, we have not.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Yeah, Commissioner Ciotti, I just, I will have to say that, I mean, I very much appreciate where you're coming. But I'm not comfortable, kind of, delving into that at this point on this site plan. But I do support the notion.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Hughes.

**Commissioner Hughes:** I too am with Commissioner Gutshall, but I do--before I do that, I wonder if the applicant would like to answer the question about to ask them. Does the applicant suspect that the clientele it wishes to attract might be individuals who wish to have recycling available to them?

**Mr. Voegelé:** Absolutely.

**Commissioner Hughes:** I do agree that we need a better County policy. I just don't necessarily think it's a site plan issue. I don't think many people that are going to try to attract would be wanting to go to a mall that doesn't recycle.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Sockwell, were you seeking recognition on this? No. Further discussion? All those in favor of the motion to amend, raise your hand. Opposed? Abstain? Motion fails one to nine to one. Did you catch those, Ms. Stahlhut? You're very quick. Further discussion or amendments to the main motion as amended? Commissioner Gutshall.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** I have to say thank you to Commissioner Cole for his leadership on this. But I have a little tad bit of consternation--this is not wrap-up. I have a consternation with including the three specific amendments in the main motion. In particular, I would ask you, with the bicycle parking, that sort of sounds like a public facility. And we have a forthcoming Community Facility Siting Process that will be coming forward. And it strikes me as we're pre-supposing what the outcome of that. If we were gonna have a siting process for a bicycle parking facility in Ballston, certainly the garage would be the frontrunner, I would think, but I am hesitant to do that. So, I don't know, Mr. Chair, if it's in order to request that we separate the issue, separate the question on those three amendments? Or if Mr. Cole would be amenable to that. I'm not sure Roberts Rules of Order how you want to run it here. Or if my fellow commissioners agree with me on my point. It might be moot.

**Commissioner Forinash:** I'm gonna look to our parliamentary expert, who's throwing her hands up. I think your request to the original mover, to Commissioner Cole, to separate that out, is in order. I guess it's up to him whether to entertain that or not. I don't think we would vote on that as a request.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** You could, I do believe you could move--

**Commissioner Cole:** To divide.

**Commissioner Iacomini:** Yes, to divide the question. But you have to vote on the division.

**Commissioner Gutshall:** Mr. Chair, I would like to move to divide the issue of the bicycle facility from the main motion.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Do I hear a second for that? Seconded by Commissioner Brown. Commissioner Cole.

**Commissioner Cole:** I want to speak to the issue, because I think it's an important one. You know, my general view is that the world doesn't stop for some future action. And the reason I say that in particular in the context of the Community Facility Study is because we have no idea what the future of the Community Facility is. What we know is that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Community Facility Study briefed the Board on September 29 on siting principles and on site selection process. And we know that they'll brief the Board on the 10th, next week, on a draft final report. We have no idea whether the Board is going to take--the Board cannot take action next week, because it's a work session, joint work session, in fact. It cannot take any action, and it has not indicated whether it will take any action. At the same time, I don't believe the world stands still. And the Board certainly is aware of what it's going to be doing, more than we are. And so they may never finalize the Community Facility Study, in terms of actions. There may never be a site selection process. I believe, given that that's the context in which we find ourselves, it only makes sense to go forward with the recommendation that we have. And if they conclude that they want to wait for the Community Facility Study actions to be taken, they're certainly in a position to do that.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Commissioner Cole, would you read back that clause of your original motion related to the bike parking facility, please?

**Commissioner Cole:** I can't promise it'll be precisely correct.

**Commissioner Forinash:** We could ask Ms. Stahlhut to read it back, but I think you have something written out in front of you.

**Commissioner Cole:** She's hoping that you don't ask her, so--[laughing]

**Commissioner Forinash:** So were you, but I asked you first.

**Commissioner Cole:** What I said was that I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board that it incorporate into the Ballston Garage a central bike parking facility for the Ballston Metro Station area that would provide secure covered storage for daily use, mall customers, and others desiring such storage. Consideration should be given to including showers and changing rooms in the design, as well as a space for a bicycle service operation.

**Commissioner Forinash:** I think that's a worthy thing to put forward, but for me, I would like to see it divided from the main motion so that--and perhaps offered as an either an amendment to the main motion. Yeah, that would probably, in my opinion, be more appropriate than having it be a stand-alone motion. 'Cause I do see your point, that it is connected to this project. But I would like to see a separate vote on it. Other comments before we call the question? So it's a motion to divide the bike parking component of the main motion that we just discussed from the rest of the main motion as amended. What's the three?

**Commissioner Cole:** His original motion was to divide all three, but--

**Commissioner Forinash:** No, he had mentioned that, but that wasn't the motion. All those in favor of the motion to divide, raise your hand. Opposed? Abstain? That motion carries eight to two to one. So I think now would you like, Commissioner Cole, to offer that as an amendment to the main--?

**Commissioner Cole:** It's divided. I don't have to offer it again. It's been offered. All he did was divide them.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Okay, so that's standing by itself now, separate from the main motion as amended. Thank you. Put a star next to that one to come back to. Further discussion of the main motion, or what's now the first part of the main motion with the amendments we've already voted on? Further discussion or amendments to the main motion? All right. So, if I can encapsulate the main motion now. It's to recommend that the County Board adopt the three site plan amendments in ordinance form. With, and I will paraphrase here, I hope I don't butcher it too badly, Commissioner Cole. Actually, you know what? Let me have you read back--

**Commissioner Cole:** Why don't I paraphrase it? With a recommendation that the Board include in the CIP support for garage improvements to coincide with the reopening of the mall. And two, that it direct staff, the manager, to conduct a study of Glebe Road, and to work with the Transportation Commission in that regard, to establish a longer-term vision for Glebe Road, and a plan for achieving that vision.

**Commissioner Forinash:** And then the amendments that we've incorporated into that main motion are Commissioner Ciotti's amendment to recommend that the County Board direct staff, the applicant, and other parties to ensure the value of the new bridge and its easement by establishing a documented unencumbered travel path all the way to the Metro. Commissioner Ciotti's amendment to ensure that curb ramps are covered in the snow removal condition. And that's it. All right, all those in favor of the main motion, raise your hand. Motion carries unanimously, 11-0. We have now the divided part of the main motion, on the separate, excuse me, on the bike parking facility. Does anybody wish to discuss or amend to that before we vote on it? All right, all those in favor, raise your hand. Opposed? Abstain? That motion carries ten to one.

**VACATION**

**Commissioner Cole**, can you tee up the vacation amendment? Or excuse me, motion, please?

**Commissioner Cole**: I can. Oh, first of all, we have staff here. So--

**Commissioner Forinash**: Is there a separate presentation, or are you just here to answer questions? Thank you. It could be, yes. It could be, yes.

**Commissioner Cole**: We don't wanna take you away from all the other things you might have been doing tonight without giving you a chance to enlighten us about the vacation.

**Linda Collier, DES – Real Estate**: This is just an ordinance of vacation for three very small areas, mostly along Randolph. And they total 13 square feet. So it's a very, very small areas were the building goes into an easement.

**Commissioner Forinash**: What makes it de minimus? Like a square inch? This is the smallest one I've dealt with.

**Ms. Collier**: I know. One of them is--so there are three of them, and--

**Commissioner Forinash**: No, no, no, it's just--never mind.

**Ms. Collier**: One is 4 square feet, but it goes, you know, it'll go all the way up. But it's 4 square feet. The other one is 3 square feet. And then one is 6 square feet.

**Commissioner Forinash**: So really we should--

**Commissioner Cole**: In other words, they each have air rights.

**Commissioner Forinash**: Well, I think, I think they should be--they should be calculated in cubic feet, clearly.

**Commissioner Cole**: Ike\*, are you paying attention?

**Commissioner Forinash**: Micro units. Micro units. Commissioner Cole, given the description of that, would you like to put a motion out for us?

**Commissioner Cole**: I move that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board--oh, let me back up for a second.

**Ms. Collier**: The recommendation is on the Board Report, the recommendation to the--

**Commissioner Cole**: Yeah, I've got it here in front of me. But I'm just--two part. The Planning Commissioner recommend to the County Board that it enact the attached ordinance to vacate portions on an easement and right of way to certain utilities easement located along the southern side of Wilson Boulevard and along the western side of North Randall Street, on parcel A-1 Ballston Common, comma, RPC number 14-059-028, property of Ballston Acquisition Company, LLC, RPC number 14-059-028, with conditions, and to authorize the Real Estate Bureau Chief, Department of Environmental Services, or its designee, to execute on behalf of the County Board the Deed of Vacation, all other documents or deeds necessary to effectuate the ordinance of vacation, subject to the approval, as to form, by the County Attorney.

**Ms. Collier**: Excuse me, I'm sorry. But the Planning Commission has to determine that the requested vacations are in accord with the comprehensive planner--

**Commissioner Cole**: That's what I thought. That's what I thought. It's under, recommended to the--oh, I move that the Planning Commission finds that the requested vacations are in accord with the comprehensive plan, or applicable portion thereof, and recommends that the County Board as what I said before.

**Ms. Collier**: That's fine.

**Commissioner Forinash**: So there are essentially three components to the motion. One is the finding. The second is the enactment of the ordinance. And the third is the authorization. So it's a finding and two recommendations to

the Board. Did everybody follow that? Everybody up here, at least. All right, who seconded? Commissioner Schroll seconded Commissioner Cole's motion. Any discussion of this? All right, all those in favor of the motion, raise your hand. Opposed? Abstain? Commissioner Harner departed, so that passes ten to zero. Further actions or motions related to this subject? Commissioner Cole.

**Commissioner Cole:** I do want to make some wrap-up comments, if I might. First of all, this was not a difficult site plan. And that's important to say because it was a complex site plan proposal, a series of site plan amendments. But it was not difficult, because everyone approached it with goodwill, cooperation, flexibility. Everyone wanted to make this the best possible place they could. Particular compliments to Ms. Byrd and Ms. Gabor. It was a pleasure working with both of you. The quality that you bring to anything that you work on is evident. Special thanks to Mr. Voegele. Sorry, I forget your last name. I'm sorry. Ms. Cort\*. Ms. Ford, Mr. Pritchard, and Mr. Buch, and the entire team. Thank you so much for embracing the community on this because this has really been a shared effort. I cannot thank you enough. The spirit of cooperation was evident throughout this, and the community will be better for it, notwithstanding my criticism of the County for delaying to improve its portion of the work. So I look forward to shopping, and eating, and working at the new Ballston Corridor. Thank you all.

**Commissioner Forinash:** And I think one thanks was left out of that. And then I'll call on you Mr. Duffy, and that's to Commissioner Cole, who shepherded this project through in very fine fashion. You mentioned that it wasn't the toughest assignment you had a willing applicant and a great project. But [laughing] I'll note the mic was off, so hopefully the recording didn't pick that up. But the fact is, you know, we did do some things--we did some things differently on this one, including pre-meeting and post-meeting around each SPRC, which was very valuable. I know it was also very labor intensive on the part of staff, the applicants, and the planning commissioners who were involved. So I'm not sure we would want to do that for every project, for every SPRC meeting, but it really did, on your initiative, help to make this one work very well through the process and bring us to this point. So thank you on behalf of all us, Commissioner Cole. Mr. Duffy.

**Mr. Duffy:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just briefly, I know that the hour is late. I just wanted to echo what Commissioner Cole just said. And again, I want to congratulate and acknowledge his work as Chair of the SPRC. And Mr. Chairman, your involvement in the process too. And all the planning commissioners that participated in this. I think from staff's perspective, this is what the site plan review process is all about. And it was a very thorough process. As you heard, it was a deliberative process. And it's made a difference. I think that's why the public testimony was somewhat limited tonight, because of the level of engagement that took place throughout the process. But we did this in a very compact, and again, a very deliberative approach with a great deal of involvement and collaboration between the commissioners, the staff, and most importantly, the entire applicant team. It made a difference. And so I want to congratulate the Commission. Thank you for engaging on this project.

**Commissioner Forinash:** And I will note that I'm not--Mr. Voegele, I'll certainly call on you in just a moment. I will note that we're not closing potential consideration of this site plan, because we may have an informational presentation from Economic Development staff of the letter of intent on Monday. That's not known yet. So, just, this one is still officially open for that potential. Mr. Voegele.

**Mr. Voegele:** I know it's late. I would just like to say, on behalf of my colleagues, my incredibly dedicated team of consultants, certainly our co-applicant here, just to express my sincere appreciation for this process, the exceptional commitment and dedication of staff, but also the collaboration. The huge amount of leadership that took place through the SPRC process that led to something that, I believe, is so much better than it was when we started. And while we are not there yet, we've come very, very far. And we're very close. And I just want to express my sincere appreciation. Thank you.

**Commissioner Forinash:** Thank you, Mr. Voegelé. All right, I believe we are adjourned until Monday at 8 o'clock. We'll convene here at 8 o'clock Monday. But at 7 o'clock, you need to be at the Lee Highway Charrette Open House. That's not an assignment. That's just an exhortation. Thanks everyone.

**ARLINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**SITE PLAN REPORT - AGENDA ITEM #4**  
Ballston Quarter, Site Plan #193 (ACTION)  
Steve Cole, Site Plan Review Chair

## **Background**

The Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) reviewed three separate applications for amendments to Site Plan #193 as part of its comprehensive review of Ballston Quarter. At the request of the County Board, this review was expedited. To accommodate this request, several changes to routine site plan review processes were modified:

- Each meeting was scheduled for three hours
- One representative from each civic association was invited
- The three site plan amendment applications were treated largely as an integrated proposal for the entire project.

In addition, to ensure the work of the committee could be completed within the three-hour time frame for each meeting, several other accommodations were made:

- Prior to each meeting, staff and the site plan review chair, along with an additional Planning Commissioner, met with the applicants to plan the forthcoming meeting
- Following each meeting, a similar session was held to review the meeting and to offer direction for the next meeting.
- A new approach to committee member comments was used – each committee member was recognized to make comments or seek clarification of issues. Only after each committee member had a chance to speak was time provided for open discussion.
- Time was provided throughout the meetings for public comment.

While not all of these accommodations will be appropriate or desirable for all site plans, chairs of future site plan reviews should consider which of these might be helpful in structuring a constructive, efficient and fair review. No doubt, other review process modifications will apply for particular site plan applications.

## **Issues for Discussion:**

As noted, this review involved three separate site plan applications. It is proposed that the discussion be divided into four parts, one for each application – residential building, office building, mall – and one for overarching issues affecting all applications.

### Residential Building

- **Height** – The residential building is proposed to be 22 stories. There was general consensus although not unanimity that this height is acceptable and is consistent with

surrounding approved and built developments. Opposition to this height, however, came principally from the nearby civic association.

- **Density** – Permitted density for the zone (C-O-2.5) is 115 dwelling units/acre or 232 dwelling units for the subject site. The proposed development would include 406 units. There was general consensus that this density is acceptable. Concern was expressed related to the impact on vehicular traffic and transit.
- **Density Exclusions** – Areas proposed to be excluded from countable GFA include: vertical shafts, below grade mechanical and storage areas, and pedestrian access corridors. No specific concerns were raised in regard to these exclusions in the SPRC.
- **Affordable Dwelling Units** -- The applicant is proposing to meet the requirements of the zoning ordinance with respect to affordable dwelling units.
- **Unit Mix** – the proposed unit mix includes 38 studio apartments, 72 two-bedroom apartments. The remainder are one-bedroom or one-bedroom plus den apartments. Committee members expressed concern that this unit mix may not be responsive to the demand of the range of demographic groups, that some larger units or units with more bedrooms might be needed. The applicant expressed a willingness to design the building so that multiple smaller units could be combined to form larger units.
- **Architecture/Materials** – Committee members expressed general support for the design of the residential building. Question, not criticisms, were raised regarding the public areas of the design on the roof above the second floor and on the rooftop.
- **Parking** – The applicant is proposing 288 residential parking spaces or a ration of 0.70. This ratio is significantly below any recently approved residential development. To the extent demand for parking exceeds supply, the proposed approach if for individuals to purchase monthly passes for the County garage.
- **Bonus Density** – The residential building is proposed at 174 units above what is allowed under C-O-2.5. 23 of these units would be achieved by a LEED-silver design. The remaining bonus density would be achieved “in exchange for public amenities that would result from the proposed development of the site.” (Staff report, p. 22)
- **Site Plan Conditions**
- **Other**

#### Office Building

- **Architecture/Design** – The applicant proposes a significant redesign of the office space that sits atop Macy’s department store. This includes significant “opening up” of the space. In addition, it includes the construction of two elevator lobbies – on Wilson Blvd. and Glebe Rd. to meet the needs of the offices independent of the Macy’s store. There was general consensus that the proposed design enhanced the appearance of the building. At the same time, there was concern expressed that little would be done to improve the design of the Macy’s store and that it continues to represent a cold, impersonal, inactive element as it presents itself on two of Arlington’s most important streets. Committee members were reminded frequently that the Macy’s store is not part of the application for a site plan amendment. Nonetheless, this issue was raised throughout the review.

- **Site Plan Conditions**
- **Other**

## Mall

- **General Design and the Mews** – The applicant proposes a complete renovation of the mall, removing the roof from a significant portion and retaining a relatively smaller area as an indoor mall. Some committee members expressed concern about this design and whether it would result in a more successful place.
- **West Plaza** -- Seen as a signature change to the mall, the review some members of the committee expressed concern that the plaza was not entirely at street level. In addition, there were comments related to accessibility, design, and uses.
- **Architecture/Signage** – While not normally subject to SPRC review, the applicant provided a presentation on signage as, along with architecture, it is central to the way the redevelopment presents itself to the public. Comments on signage were advisory only. Nonetheless, there was a range of comments/concerns expressed about architecture. In particular, there was a strong consensus that the redevelopment pays significantly insignificant attention to the Glebe Rd. frontage. In addition, there was concern expressed that there is the opportunity to refresh the mall by replacing the façade materials along Wilson Blvd. Finally, the materials used in the mews was the subject of conversation and concern.
- **Randolph Street Entrance** – This issue received considerable attention during the review. There was a general consensus that the proposed entrance does not represent the mall as well as it could.
- **Site Plan Conditions**
- **Other**

## Site Plan-Wide Issues

- **Wilson Boulevard Pedestrian Bridge** – There was significant concern expressed about the proposed removal of the pedestrian bridge and the fact there was no plan to replace it. Many committee members and individuals from the community expressed deep concern. The plan was changed to include a new bridge. There remains some concern that the new bridge is not located exactly where the current bridge is located and that the design may differ. The committee was told that there would be a follow-on community process to offer community input on the bridge design. At present, the plan only provides for a basic, functional bridge.
- **Street Cross-sections** – The site plan amendments include a proposal to restructure Wilson Boulevard between Stuart and Randolph Streets. This would involve elimination of most of the median as it exists today and narrowing and relocation of the east-bound lanes to the north. Changes would also be made to curbside uses, including to street parking, pickup and drop off and crosswalks. These changes were generally, but not universally, seen as important improvements. On the other hand, very few changes are proposed to the Glebe Road frontage. On street parking will be sought and the lay-by

area near the Macy's entrance will be removed. Some committee members, especially civic association representatives see this as a lost opportunity to tame the road and make it contribute more to placemaking. It was expressed that when coupled with the redevelopments on the west side of Glebe Rd., this is an important opportunity to humanize Glebe Rd. and make Ballston a much better place overall.

- **Streetscape** – There would be significant changes to the streetscape surrounding the proposed Ballston Quarter. In general these were seen as positive. The developers responded positively to access issues, in particular related to handicapped parking and access to the new office building. There was concern expressed that insufficient changes are being made to the County parking garage exterior design, especially at the main Glebe Rd. entrance to communicate effectively the important placemaking changes at Ballston Quarter. The lack of improved sidewalks along the garage is also a concern. Finally, there was an issue related to ensuring that tree plantings are of the highest quality and that soil beds are designed to ensure the highest probability of long term success
- **Accessibility** – Several issues related to accessibility were raised by the committee, either in full committee meetings or in a separate meeting with the Disability Commission representative and a Planning Commissioner. One issue that has been addressed in the Wilson Blvd. street frontage and access to the office building and Macy's. A second issue addressed was the location of handicap parking spaces on the site's perimeter. Other issues raised included design considerations at all entrances, including garage entrances, and special accommodations in the residential building.
- **Pedestrian Flow** – In addition to the issue of the Wilson Blvd. pedestrian bridge, there were concerns expressed related to other pedestrian flow issues. These included access to the mall from Randolph Street, access to the mall from the garage, access to the Metro station from the residential building, and access through the site during construction.
- **Bicycle Parking** – The view was expressed that the County Garage provides an excellent location for a central bike parking facility serving the Ballston Metro Station area. While there are plans to increase bike parking at the Metro station entrance, the view was that the demand is likely to greatly outstrip the supply and that a secure, covered parking area easily accessed from the street with the possibility of on-site mechanics, and other amenities would be in keeping with the County's multi-modal goals.
- **Construction Phasing** – In general, while there are starts and stops on the construction schedule for the various major elements, it's best to think of the redevelopment as a single project with one start and one finish. Two issues were of greatest concern to the committee. First, there was a general concern about the maintenance of pedestrian access through the mall from the Metro and other locations to the parking garage, the cinema and other places that will remain active. Second, there was a general consensus within the committee that the south side of Wilson Blvd. should remain open to pedestrians throughout construction.
- **Site Plan Conditions**
- **Other**



HOPE HALLECK  
CLERK TO THE  
COUNTY BOARD

## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA OFFICE OF THE COUNTY BOARD

2100 CLARENDON BOULEVARD, SUITE 300  
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22201-5406  
(703) 228-3130 • FAX (703) 228-7430  
E-MAIL: countyboard@arlingtonva.us



### MEMBERS

MARY HYNES  
CHAIR  
J. WALTER TEJADA  
VICE CHAIRMAN

JAY FISETTE  
LIBBY GARVEY  
JOHN E. VIHSTADT

November 3, 2015

Mr. Christopher Forinash, Chair  
and  
Arlington County Planning Commissioners

RE: Ballston Quarter

In June 2015, the County Board directed the County Manager to explore options for a public-private partnership with Forest City that would enable the developer and Arlington County to collaboratively pursue a transformation of the aging Ballston Mall into a truly dynamic, 21<sup>st</sup> century mixed use catalyst that will support a sustainable economic future for Ballston and the County. This effort continues the County's longstanding approach and commitment to Ballston which began in the 1980s with the first ground-breaking public-private partnership to transform the former Parkington shopping center. During the 1990s and early 2000s, that commitment continued with the introduction of a new cinema, Kettler Iceplex and the Point office building.

Throughout this more than 30 year transformation of Ballston, the Planning Commission has been a key planning advisory group for the County Board. The Commission's focus on important physical planning issues and opportunities are central to ensuring that Ballston continues to be one of the County's major transit-oriented centers of commercial and residential growth.

On behalf of the County Board, I thank you for the essential leadership role the Commission has played over the past four months through its Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC). This vigorous, open citizen engagement process has been key to the public review of Forest City's redevelopment plans. As you know, on November 4, the full Planning Commission will have the opportunity to consider the developer's plans along with the report from SPRC. We look forward to receiving the resulting advisory report. We will consider it in conjunction with reports from other key commissions and committees as we make our decision regarding this important redevelopment plan and the supporting public-private partnership.

Specifically, the County Board looks forward to the Planning Commission report and recommendations focused on the following physical planning questions:

1. Does the proposal in its entirety meet the general planning goals laid out in the approved General Land Use Plan (GLUP), Ballston Sector Plan and other applicable County Board adopted plans and policies?
2. Do the proposed site plans, including building form, massing, height and other physical development features and improvements, enhance the overall character of the Ballston sector?
3. Is the array of proposed community benefits defined by the preliminary staff report aligned with creating a great place, regardless of funding source?

In terms of the public-private partnership, the County Board has directed the County Manager to finalize a non-binding Letter of Intent (LOI). We have directed that the details of the LOI be presented to both the Fiscal Affairs Advisory Commission (11/12) and the Economic Development Commission (11/10) so that they can provide the Board with their advice on the document. The County Board will consider their LOI advice along with the Planning Commission's planning advice at our November meeting. Should the Planning Commission desire an informational briefing on the LOI, it may be possible to provide a briefing at your November 9 meeting if the document is ready. If it is not, Commissioners are welcome to attend the other Commissions' meetings. Ultimately, the County Board will determine the final details of the public-private partnership that will be negotiated over the coming months.

In closing, the County Board wishes to commend the Chair of the SPRC and the Planning Commissioners who respectively facilitated and participated in the recently concluded SPRC process. We look forward to the Planning Commission's report on the key land use, site planning, and associated design aspects of this important redevelopment plan for Ballston's future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Hynes".

Mary Hynes  
Chair, Arlington County Board

Ellen Armbruster -thoughts—Pedestrian/transportation issues associated with Ballston Quarter Site Plan, #193

Transportation issues:

First: This is a 13 acre site, where over the last 30 years Arlington has added urban densities to a huge block while adding no street grid. Each building has added more burden to the surrounding streets: there is no good pedestrian connectivity through the parcel in any direction. This project adds another high density building, with a token of pedestrian connectivity.

Second: Arlington threw its eggs in the “single-occupancy vehicle basket” with the parking garage which destroyed any ability to develop the site with good urban design principles. And it is a failure: 50 percent empty! And we’re stuck pouring money into it for many decades to come.

On the other hand, one block away--Ballston Metro station has over 25,000 daily gate fares, with a fairly even daytime/ nighttime population. 71-74% of metro users access the metro on foot (18,500 pedestrians), 12-18% by bus. The highest pedestrian counts are along N Stuart St. (WMATA data, 2010, the latest I could find online). We barely allocate enough money to replace light bulbs and fix broken escalators.

Ballston Mall is a neighborhood mall, not a regional mall, and will remain a neighborhood mall even after the renovations. Therefore, engaging the local pedestrian population is critical for the success of the renovated mall.

Pedestrian issues:

The west plaza is effectively a continuation of Stuart St and should exploit the strong desire line of pedestrians walking north/south from the Metro to continue through the west plaza at street level to Glebe Rd. Instead, the project segments the pedestrians into categories: able bodied who can walk down steps to the lower level, others use escalators to the lower level and people needing the elevator travel from the street to the left and back for the elevator. Still others continue around the lower level to the left, at street level further into project, or along a corridor to Glebe Rd. The steps and lower level also prevent retail in the west plaza from being double loaded at the street level, and as we have heard repeatedly from commercial developers in the County: retail wants density and retail wants to be double loaded. And yet the developer, for their main entrance to the project, presents the pedestrian and potential customer with multiple access choices and no retail density at the street level. The lower level is also open to the elements and will not be inviting during inclement weather.

The east/west spine of the mall doesn't continue to Randolph Street in open and inviting manner, but is routed through a narrow, closed corridor. There are examples of buildings in Arlington that "lift up their skirts" to allow pedestrians/vehicle traffic to pass under, and permit doors to open up onto: the Comfort Inn on Glebe Rd, the Clarendon Apartments in Clarendon, the Delancy at Shirlington Village. The developer refused to consider such an option.

Elimination of the Wilson Blvd median will increase jaywalking throughout the whole block and eliminates the AASHTO-compliant pedestrian refuge at the mid block crossing (could reduce median from 12 to 6 feet and still be AASHTO-compliant.)

The sidewalk on Wilson has benches, light totems etc. which obstruct a straight path of travel, become obstructions for disabled and visually impaired. The proposed café seating also disrupts straight path of travel along Wilson.

Residents of Alta Vista are very concerned about the removal of the pedestrian bridge—the developer has committed to replace it. The existing bridge cannot be retained in situ since the location where it attaches to the mall will be torn down for the open air west plaza.

Developer must maintain safe path of travel from the parking garage to Wilson Boulevard throughout construction.

Developer currently proposes to block pedestrian passage along south side of Wilson during construction, this is not acceptable. Developer must maintain pedestrian access along south side of Wilson during construction.

Developer must maintain access to the bus stop on Randolph. Parts of Randolph will be closed during construction: developer must provide a safe and accessible way for bus patrons to cross the street.

The developer proposes to add a 22 story, 408-unit apartment building to the project, parked at only .70, below the county requirement, arguing that the proximity to metro and buses will reduce auto usage. I don't disagree, however, the metro rail station and bus plaza are over capacity, run down and in need of maintenance and repair. Any developer adding density to the Ballston area should be required to contribute to the planned west entrance of the Ballston metro and improvements to the bus plaza.

The Macy's minor site plan amendment does nothing to improve the pedestrian/retail experience at the street level.

Public benefits: what are they? Where are they? Since the developer wants Arlington county taxpayers to help finance this, do we actually get any, or are we just paying for the streetscape improvements ourselves? What they proffered at SPRC was new sidewalks, replacing the bridge etc.: things we expect from every site plan, and we expect the developer to pay for it. (Replacing the bridge is just maintaining the status quo). I do not see anything in this site plan that I want my taxpayer's dollars to pay for. If I'm going to "partner" with a developer it's not going to be for a small, timid remodel of a failed, inward looking shopping mall with no street connectivity.

Details:

I was provided the 4.1 drawings of the streetscape only after SPRC had concluded. The plans do not comply with the Master Transportation Plan in several respects:

The Pedestrian Element, 2008, page 17—calls for a pedestrian refuge 6 feet wide and ADA-compliant if the street is over 65 feet wide. Wilson at Randolph is 66 feet wide, not only do we **not** get the called-for median but, the developer proposes to remove even the small 1.5 foot wide median that exists there today. The developer also proposes to remove most of the median along Wilson, except at Stuart discussed above.

The Streets Element, 2011, page 24, calls for curb lanes that are 11 feet wide on arterials that have bus and truck traffic. For the proposed Wilson Blvd eastbound, the developer has reduced the curb lane to 10 feet, down from the existing 12 feet, too narrow for buses and trucks. In order to encourage public transportation, we need to have adequate facilities for transit. Why is this project making things worse for transit?

The Streets Element, page 26, calls for arterial streets to have a 10-16 foot sidewalk with a 6 foot planting/street furniture zone. The current Glebe Road sidewalk in front of the Mall has a bit over 9 feet of clear width. The developer proposes to reduce the clear width to 8 feet, which not only does not meet the standard but creates a worse condition than what we have now. (And don't tell me they are making the pits bigger for the trees- pedestrian clear width is more important than tree pit size!)



FYI: FA. Ballston Quarter Redevelopment.

**From:** [solarsklar@aol.com](mailto:solarsklar@aol.com) [<mailto:solarsklar@aol.com>]

**Sent:** Sunday, October 25, 2015 12:07 PM

**To:** Mary Hynes <[Mhynes@arlingtonva.us](mailto:Mhynes@arlingtonva.us)>

**Cc:** Jay Fisetta <[jfisetta@arlingtonva.us](mailto:jfisetta@arlingtonva.us)>; Libby Garvey <[lgarvey@arlingtonva.us](mailto:lgarvey@arlingtonva.us)>; John Vihstadt <[jvihstadt@arlingtonva.us](mailto:jvihstadt@arlingtonva.us)>

**Subject:** AHCA Letter to Board on Ballston Quarter Redevelopment - Scott Sklar, Pres. AHCA

Since the Ballston shopping center is within Ashton Heights, we are formally weighing in on this process in the five key areas where we see the need for improvement. - Scott

27 Oct. 2015

Ms. Mary Hynes, Chair, Arlington County Board

Dear Ms Hynes,

As president of the Ashton Heights Civic Association I would like to share our thoughts with you and the planning commission about the proposed Ballston Quarter redevelopment. Our association has participated in all five SPRC discussions and in earlier meetings with Forest City. In general we are supportive of the applicant's proposal and applaud Chair Steve Cole's handling of the meetings, but we have five areas of concern:

**Public/Private Partnership (PPP).** We do not agree that the county should provide subsidies and special waivers for height and density without compensation through normal community benefits. These subsidies remain undefined and it appears that PPP negotiations between the county board and Forest City will continue beyond the planning commission's hearing on November 2nd. This uncertainty is aggravated by a lack of definition on the SPRC's final recommendations to the planning commission. Since these unknowns involve a broad set of tradeoffs necessary to reach the final cost and design of the development, it is difficult to understand what we are getting and what it will cost the county. We recommend slowing the process down until the unknowns are better understood. Further, we would propose that representatives of the affected neighborhoods be made part of the PPP formulation and negotiations.

**Community Benefits:** In their proposed 22 story/406 apartment building, Forest City has asked the County to allow 6 stories and 177 apartments above zoning regulations. Normally this increase in height and density is an opportunity for the county to demand community benefits to compensate for the developer's gain. We remember that Mosaic Park was largely an outcome of negotiations on Founder's Square height and density waivers. This time, however, instead of open space, offices for community meetings, or other facilities for the common good; the benefits offered are for expenses associated with the site plan itself, and are yet to be quantified (e.g., the resurrected bridge). The questions arise: would we choose these site features over other community benefits if we had a choice, and why does Forest City need so much incentive beyond a 22 story-406 apartment building?

**Open Space.** Both open space areas claimed as open space are already open to the public. The only change is the removal of the roof. Unfortunately, the total area under consideration is insufficient given this relatively high-density development that includes so many apartments. We would urge you to require additional open and green spaces.

**Transportation.** We believe that four major parking garage curb cuts plus county and tour bus stops will result in significant traffic congestion on Randolph St. The street is poorly designed to accommodate this number of cuts, particularly since each will service large buildings. We also do not agree with the elimination of drop-off spaces, such as the curb-side on Glebe behind Macy's and on Wilson in front of the main entrance. There is presently no drop-off zone planned for the residential building; surely an oversight.

We also object to the elimination of center median, shrubs, trees, and fence along Wilson Blvd. because it will dramatically reduce greenery and encourage unsafe jaywalking.

**Parking.** Originally a parking ratio of 0.84 spaces per apartment was proposed (rather than the county requirement of 1 space per apartment). The proposal is now 0.70 spaces per apartment. We are concerned that these waivers would result in parking overflow into surrounding neighborhoods. Relying on a monthly parking arrangement with the county's on-site parking garage for an additional 0.1 space per apartment is not a robust solution.

Sincerely,  
Scott Sklar, President, Ashton Heights Civic Association (AHCA)  
Ph: 703-522-3049 Email: [solarsklar@aol.com](mailto:solarsklar@aol.com)

cc Arlington County Board  
Mr. Chris Forinash, Chair, Arlington County Planning Comm