

**Environment & Energy Conservation Committee**  
2100 Clarendon Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22201

October 23, 2017

The Honorable Jay Fisette, Chair  
Arlington County Board  
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300  
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: South Park Master Plan

Dear Chair Fisette,

At our September 2017 meeting, Departments of Park and Recreation (DPR) staff presented the proposed South Park Master Plan for a public park situated on both Arlington and Alexandria property near Potomac Yard. Much of the site is in a Resource-Protected Area (RPA) and the underlying soil on the bridge connecting to Alexandria is reportedly contaminated with heavy metals from past industrial use; we appreciate DPR staff's efforts to work within these constraints and incorporate natural spaces into the design. We are generally supportive of several elements of the South Park Master Plan, specifically:

- Inclusion of passive, unprogrammed green space.
- Inclusion of a riparian meadow with native vegetation and trees (approximately 113) near the riverbank.
- Riverfront views from different levels of the park.
- Placement of the dog run outside of the RPA; adjacent bioretention area to manage run-off from the dog run.
- Improved trail connectivity, particularly between Route 1 and the Four Mile Run (4MR) Trail.
- Interpretative trail and plaza which will draw attention to the Arlington-Alexandria boundary and the original alignment of Four Mile Run, and provide environmental education opportunities for all users of the park.

We have one primary concern about the current design, which was also voiced at community meetings attended by E2C2 members and expressed by members of the Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC) and Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC):

- Potential conflicts between pedestrians (particularly those using the riverfront overlook) and bicyclists on the trails through the park and particularly on the 4MR Trail, which is used as a key bicycle commuting corridor. DPR staff indicated that the portion of the 4MR Trail that passes the riverfront overlook will be slightly raised and curved. However, the riverfront overlook appears to have limited space for standing, and further consideration should be given for measures to avoid accidents and near misses, such as signage on the 4MR Trail and the adjacent paths or a wider viewing platform (which would require an increase in the existing funding).

We appreciate your consideration of our feedback as you review the proposed South Park Master Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christine Ng". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "N" and "g".

Christine Ng  
Chair, Environment & Energy Conservation Committee