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**Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) of the Planning Commission**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**January 27, 2021, 7:00pm**

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*This meeting was a virtual public meeting held through electronic communications means.*

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**Planning Commissioners in attendance:**

James Schroll (Co-chair, LRPC)  
Jim Lantelme  
Leonardo Sarli  
Sara Steinberger

**Planning Commissioners absent:**

Denyse "Nia" Bagley  
Elizabeth Gearin (Co-chair, LRPC)  
Stephen Hughes  
Elizabeth Morton  
Devanshi P. Patel  
Tenley Peterson  
Jane Siegel  
Daniel Weir

**Representatives in attendance:**

Omari Davis, Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board (HALRB)  
Sergio Enriquez, Park and Recreation Commission (PRC)  
Jim Feaster, Pedestrian Advisory Committee  
Aaron Schuetz, Bicycle Advisory Committee and Lyon Park Citizens Association

**Staff in attendance:**

Angie de la Barrera – DES  
Christine Baker – DES  
Rob Gibson – DES  
Walter Gonzalez – DPR  
Kris Krider – CPHD, Urban Design  
Tim Murphy – CPHD, Planning  
Margaret Rhodes – CPHD, Planning  
Laura Shaub – CPHD, Urban Design

**Members of the public in attendance:**

Randy Bell, Anne Bodine, C. Elsberg, Geoff Olinde, Matt Roberts, Bill Ross, Kelly Shooshan, Zachary Zingsheim

**Pershing Drive Special General Land Use Plan Study**

LRPC Chair James Schroll opened the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Commissioner Schroll recognized the members of several other Arlington County boards and commissions and civic leaders in attendance, as well as staff members.

Margaret Rhodes, Rob Gibson and Kris Krider provided an overview of the latest online survey results; the draft principles; the preliminary transportation analysis; and the urban design analysis, which focused on building heights, cross-sections, and refined models.

Once the staff presentation concluded, Commissioner Schroll solicited comments and feedback from LRPC attendees.

The Commission members offered the following comments and raised several clarifying questions:

Comments related to Location and Character of Open Space:

- Clarifying question regarding the reasoning for siting open space along North Pershing Drive instead of along North Wayne Street, where it might help facilitate the transition of a potential building to the lower-density residential neighborhood. The site for open space was selected during the modeling to help activate the edge and anchor it; where it would be visible to the broader community, not just the neighborhood; for equity reasons; and where it could help to serve as a buffer. The future open space would be further designed through park planning process concurrent with or following the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) process when a site plan is submitted.
- Comment expressing support for the proposed location of the open space and interest in seeing any future building wall to the east of the park having a lot of glass to allow for eyes on the open space, activation and visual interest.
- Comment expressing that a casual use space program for the open space makes sense.
- Comment that locating the greatest height in the center of the building is appealing. There would be concern about shade impacts to the open space, but locating the greatest height in the center of the building might help mitigate shadows.

Comments related to the North Wayne Street Section Scenarios:

- Comment expressing support for a grassy setback and the four-story scenario with less height as a better transition to the neighborhood; the potential building should not be taller than what is already there. Also supportive of the mews concept for the southern edge of the site.
- Comment expressing acceptance of either height scenario, but would defer to the neighborhood. Comment expressing that residential walkouts could lead to better street-level activation for pedestrians.
- Comment expressing support for the six-story scenario to provide for more housing, but they would want to have a step-back at three stories to match the Bromptons and to make the building appear lower in scale. Comment expressing acceptance for either residential walkouts or for mixed-use; no preferred use.
- Comment suggesting that it might be helpful in the future to have a plan view diagram that identifies where potential uses (e.g., residential, commercial, etc.) might be located.
- Comment suggesting using a width to height ratio to help assess the height scenarios. Comment expressing some comfort with six-story scenario.

- Comment about concerns with traffic and parking. Would oppose greater height if it meant there was any above-grade parking or that more parking was provided for any additional units.

#### Comments related to the Arlington Boulevard Section Scenarios:

- Comment expressing support for six stories uniformly around the site and uncertainty about the eight-story scenario on Arlington Boulevard. Comment supporting the idea of balconies and interest in the residential walkout option, but would want to know how much retail could be accommodated on the site with the addition of walkouts on North Wayne Street.
- Comment expressing that eight stories here could be easily supported, but only if the building is moved back; the bigger concern on this side of the site is establishing a buffer between vehicular traffic on Arlington Boulevard and the trail.
- Comment indicating the greater the buffer zone from the roadway the better.
- Comment expressing that eight stories seems too tall. All of the tall buildings on Arlington Boulevard are located closer to Rosslyn. There was a lot of controversy over 70' at 2201 North Pershing Drive. Everything near the site, to the south and across Arlington Boulevard at the Fort is no more than 3 stories. This does not seem like a site to achieve affordable housing. Central massing is good. 3-5 stories is preferred and 8-10 stories is crazy for this neighborhood a mile from Metro.
- Comments from two others opposing height greater than 6 stories.

#### Comments related to the North Pershing Drive Section Scenarios:

- Clarifying question regarding how these different scenarios affect or facilitate biophilic design. The stepback scenarios provide opportunities for green roofs at a more visible height.
- Comment expressing no clear preference between six and eight stories. Comment expressing support for the stepback scenarios with the incorporation of biophilic elements on the stepback, but the stepback space should be occupiable space. Green and useful.
- Comment supporting 6 stories and the stepback scenarios with biophilic design elements.
- Comment supporting the stepback scenarios with biophilic design that could be occupiable; likes the 6-story scenario, but may not dislike the 8-story scenario.
- Comment supporting the stepback scenario, but cautioning that the dimensions of the stepback should be considered carefully; a stepback can break up the scale and verticality of a building; a stepback that is only 2' deep may be too small, as it would appear as a token gesture – it may need to be as wide as a sidewalk or more if people want it to be useable and accessible.
- Comment supporting the 6-story setback scenario for a better pedestrian experience.

#### Comments related to the South Property Line Section Scenarios:

- Comment supporting the mews scenario as a strong preference; would allow for eyes on the street, and would let the new development be a good neighbor to the existing apartments; should have front door entrances to the apartments or townhouse; preference for 4 stories.

- Comment expressing support for a 4-story mews.
- Comment supporting the mews and a preference for 4 stories, but would defer to the neighborhood on height.
- Comment supporting the mews scenario, though 4 stories is taller than what is already in that area; would like the mews to serve as a yard area or a bicycle connection to the bike path along Arlington Boulevard; would not like the mews to serve cars.
- Comment supporting a 4-story mews with a bicycle and pedestrian only connection, if there should be a connection to Arlington Boulevard here.

#### Comments related to Modeling Options:

- Comment supporting Option 2 with massing the greatest height in the center of the site and stepping the building down into the neighborhood; supports the driveway along the open space, which provides more breathing room for the park, setting it apart from the building.
- Clarifying question about the size of the open space and whether it changes between the two modeling options. For the purpose of modeling, the open space was modeled to be 100 ft. x 100 ft. The ultimate size of any open space would be determined through the site plan review process. Staff wanted to illustrate an open space in the modeling that represented approximately 10% of the site.
- Comment supporting Option 2, particularly the driveway and courtyard.
- Comment that it is difficult to distinguish between the two modeling options. It might come down to what height people are comfortable with, and then it is about design. Both options have potential and both are fine.
- Comment that vehicular access to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street North should not be on the table; access should be closed off; concern that this building will be a wall; neighborhood structure is important.

#### Public Comment

- Matt Roberts, attorney for the applicant, associated himself generally with the comments heard at the meeting and expressed interest in looking forward to the next steps.
- Approximately 18 years ago, there was a proposal for 2201 North Pershing Drive that with a tall building height that he believes the Fort opposed. Talking to the Fort is important. Parking is important, as the Washington & Lee Apartments have only one parking space per dwelling unit, and parking in the neighborhood is already challenging. Likes the idea of green space along North Wayne Street and would support either one way traffic on or closing 3<sup>rd</sup> Street North, so traffic cannot cut through the neighborhood. If a hotel is considered on site, that could lead to traffic issues if buses are dropping groups at the hotel.
- The 2201 North Pershing Drive height should be the maximum height for this site. This site is not in Rosslyn or Clarendon; eight stories with limited parking would be tough for the neighborhood. This site is walkable to the Metro, but it is a 15-20 minute walk and not located within the Metro corridor. Activation on North Wayne Street is important, but there are 1-2 story houses very close by. It is important to talk to the Fort.

- The open space location is appropriate for a village green. It is important that the open space not shrink and that it be a good solid, useable shape. The location is good and having a driveway near it is good, as we want the open space to feel like an open, public space, not a front lawn for an apartment building. The proposed treescape along North Wayne Street looks good, along with the walkout scenario. Supports the idea of having the mews off North Wayne Street at the southern edge of the site; adding a connection there is good, as we don't want there to be a superblock. This is a good opportunity for natural meadowlands, along with additional greening, berms and buffers along Arlington Boulevard.

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Commissioner Schroll adjourned the meeting close to 9:00 pm.