

ARLINGTON COUNTY
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414

Arlington, Virginia 22201

March 17, 2021

Honorable Matt de Ferranti
Chair, Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Courthouse Square Landmark Block Project

Dear Chair de Ferranti,

The Park and Recreation Commission has received presentations from county staff and the developers of the proposed Landmark Block Building. The commission has presented suggestions on the project and would like to emphasize some of those points here.

This project will provide a significant change to the public experience in this part of Arlington due to its prominence in comparison to surroundings and the minimal green space existing in the vicinity. The commission welcomes the commitment of the developers towards advancing the open space vision of the Courthouse Addendum and the monetary contribution towards the future creation of the Courthouse Civic Square. We would support a higher level taking into account the substantial benefits that the owners and future residents will receive from the county. However, we do understand that part of the open space contribution involves design and development of the Uhle Street Promenade, which is a crucial component of the Courthouse Addendum vision.

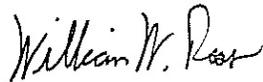
We appreciate the developer's work towards incorporating various suggestions into their final design and would likewise encourage the inclusion of definitive language for certain points. Namely, the commission would like to see language that incorporates bird-safe glass within at least the first five stories of the building. This detail was discussed in previous SPRC meetings and highlighted in the Staff Report and is a primary component of improving the sustainability of the building.

The developer's design and vision for the Uhle Street promenade and the construction of a shared streetscape environment along 15th street are consistent with the Courthouse Addendum. We have offered recent recommendations for this and other recent projects about reducing the straight lines and sharp corners and make building designs and outdoor spaces more fluid,

organic, and natural-looking which would include the definitions of pathways and the arrangement and shape of tree pits and planting areas.

In any case, as refinements of the design proceed, the commission would like to understand in more detail the plans for tree type and numbers, and a more comprehensive outline of biophilic elements being incorporated into this space as well as others on and around the building itself.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William W. Ross". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "W".

William Ross
Chair, Park and Recreation Commission

cc: Members, Arlington County Board
Members, Planning Commission
Mark Schwartz, Arlington County Manager
Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation