

Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC)
Virtual Meeting via Microsoft TEAMS
Wednesday, February 10, 2021 7 P.M. – 9 P.M.
This meeting was recorded.

Minutes (approved with edit March 10, 2021)

Attendees (PAC): Eric Goldstein, Chair; Eric Goodman, Vice Chair; Pamela Van Hine, Recording Secretary; John Armstrong; Ian Blackwell; Jim Feaster; Elizabeth Gallagher; Patrick Kenney; Tom Korn; Andrea Walaker; David Patton, Bike & Pedestrian Planner; Mary Dallao, WalkArlington Program Manager

Invited Speakers: **Aurora Highlands:** Dana Bres (BAC) and Pamela Van Hine (PAC); **JBG Smith:** Andy Vanhorn, Executive Vice President, JBGS, and Kedrick Whitmore, Venable LLP

Other Organizations: **Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC):** Gillian Burgess; Collier Cook; Elizabeth Kiker, Chair; Leah Gerber, Active Transportation Coordinator; **Transportation Commission (TC):** Darren Buck; Chris Slatt, Chair; **Park & Recreation Commission (PRC):** Neal Hunter, PAC Liaison; Bill Ross, Chair; **22202 Organizations:** **Aurora Highlands Civic Association (AHCA):** Natasha Atkins; **Crystal City Citizens Review Council (CCCRC):** Christer Ahl, President; **Crystal City Civic Association (CCCA):** Carol Fuller, President; Claire Lauchner; **National Landing BID:** Rob Mandle; Malaika Scriven; **Virginia Railway Express (VRE):** Sonali Soneji, Program Administrator/Project Manager for VRE Crystal City station

JBGS Attendees: Andy Vanhorn, Executive Vice President, JBGS, and Kedrick Whitmore, Venable LLP; Riley Bartlett; Jay Corbalis; Kathryn Hennigan; Jack F. Kelly; Mark O'Hara; Aaron Ross; Malcolm Williams

County Staff: DOT: Dan Nabors; Christine Sherman Baker, Vision Zero Program Coordinator; Kevin Casadei; Joann Gabor; CPHD: Olivia Sontag, Planning Division;

Media: Gordon Chaffin

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M. and welcomed PAC members, staff, and guests. There were no public comments. The Chair encouraged PAC members to participate in the many upcoming transportation-related County public meetings, such as attending the [Vision Zero](#) public forum on Thursday, the [ART Operations & Maintenance Facility Virtual Public Meeting](#) on Tuesday, February 16 at 7 P.M. Don't forget the [Police Practices Work Group meeting](#) on Monday, February 15 at 7 P.M. and the [Crystal City Bike Network Virtual Community Meeting](#) on Wednesday, February 24 at 6:30 P.M. Send in your comments on the [Shirlington Road Bridge Maintenance](#) project by Thursday, February 18! Check out the County [Engage Arlington webpage](#) for more upcoming meetings.

Mary Dallao, Walk Arlington Program Manager: [Walk Arlington Update](#): The speaker is planning for [National Walking Day](#) on Wednesday, April 7 – Please continue to send her your favorite places to walk locally! She is also starting to plan for the next [8-Week Walking Challenge, April 19-June 11](#). Read about last Fall's Challenge [here](#). Get in shape, make new friends, have fun!

Eric Goldstein, PAC Representative on the Vision Zero External Stakeholder Group: [Vision Zero Update](#):

The Chair reminded the PAC about the public engagement on Thursday to raise questions about the County Vision Zero [draft Action Plan](#). Send [comments](#) by Friday, February 26. He then led a discussion on participants' views of the plan, with additional input from D. Patton, D. Nabors, and C. Baker.

Some issues raised:

- Targets for measuring success need to be more specific (e.g. number of smart infrastructure – where, when, what)
- VZ programmatic focus is to change the culture to focus on safety – in all County programs. Need evangelizing within County structure and to outside groups.
- VZ plan is also very data driven, evidence-based.
- Question about definitions – see the Program Goals page. But need to reduce jargon and abbreviations to reach a broader audience.
- Need meaningful measurable targets.
- How will programs/action steps be prioritized? Projected timelines suggest, but plan needs to be flexible as issues arise.
- What happens if Board approves plan, but budget issues force severe cuts to implementation?
- Can unsafe streets be fixed more quickly through VZ? (Note HIN as one possibility)
- Why does the plan only review speed limits above 30mph, when we know crashes are likely to be deadly at 30mph (They're starting with higher-speed streets, and with time, will be able to do more lower-speed streets (DP). Harder to get drivers to drive more slowly when street was designed for higher speeds. Need to design for lower speeds, and evaluate carefully, but can't get below 20mph?)(DN) Look for new Virginia legislation that would not require using engineering studies to evaluate these lower speeds.
- Also need to address increased risk of heavier and larger/taller vehicles (e.g. SUVs vs. sedans)
- Calm streets = pleasant (and safe) streets – through crosswalks, coordinated traffic lights and “greening up” - using trees, green paint, and green medians. Can this be applied to major roads, such as Lee Highway?
- Tool box – need more information on what this is; but use it, and test it
- Use examples from other VZ communities (they do)

The Chair will review with Vice Chair and C. Yarie (all are members of the External Stakeholders group) to compile PAC comments to submit to the County Manager and/or staff. Note: The PAC gave extensive comments to C. Baker Sherman last fall.

Crystal City Water Park Minor Site Plan Amendment public forum (Invited Speakers: Aurora Highlands: Dana Bres (BAC) and Pamela Van Hine (PAC); JBG Smith: Andy Vanhorn, Executive Vice President, JBGS, and Kedrick Whitmore, Venable LLP

Introductory Comments (P. Van Hine): P. Van Hine again welcomed everyone and thanked everyone who made tonight's discussion possible. She briefly explained that the PAC was hosting this discussion after the Board referred the plan to relevant committees and commissions for review. She then gave her perspective on the Water Park plans – that the existing park needed updating, including a real, defined sidewalk; and that JBG Smith had already made two significant pedestrian-friendly improvements by removing the staircase and turning the kiosks so that the ordering windows did not face the sidewalk. Tonight's discussion will focus on other, unresolved issues. Her final comment was a plea for developers and staff to listen to the needs of 22202 pedestrians, cyclists, and micromobile and transit riders when planning for space and designing infrastructure that will be safe, convenient, comfortable, and accessible for users of all ages and abilities – and to help us help them to create a truly livable community with health people, healthy trees, and a healthy environment.

National Landing Water Park (A. Vanhorn and K. Whitmore): A. Vanhorn gave brief introductory comments, thanked the PAC for hosting this public forum and inviting JBG Smith to participate, then introduced K. Whitmore, who presented the JBGS Plans. He emphasized that the park currently has no public easement and that JBG Smith would be granting the County a public easement through the park redevelopment process. He also emphasized that Board approval is not the end of public comments – which continues through the approval of civil engineering plans, landscaping plans, and final design. Through a series of slides, the speaker showed how the Water Park fit into the overall open space plans in Crystal City and how the park design has evolved since August 2020, in response to public comments. He then explained the expansion of the modal confluence zone (the “landing area” where VRE riders and CCC cyclists will mix) and how appropriate signage might mitigate potential conflicts in this zone and closer to the two tunnels. He also stressed the importance of a connection close to the tunnel for ADA compliance and accommodation of VRE riders who then want to bike on the CCC. He finished with slides that showed the proposed Crystal Drive Frontage – the landscape zone, the “pedestrian zone”, kiosk zone, and internal pedestrian zone, followed by a series of various street views from different angles into the park, as well as several photos illustrating effective bike-ped mixing strategies.

Discussion: Topic #1: Sidewalk and Planting Zone (P. Van Hine): The speaker proposed that the JBG Smith plans did not provide either sufficient planting width for the trees (4’7”, not 6’ minimum) or the pedestrian clear zone (8’, not 10’ minimum). She further noted that the layout provided no “jumping off” space for pedestrians to move around each other, because the kiosks (and furnishings in between the kiosks) create a barrier to the east and the lovely landscaping zone is a barrier to the west. She then explained why pedestrians need a 10’ minimum clear zone: the type of pedestrians that are using this space and where they are going. She showed an area map that illustrates that this sidewalk is part of a major sidewalk network that extends from 12th & Hayes, down the East side of Crystal Drive, and all the way to and through Alexandria, with connecting networks to the north on the Long Bridge Promenade, to the west on the 18th Street network, and to the East via the Crystal City Connector. The 12th St to Alexandria route is flat, connected, continuous, accessible, well-maintained, wide, has little conflicting cross traffic, and matches pedestrians’ desire lines. She highlighted the red mark on the map – the sidewalk by Water Park – that creates a major constricting pinch point for pedestrians on the network. She then showed a heat map of runners’ actual routes – which matches routes on her map! She finished by showing a heat map for cyclists – which also shows a strong desire line for traveling along both sides of Crystal Drive and warned that if a northbound protected bike lane is not provided along this section of Crystal Drive, cyclists and micromobile riders will ride on the sidewalk, causing a major pedestrian safety hazard, especially for the many vulnerable pedestrians living in the area. She recommended that JBG Smith move the kiosks to the east to create a 10’ minimum clear zone and 6’ minimum planting area. If the space is taken from the interior pedestrian zone east of the kiosks, the park will not lose any green space or gain any more hardscape.

Discussion: Topic #2: Upper Plaza/Modal Confluence Zone and Topic #3: Other Potential CCC/VRE Conflicts (D. Bres): The speaker showed an illustration of the proposed VRE rider route from the north Crystal Station exit and how riders might interact with cyclists and pedestrians on the Crystal City Connector. He described the high volume of both pedestrian and cyclist traffic on the CCC, then showed potential conflict areas on the modal confluence zone and crosswalks. He suggested possibly switching the crosswalks to avoid some of this conflict. He then pointed out possible points of conflict as VRE riders and CCC users approach or exit from their respective tunnels and encouraged NOT having a connecting path close to the tunnel entrances because of possible crash risks. Finally, he asked that plans for trail access during construction be carefully considered.

Discussion: Comments on presentations: Please listen to meeting recording for more details.

Topic #1: Sidewalk and Landscaping Zone:

- *Crystal Drive Bike Lanes:* Several participants commented on the need for a NB bike lane on the East side of Crystal Drive, including this comment: It's essential that the PAC and JBG recognize that DES is proposing to move the bike lane to the west side of Crystal Drive. This would be disastrous. If there's no bike lane next to the park, bikers will ride even more on the sidewalk than they already do. D. Nabor stated that the removal of the current narrow, north bound unprotected bike lane next to the park is NOT planned. Everyone should try to attend the February 24 meeting on the bike plan - see next steps.
- *Planting zone:* Does the County allow use of Silva cells under sidewalks (an open-cell support system that allows better root infiltration w/o root heaves, supports more tree growth in constrained boxes); Pam's point about the sector plan policy calling for adequate street trees in Crystal City is important; From Arlington's landscape standards: "Continuous planting strips shall be as wide as possible with a recommended width of 6 ft." Vincent Verweij says that "6 ft. is standard in new construction", 600 sq ft is the minimum recommended. J. Gabor noted that the planned planting volume met current County guidelines. She would consider improvements to it however.
- *Sidewalk Width:* Several participants agreed that the sidewalk is the desired path for pedestrians moving by the park (as opposed to into the park) – and needs to be wide enough to support the volume of pedestrians here, and cyclists moving through the area will not want to go behind the kiosks. One comment noted the strong desire of pedestrians to walk in a straight line – the shortest possible distance – when walking to a destination. Pedestrians will not want to meander on a lovely path through the park. Another comment was that cyclists would head towards the east side path if the sidewalk is too narrow and too crowded – which would be difficult for cyclists to transit and would cause unnecessary conflict with pedestrians.
- JBG Smith response (K. Whitmore, primarily): **Bike Lanes:** DES, not JBG Smith, is ultimately responsible for the bike lane design along Crystal Drive. **Landscaping Zone:** We do have a continuous planting zone for the street trees along Crystal Drive, which allows for the flexibility in the width of the planting zone. A. Ross noted that the layout was designed to save as many existing trees as possible and showed Slide 3 to point out where existing trees are kept and new trees will be planted. JBG Smith will explore additional ways to increase the soil volume, including adding Silva cells and other ways for root support under the sidewalk **Clear Zone width:** The CCSP recommends a 6' minimum clear zone – and JBG Smith expanded it to 8' (but CCSP also states that most are 8' or 10' minimum width). He also said that there was "jumping off" space between the kiosks (but that space is filled with furnishings and people). **Final Comment:** JBG Smith appreciates the comments and will review the plans to see if more space can be provided (for trees and people).

Topics #2: Upper Plaza/Modal Confluence Zone and Topic #3: Other Potential CCC/VRE Conflicts:

- We should ensure we get runnels with the stairs as well.
- Have we ever approached Crystal Place about closing their right-only driveway exit next to the mixing zone? All the mixing, negotiating one's way past a driver looking left for traffic and entering the mixing zone is the biggest hazard. The issue of closing the Crystal Place drive came up in the VRE TAC, but VRE, whose responsibility it is, did not follow up, as far as I know.
- Participants had lots of comments on the best way to design the upper plaza/confluence zone to keep everyone safe. Some people suggested a smaller space; some thought the larger space was advantageous. Create a design that makes the points of confluence as perpendicular and

predictable as possible. Create design that encourages pedestrians to continue on the sidewalk, rather than behind the kiosks, to reduce some conflict. Getting cyclists into the street as quickly and directly as possible should be a priority, but also make clear to pedestrians that they are crossing a piece of cycling infrastructure (via paint, paver, or even a curb). That will eliminate the majority of the issues because cyclists will know where to go and pedestrians will understand where they are going. (they = bicyclists). C. Slatt encouraged relocating the crosswalks to the south as one conflict mitigation strategy.

- VRE/CCC lower path connections: C. Slatt supported keeping a connection between the two paths for ADA compliance and to support VRE-riding cyclists who want to continue on the CCC to the MVT. G. Burgess: Ensure that which tunnel is which is clear from the top of the paths, so that people don't enter the wrong tunnel.
- JBG Smith Comments (K. Whitmore): We appreciate comments and feedback; our goal is to ensure safety for all modes when spaces converge.

Next Steps: Watch for PAC meeting minutes and recording. Send comments, via email, to khennigan@jbgsmith.com; Participate in the Tuesday, February 16 [Park & Recreation Commission Meeting \(agenda\)](#) and the Wednesday, February 24 [Crystal City Bike Network Virtual Community Meeting](#). Monitor County Board review at their March 20th meeting.

PAC Business:

- Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the [January 13 PAC meeting](#) were approved, with minor typographical errors corrected.
- Crystal City Bike Plan (L. Gerber): She described the basic layout – a contraflow PBL NB on Clark-Bell and a SB PBL on Crystal Drive and encouraged everyone to attend the Wednesday, February 24 [Crystal City Bike Network Virtual Community Meeting](#).
- Updates and final comments from PAC Members:
 - [Clarendon Sector Plan Update](#) (J. Armstrong, PAC Representative): Watch the two videos on the website, then provide online feedback on proposed building height and form, and potential Fairfax Drive open space is due February 22. Discussion next goes to the LRPC, followed by more online engagements.
 - [VDOT Route One Multimodal Improvements Study](#): P. Van Hine, the PAC Representative on this VDOT Task Force, noted 3 upcoming meetings: A [Livability 22202 Route 1 Working](#) Group and VDOT meeting on Monday, February 22 (preregister [here](#)); a VDOT Route 1 Task Force Meeting on Thursday, February 25; and [a VDOT Public Engagement](#) on Wednesday, March 3. She will report on them at the March 10 PAC meeting.
 - [Water Park plans](#): P. Van Hine asked for a consensus on whether the PAC should make recommendations now – or wait until JBS Smith has revised plans. The consensus was that the PAC will wait until revised plans are available, hopefully in time to discuss at the March 10 PAC meeting.
 - [Roaches Run pedestrian access](#): T. Korn asked if access was planned, and P. Van Hine noted that this was in the Livability22202 plans, which are in early development. (Note: General pedestrian network plans will be presented at the PRC meeting on February 16).

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:00 P.M. The next PAC meeting will be held virtually on Wednesday, March 10 at 7 P.M. Watch the [PAC webpage](#) for a draft agenda.