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Dear Members of the Long Range Planning Committee:

This firm represents property owners within the Crystal City area. I would like to weigh in on the proposed scenarios set forth in staff's presentation for the March 24 LRPC meeting.

We appreciate staff's review of building height issues in Crystal City. This is an opportunity to dramatically enhance placemaking and architectural quality while increasing the community benefits delivered to the community. Unfortunately, we have some concerns about whether the methods set forth in this presentation will actually achieve those goals.

If adopted, the scenarios essentially "choose" which building sites will go forward with additional height. The scenarios appear to have made these choices without analysis of several key factors:

- **Redevelopment Potential** – one of the important justifications for allowing additional height is the ability to obtain additional benefits for the community. As a result, the sites that can receive additional height should be those sites that are likely to redevelop in the near future, so that benefits can be delivered in exchange for this additional height. Further, height variation will be achieved through this metric, because sites redeveloping in the near term will naturally create higher heights than those buildings that remain. We ask that staff consider the redevelopment potential of sites when determining whether additional heights may be warranted.
- **Equitable Opportunity for Architectural Statements** – all development throughout Crystal City should have the opportunity to strive for architectural excellence. By "choosing" certain sites for additional height, those that are not chosen will not have the same opportunities to achieve architectural interest. We ask that staff afford the same opportunities for architectural expression across Crystal City.

Rather than a proscriptive map of what sites can and cannot achieve additional height, the result of the process should be a set of general principles that may be applied to any site that is seeking additional height within Crystal City. These principles can then be applied to the proposal, and a determination can be made as to whether the proposal is worthy of additional height based on its adherence to these principles.

While the Sector Plan got many things right, one of its greatest weaknesses was an overly proscriptive set of design guidelines. The recommendations set forth in staff's report will only repeat and exacerbate the mistakes of the Sector Plan in this regard.

**Accordingly, we ask that the staff create a set of criteria to be met by any site seeking additional density.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Very truly yours,



Kedrick N. Whitmore