



May 25, 2021

Subject: Crystal City Building Height Study

Matt Mattauszek, Planner, Pentagon City Planning Study
James Schroll, Chair, Long Range Planning Committee

In its May 17 meeting, the Long Range Planning Committee members suggested that the stakeholders—the three civic associations and the principal property owner requesting the study, JBGS—should welcome a consideration of broader additional density as part of this study for the community benefits it could provide.

Not only is this not desired by any of the stakeholders, as their individual communications made clear, but it would send a somewhat alarming signal to the rest of the community and all stakeholders under the CCSP. The building height study was initially proposed by JBGS and supported by the three civic associations to provide more interest and variety in the skyline, within the existing density allowances, consistent with goals of the Plan. It was never intended to introduce a broad discussion of overall density increase in the CCSP. There is no demand for additional density at this time, and no known plan for projects beyond existing ones. With the expansion of this height study to include density, the scope is exceeding what any of the impacted stakeholders feel is warranted.

While we're aware there are aspects of the sector plan which have proved too constraining, and some that are unclear—to be expected with a 10-year-old plan—and we recognize it is conceivable in future that some additional density beyond what is permitted under the current plan would be desired, any such consideration would need to happen through a formal sector plan update, where all stakeholders, including all other property owners, would be at the table. Given the strong support for improved connectivity and open space within Crystal City and throughout the 22202 area and points south, particularly in light of the current and proposed increased density in Pentagon City, height for sculpting purposes may allow for somewhat smaller footprints, which could aid the connectivity goals.

We believe that density calculations and impacts are complex and subtle enough that any broader request for additional increased density in Crystal City, beyond what the Sector Plan permits, requires a separate open and transparent process with all stakeholders involved. It would include holistic, integrated planning with relevant staff participation from DES and DPR.

Consequently, we request that the LRPC make clear to all stakeholders that the original purpose and scope of the study—more height, well designed, within permitted density—will be maintained, and that additional density beyond that will not be considered.

Sincerely,

Mike Pickford, President
Arlington Ridge CA

Scott Miles, President
Aurora Highlands CA

Carol Fuller, President
Crystal City CA

cc: Anthony Fusarelli, Director of Planning
James Lantelme, Chair, Planning Commission
Mark Schwartz, Manager, Arlington County