

February 18, 2021

Ms. Margaret Tulloch-Rhodes
Principal Planner
Comprehensive Planning, Planning Division
Community, Planning and Housing Division
Suite 700
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22201

RE: Special GLUP Study for Courthouse West – follow up to November 2019 meeting

Dear Ms. Tulloch-Rhodes:

We write this letter in accordance with the updated Special General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Study Process that states that after the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) meets on a Special GLUP study request, the Chairman of LRPC transmits a letter to staff with the findings of the meeting.

On Tuesday, February 16, 2021, the LRPC of the Planning Commission met to hear presentations from staff and the applicant concerning a request for a Special GLUP Study for a block in the area known as Courthouse West. Participants included members of the Planning Commission (9/12), representatives from local Clarendon-Courthouse and nearby Lyon Village civic associations, representatives from other county-appointed commissions (Transportation, Parks and Recreation, and Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board), as well as citizens who spoke during public comment. Staff presented a well-received and thorough report of the applicant's proposal, including their application for a Special GLUP study in November 2019; and the applicant gave a brief presentation of their request to change the GLUP category from 'Service Commercial' to "High" Office-Apartment-Hotel (OAH) including their timeline and desire to move forward expeditiously given delays to date.

The LRPC found that the Tier II study continues to be warranted. The LRPC exhibited strong support for considering additional density and height on the site and entertaining various zoning categories including the one proposed by the applicant. Specifically, there was strong support for development that provides housing in this location; and LRPC discussion included a desire that any new development address issues of livability and equity and biophilia. In addition, LRPC members requested that the site contribute to the greater transportation network given its location between two metro stations and provide tapering and aesthetic mitigations to the nearby lower-density and single-family neighborhoods.

The LRPC looks forward to working with staff and the applicant and community as this study goes forward.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Gearin and James Schroll,
Chairmen, Long Range Planning Commission