

Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) of the Planning Commission
Meeting Summary
Tuesday, January 31, 2023
7:00 p.m.

This meeting was a hybrid virtual/in-person public meeting held through electronic communication means.

Planning Commissioners in attendance:

James Lantelme (LRPC Chair) (in-person)

Leonardo Sarli (in-person)

James Schroll (in-person)

Elizabeth Gearin (in-person)

Sara Steinberger (in-person)

Planning Commissioners absent:

Devanshi P. Patel

Tenley Peterson

Daniel Weir

Denyse "Nia" Bagley

Stephen Hughes

Other invited LRPC members in attendance:

No attendee, Transportation Commission

Laura Saul Edwards, Housing Commission (absent)

Sarah Baryluk, Park and Recreation Commission (in-person)

Dima Hakura, Clarendon-Courthouse Civic Association (in-person)

Jason Harrier, Lyon Village Citizens Association (virtual)

Jackie Snelling, Alternate for Lyon Village Citizens Association (in-person)

Staff in attendance:

Kellie Brown (CPHD – Planning) (virtual)

Anika Chowdhury (CPHD – Planning) (in-person)

Margaret Rhodes (CPHD – Planning) (in-person)

Tim Murphy (CPHD – Planning) (in-person)

Angie de la Barrera (DES) (virtual)

Walter Gonzalez (DPR) (virtual)

Brian Shelton (DES) (virtual)

Applicants in attendance:

Kedrick Whitmore, Venable (in-person)

Oliver Lee, TMG (in-person)

2500 Wilson Boulevard Special General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Study Tier I LRPC Meeting

Commissioner Lantelme opened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Lantelme recognized members of several other Arlington County boards and commissions and civic leaders in attendance, as well as staff members and the applicant.

Staff made a presentation followed by a presentation by the applicant.

Questions and comments included the following:

- Why was R-C mentioned as an option in the staff presentation? Is the 95' inclusive of the penthouse?
- Has the applicant taken "High" Office-Apartment-Hotel off the table? How much bonus density and height could the applicant get?
- What is the average floor height you are contemplating?
- Is staff recommending "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel? Are we asking the Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) which GLUP category is most appropriate?
- Does the Courthouse West Special GLUP Study Document provide more guidance for this site than the recommendation that "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel is a point of departure? The idea of a second Metro entrance was misrepresented in the Courthouse West SGLUP Study by the applicant and that is one reason why Planning Commissioners were supportive of a significant increase in height and density.
- Are the two recommended options for moving forward mutually exclusive? Recommendation to both move the project to SPRC review and to recommend that the area be looked at as part of a more comprehensive corridor study.
- When would a corridor study begin?

- We do not need to hold up this project while we have the broader conversation that we need to have.
- The hybrid approach of advancing the project to SPRC and doing a larger study is good. Given the extensive work done on the adjacent site through the Courthouse West Special GLUP Study, there is no reason not to apply that guidance here. A larger study should, however, be more than just an update to the Courthouse Sector Plan Addendum.
- The Courthouse Sector Plans are 30-40 years old. Have we looked at how a residential use will affect the office-residential balance in this area?
- Taking down such a young building results in a lot of lost carbon. Is there an option to keep the building?
- Can the applicants explain the biophilic vision for this site? This is an opportunity to set a new standard.
- Is there an example of the applicant's work?
- What we would be measuring the site plan application against? Why can't we apply the Courthouse West vision here? Are there any other pending Special GLUP Studies in the Metro corridors?
- Buck has assembled properties along the Lyon Village edge. Are they applying for a Special GLUP Study? We should apply an equity lens here and think about open space on this block. Our parks are overcrowded and our green space is limited. There is already an open space on this site and there should be one in the future. There would be a big carbon footprint if this building were brought down (embodied energy, landfill). We should be concerned about the environment and climate change.
- When would the site plan package be prepared?
- The 14 stories approved for the Courthouse West site was a very bold, aspirational move by the County Board. The four neighboring civic associations recommended 6 stories. Staff recommended 12 stories. The County Board recommended 14 stories. 14 stories for this site is not a starting point, it was a bold move and no more than 14 stories is appropriate here.
- The public space here should be more useable and biophilic than the existing grassy area.
- The applicant should think about how to connect the green space here to the adjacent green spaces to either side of the site.
- Courthouse West was a special process and now we are doing a special process here. Where is the larger plan to tie it all together? Leaning towards option 2, the larger study.
- The open space is important. Option 1 to move to the SPRC process is good. The grass here is aesthetic, but it does not offer value to the community. We want to see coordination between the open spaces and we can achieve that through the SPRC process. Option 2 with the broader corridor study is also warranted. We need to look at the cascading impacts on open space, transportation, etc..
- We do not have any community centers. There are no swimming pools or pickleball courts on the Orange Line corridor and we have a large percentage of the County's population. This should be offered within your development. We want to introduce this concept early on in the process. We need something here from either the Courthouse West or the 2500 Wilson Boulevard developers, in addition to affordable housing. Why are we not doing a Tier II Study here? Can the applicant survey the community to see what we want? The community was at the table with the architects during the Market

Commons process and it made a real difference. It makes for a better project and is better for the community. Wants to be involved upfront in the design process, not just at the end when the plans have already been developed.

- The majority of LRPC members indicated that they would like to move forward with both options 1 and 2 during the wrap-up.

Public Comment

- Concern that we are leapfrogging over entire GLUP categories. Do not follow the bad precedent from the Courthouse West Special GLUP Study. The County Board approved a height much greater than what the civic associations wanted for that study. This site is not comparable to the Courthouse West site, as it is further from the Metro. Adding more people is not good when we have budget issues as a County.
- Concern about how Arlington is doing business. When do we look at the big picture for recreation? We need to look at the level of services for this area.
- We need to look at the big picture. This block has the only large green space in the corridor here. To preserve livability, we need to deny this request. It is time to say this needs to be stopped in its tracks.

Next Steps

Staff will prepare a memorandum summarizing the Tier I Review and the LRPC Chair will prepare a letter summarizing the Tier I Review.

Chair Lantelme adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:31 p.m.