
Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) of the Planning Commission
Meeting Summary
Wednesday, September 6, 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)
Nia Bagley (in-person)
Elizabeth Gearin (virtual)
Karen Guevara (in-person)
Tenley Peterson (in-person)
Peter Robertson (in-person)
Sara Steinberger (virtual)

Staff in attendance:

Anika Chowdhury (CPHD – Planning) (in-person)
Rana Abu Ghazaleh (CPHD – Planning) (in-person)
Ryan Delaney (DPR – Park Development) (in-person)
Cynthia Liccese-Torres (CPHD – Neighborhood Services) (in-person)
Margaret Tulloch Rhodes (CPHD – Planning) (virtual)
Jennifer Fioretti (DPR) (virtual)
Irena Lazic (DPR) (virtual)

Other

Pamela Van Hine (virtual)
Phil Klingelhofer (virtual)

Historic & Cultural Resources Plan (HCRP) and Forestry & Natural Resources Plan (FNRP) Updates Joint 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.

Historic & Cultural Resources Plan (HCRP) Update

A staff presentation by Cynthia Liccese-Torres of the Historic Preservation Program (CPHD – Neighborhood Services) on an update to the Historic and Cultural Resources Plan was followed by discussion with the following questions and comments:

- Noted challenges in preserving historic resources, how the County determines what historic sites to preserve, and the difficulties faced in maintaining such historical sites.

- Consideration of the role of property owners in nominations for local historic district designation and their involvement in the designation process.
- Reference to the Clarendon Sector Plan, as a successful example of preservation practice and consideration for similar incentives along Langston Boulevard.
- Emphasis on the desire for formalized preservation discussions in site plans and planning studies.
- Noted that there is a different local historic district designation process for properties owned by Arlington Public Schools (APS).
- Emphasis on the importance of staff working with property owners, highlighting the need for collaboration and building relationships.

Public Comment

There were no public speakers for this agenda item.

Forestry & Natural Resources Plan (FNRP) Updates

A staff presentation by Ryan Delaney (DPR – Park Development) on an update to the Forestry and Natural Resources Plan was followed by discussion with the following questions and comments:

- Emphasis on incorporating feedback from stakeholders and interdepartmental collaboration.
- Consideration of legislative priorities between local and state entities, to address community requests.
- Noted urgency of protecting and conserving natural resources in the County and adopting and implementing the plans, especially in the context of climate change and development.
- Highlighted the importance of lot coverage and space for nature, as well as a focus on integrating biophilic design and landscaping in the early stages of site plan and development processes.
- Consideration of strategies for implementation, metrics, and incentives for conservation efforts. Topics included setting higher tree canopy goals, the importance of tree preservation in terms of carbon sequestration and erosion control, incentivizing developers to preserve existing canopy, and the possibility of creating zoning variances for homeowners with the desire to add additions to their homes, without damaging trees.
- Emphasis on the importance of accurate data collection and the overall downward trend of tree canopy.
- Concerns about conservation on private property and the need for better coordination between various departments were raised, indicating consideration for policy recommendations.
- Emphasis on the importance of consistent and creative communication, for educational purposes and the need for agreement and consolidation of assets to effectively communicate with the public. Referenced an experience where mature trees were cut down for park mitigation, emphasizing the value of educating peers about the importance of trees for water runoff.
- Noted the challenge of balancing green space retention with community needs and desires, highlighting the park master planning process and area plans as avenues for involvement.

- Emphasis on the prioritization of invasive species, both plants and pests with focus placed on impact and urgency rather than the type of species.
- Noted on the need to prioritize the most impactful threats while not neglecting progress made in controlling other invasive species.
- Encouraged further discussion and connecting with natural resources experts with the aim to address the challenges comprehensively and progressively, while being mindful of the importance of preserving and enhancing the environment.

Public Comment

There were no public speakers for this agenda item.

Next Steps

The Historic & Cultural Resources Plan (HCRP) and Forestry & Natural Resources Plan (FNRP) are anticipated to move forward with a Request to Advertise (RTA) at the October 2023 Planning Commission and County Board meeting and final action in November/December 2023.

Chair Lantelme adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:45 p.m.