



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

ARLINGTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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GIZELE C. JOHNSON
CLERK

November 6, 2019

Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Suite 300
Arlington, Virginia 22201

SUBJECTS: 3. HARRIS TEETER

- A.** GP-347-19-1 GENERAL LAND USE PLAN AMENDMENT from “Low-Medium” Residential (16-36 units per acre) to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” (up to 3.24 FAR including associated office and retail activities) for an area at 525 North Thomas Street; and identified as RPC#20-012-009.
- B.** Z-2612-19-1 REZONING from “S-D” Special Development District, “RA8-18” Multiple-family Dwelling District, “C-2” Service Commercial-Community Business District, and “C-0-2.5” Mixed Use District to “R-C” Multiple-family Dwelling and Commercial District; located at 525 North Thomas Street, 640 North Glebe Road, 624 North Glebe Road, 616 North Glebe Road, and 600 North Glebe Road, identified as RPC# 20-012-009, -018, -019, -020, -021, and -024.
- C.** SP #72 Site Plan Amendment to remove site area from the subject site plan; for the parcels located at 600 North Glebe Road and 525 North Thomas Street (RPC# 20-012-021, and 20-012-009).
- D.** SP #315 SITE PLAN AMENDMENT to incorporate approximately 255,939 sq. ft. of site area into the site plan; to construct approximately 3.21 FAR of retail and residential uses, with approximately 77,575 sq. ft. of retail space and approximately 732 multi-family residential units; with modifications of zoning ordinance requirements including: reduces loading, reduced parking ratios, and other modifications as necessary to achieve the proposed development plan; located at 525 North Thomas Street, 640 North Glebe Road, 624 North Glebe Road, 616 North Glebe Road, and 600 North Glebe Road (RPC# 20-012-009, -018, -019, -020, -021, and -024).
- E.** SP315-19-1 USE PERMIT ASSOCIATED WITH A SITE PLAN for a new public open space in the “R-C” Multiple-family Dwelling and Commercial District; located at 525 North Thomas Street, and a portion of 624 North Glebe Road and 616 North Glebe Road (RPC# 20-012-009, -019, -020).

PC. #37.A.-F.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board adopt the attached resolution to amend the General Land Use Plan from “Low-Medium” Residential (16-36 units per acre) to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” (up to 3.24 FAR including associated office and retail activities) for an area at 525 North Thomas Street; and identified as RPC#20-012-009.
2. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to rezone the properties known as 525 North Thomas Street, 640 North Glebe Road, 624 North Glebe Road, 616 North Glebe Road, and 600 North Glebe Road (RPC# 20-012-009, -018, -019, -020, -021, and -024) from “S-D” Special Development District, “RA8-18” Multiple-family Dwelling District, “C-2” Services Commercial-Community Business District, and “C-0-2.5” Mixed Use District to “R-C” Multiple-family Dwelling and Commercial District.
3. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to amend Site Plan #72 to remove site area from the subject site plan; for the parcels located at 600 North Glebe Road and 525 North Thomas Street (RPC# 20-012-021, and 20-012-009), subject to the conditions of the ordinance.
4. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to amend Site Plan #315 to incorporate approximately 255,939 sq. ft. of site area into the site plan; to construct approximately 3.21 FAR of retail and residential uses, with approximately 77,575 sq. ft. of retail space and approximately 732 multi-family residential units; with modifications of zoning ordinance requirements including: reduced loading, reduced parking ratios, and other modifications as necessary to achieve the proposed development plan; located at 525 North Thomas Street, 640 North Glebe Road, 624 North Glebe Road, 616 North Glebe Road, and 600 North Glebe Road (RPC# 20-012-009, -018, -019, -020, -021, and -024), subject to the conditions of the ordinance.
5. The Planning Commission recommends that the County Board approve the subject use permit (SP315-19-1) for a new public open space in the “R-C” Multiple-family Dwelling and Commercial District, subject to the conditions of the staff report, with no further scheduled County Board review.

BACKGROUND

The Planning Commission heard this item at its November 6, 2019 public hearing. Adam Watson, Community Planning Housing and Development Department, Planning Division and Walter Gonzalez, Department of Parks and Recreation, Park Development Division gave a presentation on the proposal. Additional staff present included:

- Rob Gibson, Department of Environmental Services, Development Services Division
- Walter Gonzalez, Department of Parks and Recreation, Park Development Division.

The Applicant gave brief presentation on the project consisting of an overview of the project and provided details on the existing conditions, architectural design, and site design for the project.

Yon Vaconick, architect for this project, gave a brief presentation on the changes that have been made based off of the feedback gotten from the SPRC process. Additionally, Mr. Vaconick discussed specific architectural features.

Trini Rodriguez discussed the landscape features and the community amenities including the number of trees that are being replaced.

PUBLIC SPEAKERS

There were 12 public speakers on this item.

1. Stephanie Walker expressed concerns with the plans for the current site including the reduction of mature trees on the site, the lack of green roofs, the increased traffic on Carlyn Springs Road and Glebe Road, and safety of pedestrians. Ms. Walker encouraged the Planning Commission to defer action on this proposal until the mentioned issues can be resolved.
2. Lori McManus, resident of Hyde Park, urged the Commission to defer action on the current plan. Ms. McManus expressed concerns about the removal of mature trees. The trees are currently used to make a recreation area, however, the final plan from the developer shows the trees being removed. Additionally, trees on the rear of the development will be removed for parking garage. Ms. McManus recommended that the parking garage footprint is reduced in order to have more trees.
3. Daniel Bluestone commented on the uniqueness of this site. Mr. Bluestone expressed concerns about the project aligning with the County plans particularly with the North Quincy Street Addendum. Mr. Bluestone discussed his dissatisfaction with the design of the proposal stating that this project lacked a sense of place and looked like a hodgepodge of designs.
4. Barbara Smith talked about the joy she finds in walking in Ballston and living in Ballston with a diverse area. Ms. Smith urged the Commission to defer this project in order to make more changes to make this property more walkable and have a more sense of place.
5. Tony Taylor echoed the previous public comments. Mr. Taylor urged the Planning Commission to defer the plan in order to make the project better than the bottom line. Mr. Taylor noted that the applicant and planning staff have done a good job meeting the bottom line but encouraged them to think about the people who live in that area.
6. Cynthia Long expressed appreciation for the County Board and the time that they take to reflect on these types of projects. Ms. Long, encouraged the commissioners to take more time to reflect on the project

7. Melissa Pollack expressed her belief that townhouses are the more appropriate use for this site. Ms. Pollack also discussed her concerns with traffic and echoed all the previous comments. Ms. Pollack expressed the concerns about the lack of representation on the Planning Commission.
8. Benjamin Schmitt spoke on behalf of the Hyde Park Association. Mr. Schmitt discussed six issues including: the increase of traffic, circulation, and safety problems, protection of structures during construction, storm water management, anticipated construction noise, loss of light in green areas, and architecture along Glebe Road.
9. Mark Falcone discussed his involvement throughout the North Quincy Plan Addendum and expressed concerns about the amount of parking on site. Mr. Falcone stated his desire to reduce the amount of parking because of the number of pedestrians visiting the store.
10. Karen Becker supported the previous comments and discussed the value of the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance. Ms. Becker stated that the concerns that have been raised are outlined in the Zoning Ordinance as items that should be avoided.
11. Bernie Berne brought up concerns about changing the GLUP of the property with having a special GLUP study. Additionally, Mr. Berne stated that the zoning should be S-3A in order to be in line with the GLUP designation. Mr. Berne also discussed the intent of the open space and how the proposed public space does not measure up to the plans. One aspect included the lawn in the park design eliminates the pollinators and which could lead to insect death. Mr. Berne raised concerns with the dog run, the size of the sidewalks, and the amount of impervious pavement.
12. Lawrence Wingard stated the importance of this site in relation to the sites around this area. Mr. Wingard expressed his support of the development and would like assurances that the park gets built and that there is access from N. Thomas to Harris Teeter. Additionally, Mr. Wingard would rather have a playground instead of a dog run in the proposed park.

COMMISSION REPORTS

1. Bill Ross, Chairman of the Park and Recreation Commission, was generally supportive of the proposed park. The neighborhood provided creative input throughout the process. The dog run will set an importation precedent in Arlington. The unique phasing to deliver the park before the rest of the project is appreciated by the PRC. The PRC does lament the loss of the mature trees on the site and would like to have mitigating measures applied to all projects.
2. Commissioner James Lantelme provided a report from the Transportation Commission. Transportation Commission heard this on October 30, 2019. Parking was the main topic discussed at the meeting. The Commission felt that the amount of parking was not in line with the plans, was too high for the use, and would encourage more people to drive. The Transportation Commission voted to defer the project.

3. Chair Schroll provided a report from the Site Plan Review Committee. The SPRC discussed: building separation as brought up by the Hype Park Community. Parking ratios were seen as too high for the project. The access and loading aspects have changed through the SPRC process. The architecture does not meet the exact notes in the plans.

PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION

The Planning Commission discussed the following topics with County Staff and the applicant:

- **Transportation**
- **Architecture and Fenestration**
- **Plan Conformance**
- **Construction**
- **Park Design**
- **Trees**
- **Affordable Housing**

Transportation:

- Commissioners Iacomini and Hughes asked about the access to pedestrians and cyclists. Staff responded that the public access easement along Tazewell extends along the property line and if in the future Hyde park wanted to connect them it would be possible.
- Commissioner Peterson asked for clarification about the stop signs into the parking garage.
- Commissioners asked about the possible reduction in parking that was brought up in the SPRC process. Staff responded that with the moving of the express grocery pickup area to the garage may reduce the parking totals in the garage. The Site Plan Condition #32 would provide additional flexibility as they study market demand for the residential portion of the project to reduce the residential parking ratio. It is less likely that the commercial parking ratio will decrease.
- Commissioners asked about the possibility to preserve the trees as the parking through the phasing is determined. Staff responded that the footprint of the garage would remain the same, although the number of parking levels is reduced to reduce the parking stalls.
- Commissioners asked about the amount of the overparking of the project. Staff clarified that the project is not overparked. The project is within in the range of parking that was approved by the County Board.
- Commissioners discussed amongst themselves the feasibility and difficulty of reducing the amount of parking in order to save trees.
- Commissioners asked for more information about the transportation method of costumers that will be at Harris Teeter. The applicant stated that they are excited about every customer whether they walk or drive. Additionally, the applicant stated that the studies show that most people will drive to this store. Staff spoke to the use and the transportation study that was done with this project. The transportation study does not anticipate that the patterns of the existing store are going to continue including high pedestrian and high automobile use.

- Chair Schroll asked about the amount of the electric vehicle parking spaces that they are planning to provide and encouraged the spaces to be EV Capable. The applicant responded that they are still studying that information and at other sites they have put in about six spaces at other more suburban sites. The electric vehicle parking spaces will be in Building #2. Chair Schroll noted that EVs are becoming cheaper and will reach cost parity within five years. He stated that while the applicant may not be seeing much demand for EVs currently, the applicant will soon.
- Commissioners asked about the increase in the traffic problems. Staff deferred to the applicant but did say that Staff was confident that the traffic will not increase beyond what is expected with no development on site. The applicant talked about the mitigation efforts that they are looking into about the signal timing.
- Commissioner Bagley asked about the impact that car sharing may have on the project. Staff explained that the third lane of Glebe Road is going to be managed by the County as a potential pick-up/drop-off space during off-peak hours.
- Commissioner Bagley asked about the loading docks and the management plan for the loading dock. The applicant responded that they do have a plan and they are going to be providing that to the County. Additionally, the applicant explained that there will be trucks delivering during the day and not in the middle of the night. The safety of pedestrians is a priority and the deliveries will be during less busy hours for the store. The interior space in the space and the loading area is tall in order to have more shelving and more stacking taking place. Commissioners discussed condition #30 and #94.

Architecture and Fenestration:

- Commissioner Iacomini asked about the transparency requirements and proposals along the ground floor retail. Staff clarified that there is not a requirement, but a recommendation in the plans. The recommendation is being met along N. Glebe on Building 3 and has about 40% (50% recommended) along Building 1.
- Commissioner Iacomini asked about the surety that the transparency requirement will be met throughout the lifetime of the project. The applicant stated the design of the interior of the store will not change and therefore the transparency along the frontage will not change. Staff stated that the transparency could not be amended administratively.
- Commissioner Lantelme clarified the type of the entrances and which entrances are emergency entrances. The applicant explained each entrance and opening on the frontages.
- Commissioner Peterson asked about the options that residents have to raise concerns if shelves or boxes are being piled against the windows. Staff responded that they can contact Zoning Enforcement and they will investigate and provide warning and violations if needed.
- Commissioners asked for more information about green roofs. The applicant identified the green roofs and clarified that these roofs are on the first floor of the building. Commissioner Iacomini noted the treatment of the other rooftops among the three buildings appeared to be abysmal in the images being shown. She noted there seemed to be opportunities to provide more greenery and make the buildings more biophilic.
- Commissioners asked about the amount of HVAC units on the buildings and if the number of mechanical units is necessary. Commissioner Lantelme encouraged the applicant to find a way to make the roof green in order to screen those units.

- Commissioner Bagley talked to the applicant about the construction liaison and let them know some best practices for the construction liaison in order to make the community feel more comfortable.

Plan Conformance

- Commissioner Siegel asked staff to explain how it thought about the recommendation in the plan calling for “slender towers,” noting there are none in the project as proposed. Staff explained that as discussions with the applicant evolved around the two zonings possible for the sight, it believed that the tapering required for the site as a whole would be the determining factor regarding building form. Also, staff interpreted “slender towers” as subjective, and more importance was placed on the shape of the floorplate.
- Commissioner Gearin asked about the process of arriving at the proposed architectural features. Staff walked through the features and how they were arrived at. The plan calls for the breaking up of the frontage along the street and Staff has worked with the applicant to provide a breakup of the building. Commissioner Hughes asked about why Staff was concerned about the maintenance of the clock. Staff responded that in other areas of the County, these types of clocks have been difficult to maintain.

Construction

- Commissioner Bagley talked to the applicant about the construction liaison and let them know some best practices for the construction liaison in order to make the community feel more comfortable.
- Commissioners asked about the protective measures that will be undertaken to protect the Hyde Park structures. The applicant talked about the pile driving and sheeting and shoring procedures. The applicant stated that it would be prudent to monitor the existing buildings on Hyde Park.
- Commissioner Hughes talked about another developer in the County used the trees being removed from the site and made them into cutting boards for the residents.

Park Design

- Commissioners asked about how the design of the park came to be. Staff responded that they took into account the surrounding parks that are within half a mile of the site. Due to the proximity of other playgrounds in the area this park went in the direction of the dog run.
- Commissioner Hughes asked about the Open Space Master Plan. Staff responded that the level of services in the master plan does not include dog runs because there are currently no dog runs in the County. Dog runs are meant to be in more urban areas such as Ballston area.
- Commissioners asked for further clarification about the need for a playground at this site. Staff responded that although a playground was not considered through this process, there are play elements on the site. Through the public outreach there was determined a need for dog parks and dog runs. This dog run would be open during daylight unless they are lit. The applicant expects to keep the park lit throughout the night.
- Commissioner Gearin asked about the width of the sidewalk in the park design. Staff responded that this is not a trail and through the public outreach process, the public

wanted to something that would be safe for cyclists. Additionally, not all the paths are pavement, the boardwalk is an impervious surface.

- Commissioner Peterson asked about the design of the park and the impact on storm water management. Staff assured the Commission that the applicant is meeting the Chesapeake Bay requirements and the park is not a part of that process.
- Chair Schroll asked about Condition #57 and what changes would require a public process. Staff responded that any change in size, easement, and the design would require that it go through a public process. Chair Schroll recommended more specific language to clarify that process.

Trees:

- Commissioners asked about the trees that are going to be removed on the site. The applicant spoke to the areas where the trees are being removed and the type of the trees they are proposing. The applicant is looking to plant faster growing trees and have a hedge-like treatment in order to provide buffer year around.
- Commissioner Iacomini questioned the proposal of the hedge and wanted more deciduous trees. The applicant stated that they are looking to plant a combination of both. The applicant further clarified that they wanted to preserve the mature trees at the rear of the property and the hedge is a last resort. If the hedge is necessary, they will work closely with the Hyde Park residents to make sure that they are happy with them.

Affordable Housing:

- Commissioner Hughes asked about the affordable housing contributions. Staff explained the options that the applicant has in order to fulfill those contributions. Commissioner Hughes noted that normally when there is a GLUP change there is normally negotiated affordable housing units.

PLANNING COMMISSION MOTIONS

Commissioner Schroll moved that the Planning Commission recommend to the County Board to adopt the attached resolution to amend the General Land Use Plan from “Low-Medium” Residential (16-36 units per acre) to “High-Medium Residential Mixed-Use” (up to 3.24 FAR including associated office and retail activities) for an area at 525 North Thomas Street; and identified as RPC#20-012-009.

Commissioner Hughes seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission supported the motion 8-0.

Commissioner Schroll moved that the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to the Staff Report dated October 28, 2019, to rezone the properties known as 525 North Thomas Street, 640 North Glebe Road, 624 North Glebe Road, 616 North Glebe Road, and 600 North Glebe Road (RPC# 20-012-009, -018, -019, -020, -021, and -024) from “S-D” Special Development District, “RA8-18” Multiple-family Dwelling District, “C-2” Services Commercial-Community Business District, and “C-0-2.5” Mixed Use District to “R-C” Multiple-family Dwelling and Commercial District.

Commissioner Hughes seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission supported the motion 8-0.

Commissioner Schroll moved that the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to amend Site Plan #72 to remove site area from the subject site plan; for the parcels located at 600 North Glebe Road and 525 North Thomas Street (RPC# 20-012-021, and 20-012-009), subject to the conditions of the ordinance.

Commissioner Hughes seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission supported the motion 7-0-1 with Commissioner Iacomini abstaining.

Commissioner Schroll moved that the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board adopt the attached ordinance to amend Site Plan #315 to incorporate approximately 255,939 sq. ft. of site area into the site plan; to construct approximately 3.21 FAR of retail and residential uses, with approximately 77,575 sq. ft. of retail space and approximately 732 multi-family residential units; with modifications of zoning ordinance requirements including: reduced loading, reduced parking ratios, and other modifications as necessary to achieve the proposed development plan; located at 525 North Thomas Street, 640 North Glebe Road, 624 North Glebe Road, 616 North Glebe Road, and 600 North Glebe Road (RPC# 20-012-009, -018, -019, -020, -021, and -024), subject to the conditions of the ordinance.

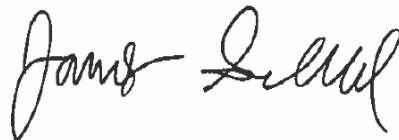
Commissioner Lantelme seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission supported the motion 6-0-2 with Commissioners Bagley and Iacomini abstaining.

Commissioner Schroll moved that the Planning Commission recommend that the County Board approve the subject use permit (SP315-19-1) for a new public open space in the "R-C" Multiple-family Dwelling and Commercial District, subject to the conditions of the staff report, with no further scheduled County Board review.

Commissioner Hughes seconded the motion.

The Planning Commission supported the motion 8-0.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Schroll". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Respectfully Submitted,

Arlington County Planning Commission
James Schroll, Chair