

City of Alexandria

Urban Design Advisory Committee

December 2018 Meeting Notes

[DRAFT-PRELIMINARY]

Wednesday, December 12, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.

City Hall, Room 1101

Date of Draft: December 31, 2018

Committee Members in Attendance:

Stephen Kulinski, Chair (SK)

Marie McKenney Tavernini, Vice Chair (MT)

Abbey Oklak, Secretary (AO)

Tom Soapes (TS)

Committee Members with an Excused Absence:

Engin Artemel (EA)

City Staff in Attendance:

Michael Swidrak (MS) P&Z

Catherine Miliaras (CM) P&Z

Stephanie Free (SF) P&Z

Applicant Team Members in Attendance:

Catharine Puskar (CP) Walsh Colucci (attorney)

Nick Aello (NA) Hord Coplan Macht (architect)

Community Members in Attendance:

Frances Zorn (FZ) Alexandria House resident

Maria Wasowski (MW) Planning Commissioner

Amy Gambill (AG) Chatham Square resident

INTRODUCTION & OLD BUSINESS

- The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:04 a.m. as the December meeting of UDAC.
- The Committee considered a draft of the notes for the October meeting. MT proposed minor changes to page 1 (header and attendance list) and changing “AO motioned” to “AO moved” on page 4. TS moved to adopt the meeting notes with the above change included, and MW seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved 4-0.

NEW BUSINESS

Third Presentation of development proposal at the WMATA Bus Barn Site (600 N. Royal Street)

Note: A fact sheet on the project is located at alexandriava.gov/69556

- CP, representing the applicant, gave an overview of the project evolution to date, noting the proposal had evolved based on input at community meetings, UDAC meetings and staff input.
- CP outlined the two refinements that had evolved since comment at the October UDAC meeting – the treatment of the garage entrance on N. Royal Street and the N. Royal Street façade.
- NA presented the redesigned garage entrance. The area of the driveway ramp open to the sky has been reduced to 20 linear feet, and the applicant enhanced the adjacent planting areas and sidewalk in order to create a more pedestrian-friendly condition. The courtyard grade was raised above the garage entrance to facilitate the revised condition.
- Regarding the Royal Street façade, NA noted that the two-story base was pulled further out toward the property line to create more depth, and the window mullion depth was increased.
- MT asked if the pulling out of the two-story base affected the sidewalk. NA responded that only a minimal amount of greenspace was affected. SF added that a 5 to 6-foot minimum depth of greenspace in front of the façade is maintained.
- TS noted that the reduction of greenspace does not look dramatic, and that he agrees with the improvement of the garage entrance treatment.
- NA noted that the window recesses are approximately 2 inches, responding to a question from SK.
- NA noted that there is no pedestrian access from the sidewalk to the garage entry, based on a question from AO.
- AO noted her support of the garage entrance improvements, including the landscape treatments and courtyard overhang.
- NA noted that there was a door over the garage, in response to a question from SK.
- SK noted his support of the podium above the garage, and that the window depth helps the N. Royal Street façade. CP added that City staff (SF and the City Architect) worked with NA on the façade improvements.

- SF noted that information on the design changes are located in the staff memo submitted to UDAC for the December meeting.
- **MT moved to endorse the project, AO seconded. The motion passed 4-0.**

Committee Elections

- MS gave a brief overview of the election process. Committee members concurred that elections should continue to be held on a yearly basis.
- **MT moved to endorse AO for Secretary, TS seconded. The motion passed 4-0.**
- **MT moved to endorse SK for Chair, TS seconded. The motion passed 4-0.**
- **MT moved to endorse TS for Vice Chair, SK seconded. The motion passed 4-0.**

Other New Business

- The Committee thanked MT for her years of service to UDAC and Old Town North (the final term of MT ends in April 2019).
- MS and the Committee discussed updates on (former and potential) development projects in Old Town North: 801 N. Fairfax Street, Transpotomac Plaza, the Holiday Inn on First Street and the Old Colony Inn.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:36 a.m.