

## **The Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC)**

November 20, 2019

7:00pm to 9:00pm

City Hall Library Conference Room

### **Committee Members in Attendance:**

Jason Albers – Chair (Architect/Potomac Yard Area Rep.)

Francisco Duran (Potomac East Rep.)

Jeremy Fretts (Architect)

Travis Herret (Potomac West Rep.)

Matthew Johnston (Landscape Architect)

Corey Faherty (Potomac West Rep.)

Peter May (National Park Service Rep.)

Kristen Nunnally (Potomac East Rep.)

### **Absent:**

Amol Vaidya (AV) (Civic Association in Potomac Yard Rep.)

2 vacancies: Potomac Yard Area Rep, Business Community Rep.

### **City Staff:**

Stephanie Free, Urban Planner, P&Z

Dirk Geratz, Principal Planner, P&Z

### **Applicant Representatives:**

Cathy Puskar, Walsh Colucci Lubeley & Walsh (JBG SMITH/Lionstone)

Ken Wire, Wire Gill LLP (Virginia Tech Foundation)

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

- Approval of minutes from October 30, 2019 PYDAC Orientation Meeting
- Staff Overview
- North Potomac Yard Phase 1 Development: Applicant presentation to introduce the concept for Phase 1 of development in North Potomac Yard
- Discussion
- Public Comment
- Next Steps (Staff)

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm. Staff provided a brief overview of the North Potomac Yard Phase I planning area and the approach for developing new design standards that PYDAC will use to review the proposed Development Special Use Permits against.

### **APPLICANT PRESENTATION**

CP began the applicant presentation by giving an overview of the site, the proposed location of the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus, and the development proposed to the south of the campus to create an “Innovation District.” KW followed by introducing the vision for the Virginia Tech Campus and the approach to develop a 300,000 square foot academic building first on block 7W,

followed by two 150,000 square foot (approximate) buildings on blocks 7E and 4 as funding permits.

## **DISCUSSION**

- KN began the discussion by asking if the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus will have its own identity or if it will appear collective with the development to the south? KW: Indicated that the Virginia Tech applicant team is currently working to define that identity while stitching the campus together with the community. He reiterated two key things Virginia Tech is striving for include serving business community and creating interactions between campus and offices. PYDAC also asked if student housing would be located within the proposed Virginia Tech buildings to which KW answered that no housing is proposed within the Virginia Tech buildings (they will be 100% academic space).
- JF relayed that at first glance the proposal is consistent with the 2017 Small Area Plan (SAP) and it's exciting. He commented that there was a lot of public interest in the revision of the Small Area Plan in 2017 with the green development and the SAP not as aggressive as some people wanted it to be and this is a real opportunity to be innovative in green building.
- PM provided several comments to the applicants:
  - 1) Landscape Design: PM asked who is doing the landscape design for the project. CP said her clients do not have the entire team on board yet; Virginia Tech representatives noted they are working with SmithGroup and Core Studio Design located in Baltimore on landscape design of the campus buildings. PM stressed the importance of including landscape architects at the beginning of a project, especially for the extension of Potomac Yard Park.
  - 2) Parking underground: PM asked if the underground parking is shared between uses. CP: still working through parking requirements but parking will be connected. PM: very important because it effects how people are going in and out of buildings.
  - 3) Loading: PM asked if loading is planned at-grade or below grade. CP indicated that it is currently at grade and KW noted that the teams are looking at both above and below grade loading. PM emphasized the opportunity to build below-grade loading to provide a better and safer environment for pedestrians. He noted that even if loading is at grade, that being able to pull in and pull out straight is a huge improvement on pedestrian realm.
  - 4) Stormwater requirements: PM asked what the stormwater requirements are and how they will be met. CP noted the stormwater management will be integrated with sustainability requirements. PM noted that with a development of this scale, the ability to retain stormwater is difficult and it would be undesirable to use the park as the retention system. CP noted that two existing stormwater ponds will be removed with this development and the teams are working through the details of stormwater management currently to provide a district-wide strategy. PM indicated that it is important to acknowledge these things at this stage because they influence design.

- 5) LEED Silver: PM asked if there is any intention of the applicants to achieve more than the minimum requirements for LEED Silver. KW indicated that Virginia Tech is willing to stretch the limits but there are a lot of moving parts right now that need to be settled before getting to that determination.
- MJ asked the applicants to further describe the phasing of the Virginia Tech buildings? KW indicated that some combination of open space and parking will be provided during the interim until all three buildings are built. Virginia Tech representatives indicated that they are very dedicated to appearance of campus even with the first building. CP indicated that the hope is for JBG SMITH to build their buildings all at once (continual construction). They anticipate that the energy and excitement over Virginia Tech will steadily and gradually fill their buildings.
- JF asked staff if there are discussions about removing the second pond to the south? CP noted that the City does not own the pond and it is owned by the homeowner's association in the southern portion of Potomac Yard. Staff explained that the City may look into options to remove it.
- KN ask about the proposed Virginia Tech curriculum. Virginia Tech representatives described that higher education was a compelling part of the proposal to draw HQ2 and the tech talent pipeline is separate initiative from the bid. Degree production versus enrollment in computer science and computer engineering to meet demand in market and the environment in Arlington and Alexandria is the priority. The may also be opportunities for internships for some undergraduate students. Policy and ethics will also have functions at the Innovation Campus.
- PM asked the applicants what PYDAC can expect to see in January? CP noted that the materials are to be determined because the design teams are being created currently. PM expressed interested in seeing massings of buildings as a 3D model at the next meeting.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- One Alexandria resident was present. She expressed that her hope is for the City to be transparent about differences in the proposal versus the 2017 SAP. CP explained this PYDAC meeting is the third of three public meetings held in the last 10 days and the applicants provided a comparison of the changes at a community meeting on November 14 that was well attended and at a Planning Commission/City Council work session on November 12. KW also reiterated that all materials are on the City webpage and a City eNews is published in advance of public meetings and when materials are posted to the webpage. The resident noted that she had trouble finding the webpage and also does not always have time to read the eNews.
- CP ran through the community meeting presentation with the comparisons slides that show the changes to the 2017 SAP.
- The resident also asked the applicants to provide more detail on the timeline of the approvals. CP noted that the CDD Amendments, Master Plan Amendments, Subdivision,

Design Guidelines, and Preliminary Infrastructure Plan are planned for public hearing in the Spring of 2020. The DSUPs will follow in the fall of 2020.

- The resident also noted she was glad the ACPS site is being moved but not forgotten. She inquired about the need for open space on the school site and it is a disadvantage that the school is moving further from the extended Potomac Yard Park. CP noted that outdoor space on the school site will be up to ACPS and she is not able to speak to those intentions.

### **NEXT STEPS**

- Future Plan Submissions
- Community Meeting #2 in January (TBD)
- Next PYDAC Meeting January 15 at 7pm in City Hall Room 1101

*Meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:01 p.m.*