

**QUESTIONS FROM THE WATERFRONT
PLAN WORK GROUP
WITH RESPONSES FROM STAFF
(11.30.2011)**

Attached are answers to several outstanding questions by Waterfront Plan Work Group member. They include:

1. Legal status of plan document and zoning text amendments.
2. What form will the WPWG report take – will it include a new draft Waterfront Plan with all of the proposed revisions?
3. Levels of underground parking at selected Alexandria hotels
4. Map of existing buildings showing what would not be allowed under the proposed Waterfront Small Area Plan (i.e., The Strand building).

Question 1: Legal status of plan document and zoning text amendments.

As a member of the Waterfront Plan Work Group, I am writing to inquire as to the legal status of the Waterfront Small Area Plan (WSAP) once it is adopted by Council. It is important for the Work Group members to have a clear understanding of the legal status of the WSAP prior to completing their work. In particular, which portions of the Plan will effectively serve as codified expansions of the City's zoning ordinance and therefore will be binding upon the City. For example, will the City be bound by the design guidelines in the WSAP adopted by Council? What will be the legal status of the Plan's recommendations? What Text Amendments to the W-1 Zone will the Work Group be asked to opine on? Are we going to be asked to opine on the proposed

amendments or other amendments to the W-1 Zone or to any other provisions in the zoning ordinance? (Ely)

Staff answer: The adoption of the Waterfront Plan serves as a guide for further City actions. The recommendations and design guidelines in the Plan are policy statements of the City. They do not in themselves expand or modify the zoning ordinance or have the force of law. If, on the other hand, the proposed text amendment is approved by Council as currently written, incorporating the design guidelines, those guidelines do then have legal effect within the zoning and SUP process, and become a necessary standard by which a development application is judged. As to the text amendment, the current work of the Work Group on the Plan itself will provide Council its thoughts about the text amendment. The text amendment does three things. It adds hotels as a use; it increases FAR on the development sites, and it increases height (already in the Height District map) on one parcel. These issues are part of the Group's discussion of the private realm. Thus, if the Work Group recommends against allowing a hotel on the Waterfront, that recommendation of the group would effectively be a recommendation to change the language of the text amendment. It will not be necessary for the Group to review the text amendment separately.

Question 2: What form will the WPWG report take – will it include a new draft Waterfront Plan with all of the proposed revisions?

The Work Group is in the process of revising the recommendations in the WSAP. Prior to voting on a WSAP as revised by the Work

Group, will a copy of the revised WSAP be sent to the Work Group members so that they will have sufficient time to review the revised WSAP prior to voting yea or nay on it? (Ely)

Staff answer: Our expectation is that the Work Group's report will contain all of the Work Group's recommendations and any other material the Work Group would like to include. Staff has not been anticipating that this effort would also involve production of a new draft Waterfront Plan containing the Work Group's recommended changes. This is not a small effort and doing so would delay the Work Group's completion of its task.

Question 3: Levels of underground parking in selected Alexandria hotels.

At the November 9 Waterfront Plan Work Group meeting, City staff provided data I had requested at the November 2 Work Group meeting pertaining to parking in the garages of hotels located in the Old Town area. Some of the requested data was provided on page 3 in a staff response distributed to Work Group members at the November 9 Work Group meeting. However, one piece of information that I requested for each hotel garage -- the number of parking levels in the garage -- was not provided in the table of data. I would be most appreciative if you would send to members of the Work Group the number of levels in each of the hotel garages. (Ely)

Levels of below-grade parking in selected Alexandria hotels

Marriott Residence Inn Alexandria: 3 levels

Sheraton Suites, Old Town North: 2 levels

Crowne Plaza, Old Town North: 1 level

Embassy Suites, Diagonal Road: 3 levels

Hotel Monaco: 1 level

Morrison House: 1 level

Question 4: Information and map of existing buildings showing what would not be allowed under the proposed Waterfront Small Area Plan (i.e., The Strand building).

This material is attached.