

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 8, 2020

TO: MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY COMMISSION

FROM: RICHARD LAWRENCE, AICP, PRINCIPAL PLANNER
NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

CC: JEFFREY FARNER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

SUBJECT: NORTH POTOMAC YARD ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY
MASTER PLAN (ESMP)

The draft North Potomac Yard Environmental Sustainability Master Plan (NPY ESMP) was submitted by the applicants to staff for review in compliance with the recommendations of the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan (Plan) and conditions of the Coordinated Development District (CDD19) Concept Plan. From the inception of the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan in 2010, the Plan envisioned that area to be a “complete and sustainable community”. The Vision and Plan Principles emphasize the importance of creating a sustainable community. “Sustainability” referring to the long-term environmental, economic, and social health of a community appropriately balanced to ensure success along all three sectors.

As indicated in the Plan, the fundamental goal of the Plan is for North Potomac Yard to achieve progressive and innovative strategies for sustainability in all aspects of development.” The Plan provides the framework to create a sustainable neighborhood through the incorporation of public transportation, innovation, environmentally sustainable design and practices, open spaces, a complementary mix of land uses, housing opportunities, and community amenities.

With redevelopment, North Potomac Yard will achieve neighborhood/district-wide sustainability certification such as LEED-ND Silver or comparable. The draft ESMP provides district-wide sustainability measures that will be integrated in a coordinated and comprehensive manner supporting the City’s environmental goal of new construction to be carbon neutral by 2040. These measures include, but are not limited to, green buildings, open spaces, stormwater management, energy and water efficiency, conservation measures, and use of renewable resources and emerging technologies.

The draft ESMP is a first step to realizing the vision of the Plan by providing a roadmap to achieve environmental sustainability that will be applied across the Plan area over the course of its 20+ year redevelopment. The draft ESMP is expected to be a living document; expected to be updated and revised over time with future phases of redevelopment and advancements in technologies and innovative environmental strategies. As the ESMP is revised and updated, the ESMP will be brought back to the EPC for review and endorsement.

ROLE OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY COMMISSION

The upcoming June Public Meeting will include a staff presentation to provide some context to the Commission followed by an applicant presentation of the draft ESMP. The EPC is requested to review the draft ESMP and provide comments based on compliance with the intent of the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan. It is envisioned that the June EPC meeting will be a high-level conversation, with subsequent meetings to discuss additional comments by the EPC. The comments from the EPC will ultimately be forwarded to the Planning Commission and City Council this Fall.