I. Welcome and Acknowledgements
Advisory Group Chair Maria Wasowski convened OTN SAP Advisory Group Meeting #13 reminding the Advisory Group that Staff has been developing more parts of the OTN SAP since the previous meeting in December and gathering comments on all released chapters and documents to date. She stated the purpose of the evening’s meeting is to review the released 1) Draft Urban Design Standards and Guidelines and 2) Draft Infrastructure and Sustainability Chapter. Additionally, she informed the group of Nancy William’s departure from the OTN planning effort and introduced Heba ElGawish as the project lead and main point of contact.

Advisory Group Discussion of Schedule – Staff reviewed the upcoming schedule outline to the Advisory Group. The schedule will be a working draft to include tentative release dates between March and April for the remaining three draft chapters of the OTN SAP Update: (1) Transportation Chapter, (2) Planning, Land Use and Design Chapter, and (3) Implementation Chapter:

Tentative Schedule:
- **Late March/Early April 2017 Advisory Group Meeting #14** – Anticipated release of the Draft Transportation Chapter and the draft Planning, Land Use and Design Chapter
- **April 13, 2017 Community Meeting** – Anticipated release of the Draft Implementation Chapter and the combined OTN SAP Update Plan for a 45 Day Public Comment Period.
- **April 27, 2017 Advisory Group Meeting #15** – Anticipated Advisory Group discussion of potential mitigation under the Transportation Study
- **April 2017** – Anticipated Planning Commission and City Council Work Sessions
- **June 2017** – Anticipated Planning Commission and City Council Public Hearings

The Advisory Group and the public will continue to have the chance to share their comments on the draft chapters released to-date as well as future draft chapters to be released. Comments on the draft chapters may be submitted using the following: 1) **Old Town North Comment Board**; 2) **AlexEngage**; 3) **Email Heba ElGawish, Urban Planner, Planning and Zoning** 4) Advisory Group Meetings; and 4) Community Meetings.

II. Draft Urban Design Standards and Guidelines Presentation
Staff shared a presentation outlining the intent of the Draft Urban Design Standards and Guidelines (UDG’s) with an overview of each Chapter and how it relates to goals and recommendations of the OTN SAP.
Question: Will we have time to meet again and review the transportation study after the Transportation and Planning, Land Use and Design Chapters have been released?

Response: The Transportation Chapter is anticipated to be released in late March/early April. We will also have a chance to review the Transportation Study and proposed mitigation strategies at the 15th Advisory Group meeting scheduled for late April. We can identify an additional meeting if there is a need to schedule for further discussion of the Transportation Study.

Question: What is the provenance of the Urban Design topic? I do not remember a specific discussion on this topic?

Response: The Draft UDG is an update to the 1994 Urban Design Guidelines that were developed subsequent to the 1992 OTN SAP. The updated UDG’s reflect current design best practices and implement the vision, objectives, and recommendations of the OTN SAP Update.

Question: Why are there two different references to Sustainability? One of these titles should be slightly different from the other so as to lessen confusion.

Response: There is an Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability Chapter which will be part of the OTN SAP and includes the objectives and recommendations for Sustainability in the Plan area. The UDG’s document also includes a Sustainability Chapter which provides guidelines to incorporate sustainable elements into the site and building design.

Comment: It is very important to recognize that the guidelines are not absolute and that these guidelines offer a good visual guidance for proposed development in OTN.

Question: How do these UDG’s work with the Washington Street Guidelines and Standards?

Response: Everything located within the blue boundary (OHAD boundary) is not subject to these guidelines because the BAR has very specific standards for building massing and character, but the streetscape guidelines within this document do apply to the ground plane of George Washington Memorial Parkway.

Comment: Page 45 – We welcome the telecommunications wireless antennae and feel camouflage and/or screening of infrastructure for wireless broadband service will make it look unobtrusive. Can we make edits to this effect?

Response: Yes.

Question: Page 25 – Does the Retail Frontage requirement on Montgomery Street constrain pedestrian or biking movement?

Response: Ground floor retail uses promote a safe and inviting place for pedestrians and cyclists and offer a safe connection to/from the Metro station by having more eyes on the street.

Comment: Pg. 52 – In addition to green roofs, solar roofs should be an option.

Response: We can include a guideline for solar roofs.

Comment: There should be more thought given to lighting at night with regard to the intensity of light around residential areas compared to bike paths.
**Comment:** Massing and Heights have typically been a big topic of discussion at the Urban Design Advisory Committee’s (UDAC) review of projects. **Response:** Building Floor Area Ration (FAR) and heights will addressed under the OTN SAP Planning, Land Use, and Design Chapter The UDG’s focus on the allocation of the building massing.

**Comment:** What a great effort. There should be more guidance in the Site Design and/or Building Design sections for Service and Truck Loading. There is very little attention on what it takes for street trees to reach maturity - there needs to be consideration for soil volume. There should also be more emphasis on building massing and it should extend to buildings on Washington Street. Typically BAR primarily focuses on the architectural merit of the building but not so much massing and other urban design issues.

**Comment:** The 1994 Design Guidelines do not include the word “standards” in the title. Maybe everything should be guidelines because it is difficult to decipher between what can and cannot be done and, as it is written now, there are some contradictions. **Response:** Standards are meant to be more stringent while guidelines are strongly encouraged. We cannot anticipate all circumstances so the UDG’s are structured to guide review of development projects.

**Comment:** Balance is achieved during the development process. There should be a note placed at the beginning of the document about flexibility.

**Question:** Principles – where do these fall between standards and guidelines? While projects will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, people who live in the community may still be concerned if there are no standards. Standards can provide surety and a sense of place. **Response:** Principles describe the intent for each subarea to maintain and enhance its character.

**Comment:** There needs to be effort put toward determining the difference between standards and guidelines. There are contradictions built into this document; there is a standard to use the highest quality materials but it also requires affordable housing, which is an inherent contradiction.

**Comment:** We are trying to get the best of both worlds with this document… This document, as guidelines, sets up for achieving as much of what is desired as possible.

**Comment:** The Eisenhower West Plan has less pages total than the entire UDG’s. We need to keep these as guidelines only.

**Question:** Are there UDG’s in other SAP’s? And if so, how have they worked? This may give us a point of reference. **Response:** In the past 10 years, the SAP’s have gone both ways. We understand there are unforeseen circumstances with some sites and not all standards and guidelines can be met. The document acknowledges that modifications to the standards and/or guidelines may be necessary based on a site/building’s context and circumstances.

**Comment:** Some things need to be standardized like light poles and other City standard fixtures.
Comment: There is no way to give specificity to the power plant site. Developers need to know what they can do and having too many standards may discourage development.

Comment: I suggest we pair down the standards and have mostly guidelines.

Comment: We should be able to keep most of the standards as some are generic enough (e.g. Pg. 82: Site Design)

Comment: Zoning should focus on the details and the master plan should be guided by the hopes instilled in the guidelines, not be absolutes.

Comment: Pg. 77 standards are general and we should not lose those.

Comment: The community needs to be informed of the distinction between Guidelines and Standards at the beginning of the document. Response: Section “1.3: Use of Old Town North Design Standards and Guidelines” includes a definition and how standards vs guidelines are applied. We can make that language more clear and visible.

Comment: The Advisory Group also has a role to go out to community groups and make sure people know about and read the chapters and documents that are being released.

Comment: I ask the group to consider the Vision Zero initiative when the streets are laid out. There is a benchmark opportunity to lead the way on this initiative in OTN. Walkability is key in being competitive and marketable.

Comment: I feel uncomfortable walking by the dog park and suggest more lighting. Response: There are plans to redevelop the park and if there are any other issues, you may try Call – Click – Connect to report any issues.

CONSENSUS: Staff will go over the document to make sure that Standards are used in a strategic way with preference to Guidelines to provide for flexibility.

III. Draft Infrastructure and Sustainability Chapter Presentation
City Staff presented an overview of the Infrastructure and Sustainability chapter that will be part of the OTN SAP document. The presentation outlined the key sustainability priorities included in the Chapter which are:

1. Air Quality: Combined Sewer System;
2. Air Quality: Stormwater Management and Green Infrastructure;
3. Energy and Green Building; and

Staff also gave an update on the status of the State legislation that is proposed to accelerate the construction of future infrastructure, likely to be storage tanks and/or tunnels, at the four existing Combined Sewer Outfalls (CSO) in the City of Alexandria.
**Question #1:** While I agree with the goals of this section, requiring the power plant site to comply with LEED is an imposition to the property owner, and I don’t believe the City has the authority to require that of them. Is the point to encourage a LEED ND Silver certification as the development process starts? Additionally, it seems that the power plant site is outside of the area that impacts the overflow system? **Response:** Yes, while the power plant site is outside of the combined sewershed, given the size of redevelopment anticipated on that site, it has the potential to generate flows that are large enough, even if it gets to the separated pipe, it would displace other flows in the combined sewer system from getting into the separated pipe.

**Comment:** These are laudable goals and NRG has made efforts to be more sustainable, so we should encourage, not require, their compliance.

**Comment:** Living and working in the same place was a major part of the 1972 Plan which called for a mix of land uses. Mixed-use development encourages walkability and the use of transit over single occupancy vehicles.

**Question:** Is telecommuting a good way to get people to drive less? **Response:** Absolutely. The City encourages telecommuting and using public transportation. If a transportation Special Use Permit (SUP) is required of the development, the City will work with the developer to incorporate such measures.

**Comment:** I had not heard news of the legislation or those bills passing (in regards to the timing of the CSO). **Response:** Separate bills passed unanimously on both sides of the House and the Senate with respect to the City having to address its combined sewer system sooner. When the bills switched over, they substituted language. The House and the Senate couldn’t come to an agreement on the bill. The bill is going to a conference committee with members from the House and Senate to work it out. The expectation is that they will come to some sort of compromise at this committee.

**Comment:** As a member of City Environmental Policy Commission, we are unhappy about this legislation moving forward as it can potentially take away funding from other environmental priorities. The local Sierra Club expressed concern over that legislature as well, because the City is already busy dealing with the other three outfalls. Doing all four at once will cause a financial burden on the City. Additionally, the City also needs to deal with the effects of Climate Change and the longevity of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emitted from cars. It would be a shame to be forced by this Virginia Legislature to pool all the City’s resources and efforts into addressing the outfalls now and ignore the mitigation measures needed to address GHG emissions.

**Comment:** My neighbors were unaware of the combined sewers or the arsenic plant across the street that is finally getting cleaned. A lot of people are concerned that Oronoco Bay is becoming shallower and is going to become a cesspool and attributing some of their serious illnesses to that area.

**Question:** The Green Building Policy of 2009 recognizes LEED Silver for commercial buildings and LEED Certified for residential and as the years have gone by, those standards have gotten
more stringent. I have clients that thought they were getting LEED Gold, filed and actually only qualified for Silver. Are we intending to have a different standard in this SAP? We made decisions in every other plan to follow the Green Building Policy, which changes and evolves. Are we diverging from that thought process now? Response: This is an open question that the City encourages the group to think about. The language right now is consistent with the existing Green Building Policy. We identified some community priorities, like stormwater management and energy consumption/ reducing carbon footprint, so a project can gain an extra point with LEED for meeting local priorities. This is something the City is thinking about in the next iteration of the Green Building Policy, but as it’s written right now, it asks development to be consistent with the policy as adopted or the EAP, if it gets more stringent.

Comment: I’m a Sierra Club member and concerned that the City allows children and youth to recreate in Oronoco Bay. The Potomac River is our front yard, and I don’t think we should be dumping our waste in there at any time. This is a serious issue. Response: The City has developed plans to address the CSO system and it is a priority to the City. Even if the outfalls in the City of Alexandria are removed, it is still not advisable for a child to play in the Potomac River. Not only does the City of Alexandria have combined sewers, but the District of Columbia does as well. A significant amount of the bacteria in Oronoco Bay is not coming from the CSO. Stormwater street runoff, pet waste and wildlife contribute to the majority of the bacteria found in the River. Even when there is not overflow at the outfall, the Potomac River exceeds the bacteria water quality standard on a regular basis. All the contribution to bacteria from the Virginia side, including the CSO, is less than 2% of the bacteria load.

Comment: The City had a plan to reduce the amount of impacts through addressing the other three outfalls which the City was required by the State to address, and then for the Pendleton Outfall (CSO-001), the City was recommending to do aggressive sewer as redevelopment occurs, potential City separation as well as green infrastructure systems. If the bill passes in the legislature, the City will be required to address all four outfalls simultaneously, therefore some of the strategies that the City had in the CSS Long Term Control Plan may change.

Comment: Three members of the AG will not be in attendance at the March 30th meeting because it is Spring Break. Response: Staff will follow-up with an alternative date and confirm the date of the next meeting with the Advisory Group and the Public.

Comment: Five days is not enough time to read all the material released. Response: Staff will get the Transportation and Land Use Chapters out as soon as possible but will be no less than five days in advance of the meeting.

Comment: For future meetings, please rearrange the AG group in a U-shape rather than a straight line. Response: Staff agrees and will accommodate such request at the next meeting.
Advisory Group Attendance
Maria Wasowski
Engin Artemel
Anna Bentley
Scott Barstow
Elizabth Chimento
Slade Elkins
Austin Flajser
Mary Catherine Gibbs
Stephen Goodman
Carolyn Griffin
Kevin Harris
Bruce Machanic
Carlos Mejias
Jesse O’Connell
Thomas F. Soapes
David Speck
Marie McKenney Tavernini
Christa Watters