

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: AUGUST 31, 2020

TO: GLORIA SITTON
OFFICE OF CITY CLERK AND CLERK OF COUNCIL

FROM: KARL W. MORITZ, DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING *Karl Moritz*

SUBJECT: FY 2020 CARLYLE/EISENHOWER EAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD (DRB)
ANNUAL REPORT

I am pleased to present this annual report for the Carlyle/Eisenhower East Design Review Board (hereafter the “DRB”) for fiscal year 2020 (hereafter “FY 2020”), as required by City Code Section 2-4-7(i)(1). The DRB is comprised of two design professionals (architects Roger Lewis and Lee Quill), a City Manager designee (City Architect, Tom Canfield), a City Council Representative (Redella S. Pepper), and a citizen member (Allyn Lynch). The primary role of the DRB is to review development applications within the Carlyle and Eisenhower East areas of the City. The DRB also provides design guidance to staff and makes formal recommendations to the Alexandria Planning Commission. The DRB is scheduled to meet every other month, but only if there is a project to review. Extra meetings may be scheduled on a case-by-case basis.

The DRB held four (4) individual meetings during FY 2020 and presented on the same number of individual projects – all of which were in various phases of the planning process. The fiscal year was also punctuated by the on-going Covid-19 global pandemic, which brought about electronic public meetings – a first for the City of Alexandria. The projects discussed during FY 2020 are more expounded upon below:

- a. Block P – 765 John Carlyle; b. Block 15A – the WMATA Office Building; c. “Hoffman” Blocks 4-5 – West Tower; and d. the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan Update.

On **June 22, 2020**, the DRB unanimously approved the concept submission for the north tower and podium at 765 John Carlyle. This project was previously heard by the DRB during 2006 and 2007, receiving approval for the Design Concept in May 2007. Additional approvals were obtained in July and September 2007, for final design of materials with conditions, and for treatment of parking garage and building top accordingly. The project as proposed consists of the entire Block P development site within the Carlyle District and includes two mixed-use towers conjoined by a common podium. The approximately 140’ northern office tower received approval for its general massing, façade and height. The DRB indicated that the north tower may receive final approval upon successfully addressing screening treatments for the podium level

garage – which wraps the building from the 2nd through the 5th level. The DRB also requested finessing of the arcade, which bridges the two towers at the podium level. The southern, senior living, tower was introduced to the board as a pre-concept submission – thus receiving no formal vote by the board. Nevertheless, the board was pleased with the design approach of the pre-conceptual southern tower and encouraged the applicant to submit for an end of summer review.

On **November 21, 2019** all five members of the board convened for an informational presentation by P&Z Deputy Director Jeff Farner on the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (hereafter “EESAP.”) While the board did not provide a vote on the EESAP itself, they did weigh in on plan’s approach towards affordable housing, parking (location and future convertibility), building heights and general flexibility in land uses.

On **September 26, 2019** the DRB voted unanimously (4-0, Pepper absent) to approve the final landscaping and signage plans for the WMATA Office Tower, a 14-story office tower with above grade parking. The September board meeting was the 4th and final review of the proposed office tower and focused primarily on the minor revisions to a hardscape material choice, as well as screening techniques for mechanical equipment.

On **July 18, 2019,** the board convened – with new Citizen Member Allyn Lynch – to vote on final design changes to Blocks 4 & 5, the Hoffman Town Center. The Applicant was requesting a programmatic change from condominium to multi-family rental. The Hoffman Town Center project is a multi-phased, mixed-use development, consistently primarily of three residential towers conjoined by a common podium with street-oriented retail. The architectural and programmatic changes were approved by a vote of 3-0 (Pepper absent) on the condition that the Applicant make specific changes to the ground level façade that closely reflected the originally approved design. The Applicant agreed to the recommendations of the board and conceded to working more closely with City Staff on making these revisions.

On the same evening, the board also gave final approved, by a vote of 3-0 (Pepper absent) to the general massing and design of the WMATA Office Tower. This project is unique in that City Council delegated DRB full control over the development approval process. DRB’s approval also included the materiality and building palette of the 14-story office tower, which is located just north of the Hoffman Town Center development site. The building will measure approximately 200’ in height, with active programming on the greened roof-deck. The office tower will also sit atop of podium of structured parking. The board agreed that this design approach requires attention to detail, in order to avoid creating two conflicting architectural languages across the building. Upon approval, the board asked that the Applicant work with staff to make adjustments to the “belt” of structured parking that runs through the building’s base for the above reasons. Due to timing, the board decided that the Applicant shall use the next meeting to present on the signage and landscaping.

DRB attendance for FY 2020 is summarized in the below table.

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS
MEETINGS ATTENDANCE REPORT**

JULY 1, 2019 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2020

COMMISSION: Carlyle/ Eisenhower East Design Review Board (DRB)

CHAIRPERSON: N/A

MEMBER'S NAME	2019						2020					
	July 18	Aug	Sept 26	Oct	Nov 21	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun 22
Vacant	--	-	--	-	--	-	-	-	-	-	-	--
Tom Canfield	X	-	X	--	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Alan Lynch	--	- - / -	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Redella S. Pepper	U	-	E	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Roger Lewis	X	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Lee Quill	X	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	X

INDICATE: X FOR PRESENT, E FOR EXCUSED, U FOR UNEXCUSED

- - FOR NO MEETING, - - - FOR NOT APPOINTED, * - FOR APPOINTMENT EXPIRED

LIST OF THOSE WHO DID NOT ATTEND 75% OF MEETINGS:

- None

APPROVED

Karl Moritz

Karl W. Moritz, Director, Department of Planning & Zoning