

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: AUGUST 24, 2018

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

THRU: KARL W. MORITZ, DIRECTOR  
PLANNING & ZONING

FROM: JASON ALBERS, CHAIR  
POTOMAC YARD DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: POTOMAC YARD DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PYDAC)  
FISCAL YEAR 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

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I am pleased to submit this Annual Report for the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC) for Fiscal Year 2018, as required by City Code Section 2-4-7(i)(l). PYDAC is comprised of nine members, each permitted to serve two year terms. Membership of PYDAC includes the following:

- Two Members Representing the Potomac West Area
- Two Members Representing the Potomac East Area (Northeast and Inner City)
- Two Members Representing the Potomac Yard Area
- One Member Representing the Business Community
- Two Qualified Professionals Skilled in Architecture

PYDAC reviews applications for development within the planned community of Potomac Yard. PYDAC provides guidance to staff and makes formal recommendations to the Planning Commission on new development proposals as well as amendments to previously approved projects. PYDAC is scheduled to meet every month, but only meets if there is a project to review. Additionally, extra meetings may be scheduled as needed.

Compared to the prior fiscal year, FY2018 was relatively active for PYDAC. Five (5) meetings were held in FY2018.

At the September 20, 2017 meeting, PYDAC reviewed the Landbay H/I East Multifamily Proposal at 2551 Main Line Boulevard, first presented in April 2017. The project would feature two L-shaped multifamily residential buildings measuring six stories at 69.5 and 70 feet in height, with a two-level, below-grade parking garage accessible from Watson Street containing 207 spaces. The project would include a total of 140 units. In response to previous comments,

changes to the building design included adjustments to colors and base height, enhancement of the front entrances, and adjustments to the cornice to decrease the visual appearance of the top floor height. The applicant also noted architectural adjustments and the removal of top floor units so that portions of the building would step back and better transition with the townhomes on Watson Street. Committee members had comments regarding the scale of the top floor, which some felt was too heavy despite some modifications. Other site, operational, and architectural details were raised and discussed by the Committee and members of the public. PDAC voted 5-0 in support of the project, with recommendations for modifications of building materials and a plan to address concerns regarding move-in staging and package delivery.

On January 24, 2018, the applicant presented a 117,076 square foot, 7-story office building proposal for the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) at Landbay G, Block A1. This project is directly adjacent to the National Industries or the Blind (NIB) office building planned on Block A2. The project would include a public plaza on approximately one-third of the site. Staff recommendations concerned creating a stronger corner entry, using architectural treatments to reinforce the curved street geometry of the site, and studying ways to further accentuate the stair tower element. The committee found the plaza favorable, but had questions about design, maintenance, and materials. Committee discussion concerned the lack of retail, not necessarily pertaining to this site specifically, but to north Potomac Yard generally. Staff had additional recommendations concerning materials selection and concluded that the project was in general conformance with the Potomac Yard Design Guidelines, but the Committee should have another opportunity to review the project after concerns were addressed.

The committee met again on April 18, 2018 to review the APTA proposal. The Staff Report noted positive refinements to the entry portal creating a complement to the adjacent NIB building. Refinements to the stair tower and materials selection were also noted. The applicant noted changes to the stair tower to encourage use of the stairs and to celebrate movement, which was noted as a physical and design interpretation of APTA's core mission. The committee voted 6-0 to recommend that the Planning Commission approve the project, with a caveat that a sample of the "granitex" material be provided to the Planning Commission for evaluation.

At the meeting of May 16, 2018, the committee reviewed proposed amendments to the National Industries for the Blind (NIB) DSUP pertaining to a seven (7) foot increase in the approved building height, and a parking reduction for the professional office and retail uses pursuant to the new City parking regulations. The project is located at 3000 Potomac Avenue on Landbay G. Staff supported the height increase, necessitated by an error discovered during construction, but found that the change did not alter the original design concept. The parking change resulted in the loss of one (1) space and complies with city standards, but varies from what was originally approved. A quorum was not available, but members in attendance concurred with Staff's analysis and submitted a memo to the Planning Commission indicating support. At the request of the Committee, Staff from the Department of Project Implementation also provided updates regarding the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station project.

On June 27, 2018 the committee reviewed a proposal on Landbay H at 2606 Main Line Boulevard. Silverstone Senior Living is proposing to construct two (2) buildings on the 2.01 acre site. One 9-story structure located on the southern part of the site would have 186 units for

assisted living/memory care plus retail space, and another 8-story structure on the northern part of the site would have 136 units for assisted living/independent living. Both buildings would be served by two levels of below-grade parking sharing a common access point. Staff and the applicant noted the two buildings were functionally separate, but the designs were intended to be different yet complimentary to one another. It was further noted that the buildings have an additional challenge of acting as transitions between the adjacent blocks which have different contexts and functions. While the site was originally planned for office uses, members of the Committee thought the proposed change in use appropriate given the need for senior housing in the city. The Committee and the Applicant discussed how City affordable housing policies may apply to this project, and additionally discussed amenities and unique building program issues among different types of senior housing projects. Staff noted that the project was still in the conceptual design phase, and it was anticipated that the applicant would return before PYDAC again sometime in the Fall of 2018 with a revised submission.

Board attendance was as summarized in the attached table. Two (2) PYDAC members had terms which expired Fiscal Year 2018 which are currently unfilled. These include one representative from the business community, and one from Potomac West. Four (4) of the current appointment terms will expire in Fiscal Year 2019.

Attachment: Attendance Form

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

**JULY 1, 2017 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2018**

**COMMISSION:** Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee

**CHAIRPERSON:** Jason Albers

MEMBER'S NAME	2017						2018					
	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Jason Albers – Chair	--	--	X	--	--	--	X	--	--	X	E	X
Jeremy Fretts	--	--	X	--	--	--	X	--	--	X	X	E
Anthony Istrico	--	--	X	--	--	--	E	--	--	X	E	X
Jorianne Jernberg	--	--	E	--	--	--	X	--	--	X	X	X
Matthew Johnston	--	--	E	--	--	--	X	--	--	E	U	X
Nicholas Jordan	--	--	E	--	--	--	E	--	--	*	*	*
Francisco Duran	--	--	X	--	--	--	X	--	--	E	E	U
Elizabeth Wrightson	--	--	E	--	--	--	E	--	--	X	E	*
Timothy J Casey Jr.	--	--	X	--	--	--	X	--	--	X	X	X

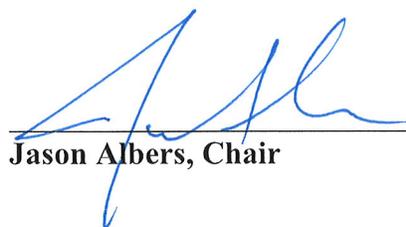
**INDICATE: X - FOR PRESENT E - FOR EXCUSED U - FOR UNEXCUSED**

\* APPOINTMENT EXPIRED

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

Anthony Istrico  
Matthew Johnston  
Nicholas Jordan  
Francisco Duran  
Elizabeth Wrightson

**APPROVED:**




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**Jason Albers, Chair**