



**DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION, PARKS  
AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES**

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James B. Spengler  
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June 6, 2016

Mayor Allison Silberberg  
Vice Mayor Justin M. Wilson  
Councilman Willie F. Bailey, Sr.  
Councilman John Taylor Chapman  
Councilman Timothy B. Lovain  
Councilwoman Redella S. Pepper  
Councilman Paul C. Smedberg

Re: Potomac Yard Metro

CC: City of Alexandria Planning Commission

Dear Mayor Silberberg, City Council Members, Members of the Planning Commission:

The Park and Recreation Commission writes in support of the Special Use Permit applications related to the Potomac Yard Metro Station.

The Commission has had monthly updates throughout the planning process from the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RPCA). In May, the Commission held an additional public hearing on the Metro project specific to the SUPs and voted unanimously to support the applications.

Actively participating in the design process, the Commission raised several issues with that we believe are adequately addressed by the plans and the SUP conditions.

First, the Commission made clear that parkland should not be used for parking, bus stops, or kiss and ride features. We are pleased to see provisions to this effect remain in the SUP conditions. Potomac Yard Park is a well-loved and active park and should remain so.

Second, the Commission believes the Potomac Yard bicycle and pedestrian trail is a key element for the success of the Metro station. It is critical that residents and visitors be able to safely walk and bike to and from the station. To that end, the Commission consistently called for adequate bicycle parking. We are pleased that the design provides for significant bicycle parking. Although not in the current plans, the Commission expects to see bicycle share stations in the future as the city continues to work with Capital Bike Share. We do have some concern about the regulation of bicycle and pedestrian cross-traffic where the metro entrance and the trail intersect but have confidence that any issues will be worked out as the project moves forward.

Third, the Commission requested that entrances to the station be designed so that they are consistent with and seamless with the character and use of the surrounding park. We believe that the design process resulted in appropriately designed entrances that mesh well with the two parks: Potomac Yard Park and Potomac Greens Park.

Fourth, the Commission asked that every effort be made to ensure that both Potomac Greens Park and Potomac Yard Park remain safe and accessible throughout the construction phase to the extent possible. We asked that if areas of the parks must be made inaccessible for safety reasons, the time of inaccessibility should be as limited as possible and adequate communication regarding alternatives be made to the public. We are satisfied that these concerns are addressed by the SUP conditions. We are pleased that the Potomac Greens playground will be relocated so those who wish to use it may do so. We are also pleased that to the extent the pedestrian and bicycle trail becomes unusable, well-communicated detours will be provided.

Finally, we note that we have consistently expressed concern about park maintenance both during construction and once the metro is open. We are pleased to see maintenance addressed in the SUP conditions. The increased use of park facilities that come with the metro station will result in the need for significant additional maintenance including the need for additional trash pick-up, among other things, and trust that you are aware of this issue in your consideration of the project.

We applaud RPCA and all who participated in the design and planning process for this project. We urge you to approve the Special Use Permits so that this worthy project may go forward.

Sincerely yours,

Jennifer Atkins, Chair, on behalf of the

Park and Recreation Commission