



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING, HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

Planning Division

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MEMORANDUM

TO: PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: Peter Schulz and Matt Mattauszek DATE: July 15, 2019

SUBJECT: Pentagon City Phased Development Site Plan and Mater Transportation Plan amendments related to Metropolitan Park

Subject

This memo summarizes and provides background information on the application for an amendment to the Phased Development Site Plan (PDSP) for Pentagon City (SP #105), and a Master Transportation Plan (MTP) amendment, as it relates to Parcel 3, also known as Metropolitan Park. These applications have been filed in association with final site plan applications to permit the construction of two new office buildings in lieu of three residential buildings for Metropolitan Park Phases 6-8.

Summary of PDSP Amendment Application

The applicant, JBGSmith, is requesting three (3) changes to the Pentagon City Phased Development Site Plan (PDSP). All changes proposed are for the development of the last phases (Phases 6, and a combined Phase 7 and 8) for Parcel 3 of the Pentagon City PDSP, also known as Metropolitan Park:

1. Change the principal use from residential to office, with ground floor retail;
2. Alter the PDSP height regulations to permit two additional office buildings of up to 22 stories;
3. Delete 1,403 unbuilt dwelling units that are allocated to Parcel 3 (Metropolitan Park) and allocate approximately 2,082,566 square feet of office use and 44,051 square feet of additional retail use to Parcel 3 (Metropolitan Park).

In addition to the PDSP amendment requests, the applicant is also requesting a Master Transportation Plan (MTP) amendment to revise the internal street network within Parcel 3

(Metropolitan Park) by deleting a portion of 14th Road S., which was intended to be an internal service road for Phases 7 and 8.



Figure 1--Pentagon City PDSP and Pentagon Centre

Location: 1400 S. Eads Street and 501 15th Street South

Site Size: Approximately 6 acres (Phases 6 & 7/8).

Zoning: C-O-2.5, Mixed-Use District

General Land Use Plan (GLUP) designation: $\frac{3}{4}$ "High-Medium" Residential and $\frac{1}{4}$ "Medium" Office-Apartment-Hotel and designated a "Coordinated Development District" (GLUP Note 4).

Background



Figure 2—Pentagon City PDSP and the division into development parcels

The Pentagon City Phased Development Site Plan (PDSP), originally adopted in 1976, is the general plan for land uses, density, public facilities, transportation, and utilities for an approximately 116-acre area around the Pentagon City Metro Station. The intent of the PDSP is to

guide future development proposals and approvals for sites within the PDSP. The PDSP divides up the Pentagon City PDSP area into several parcels, and allocates uses, densities, and building heights among the various parcels. The 1976 Pentagon City Master Development Plan termed Pentagon City a “new town-in-town” and called for “[a] desirable mix of land uses ...should include office, hotel, residential and commercial uses to create a convenient live-work-shop relationship and to ensure a twenty-four-hour vitality in the new community.” Furthermore, “[h]ighest densities, including office buildings, commercial uses and hotels, should be in the north and east of the site...”

The PDSP has been [amended numerous times](#) over the past 43 years to shift uses and densities around the site and to amend parcel boundaries (see link for history). The subject site is located in Parcel 3. This parcel was occupied by warehouses constructed in the 1950s. Density allocation for Parcel 3 was amended to eventually include 3,212 dwelling units and 100,000 square feet of retail use. In 2004, development of Parcel 3 began, and the 16-acre site was rebranded as “Metropolitan Park”.

The [Metropolitan Park Design Guidelines](#), originally developed in 2004 and amended with each phase of development, is a document intended to “establish standards for streets, buildings, open space and landscaping to ensure quality and consistency as development proceeds over time” in the Metropolitan Park parcel. The *Design Guidelines* were not adopted by the County Board in their

entirety rather, they have been adopted in components with each final site plan as they pertain to that phase. Regardless, they have provided development guidance for the subsequent buildout of Metropolitan Park. The *Design Guidelines* anticipated that Metropolitan Park would be developed as a purely residential use, with at least some buildings with ground floor retail, in 8 phases. Five of the phases have been constructed in four buildings (Metropolitan Park Phases 4 & 5 were combined into one building, now known as the Bartlett). The *Design Guidelines* recommend that “three tall buildings in the project core” of up to 22 stories fronting on South Eads Street will “anchor the site and compliment [sic] existing development to the east.” The *Design Guidelines* also make recommendations for a new street network and a public park internal to the block, which would develop over time in phases.

Condition #2¹ of the PDSP regulates the uses and allocation of densities to the various parcels. Although the 1976 PDSP approval anticipated office development on this parcel along with retail and residential, through actions of the County Board over the decades, the Metropolitan Park block (Parcel 3), was allocated a total of 3,212 residential dwelling units and 100,000 square feet of retail density and no office uses. Currently, 1,809 of the allocated dwelling units have been constructed in 4 buildings, and 76,936 square feet of retail.

Table 1

Use	Total Density Allocated to Parcel 3	Built Density (does not include Met Park 6 as approved in 2016)	Remaining Density
Residential (units)	3,212	1,809	1,403
Retail (square feet)	100,000	76,936	23,064

Condition #54² currently permits up to six residential or hotel buildings and two office buildings (in Pen Place) to have heights of up to 22 stories in the Pentagon City PDSP.

The area controlled under the Pentagon City PDSP area is a part of the much larger Pentagon City Metro Station Area as defined on the [General Land Use Plan Map](#), which also includes the Pentagon Centre Phased Development Site Plan and the River House Apartments.

¹ The existing text of Condition #1 is found in Appendix A.

² The existing text of Condition #1 is found in Appendix A.

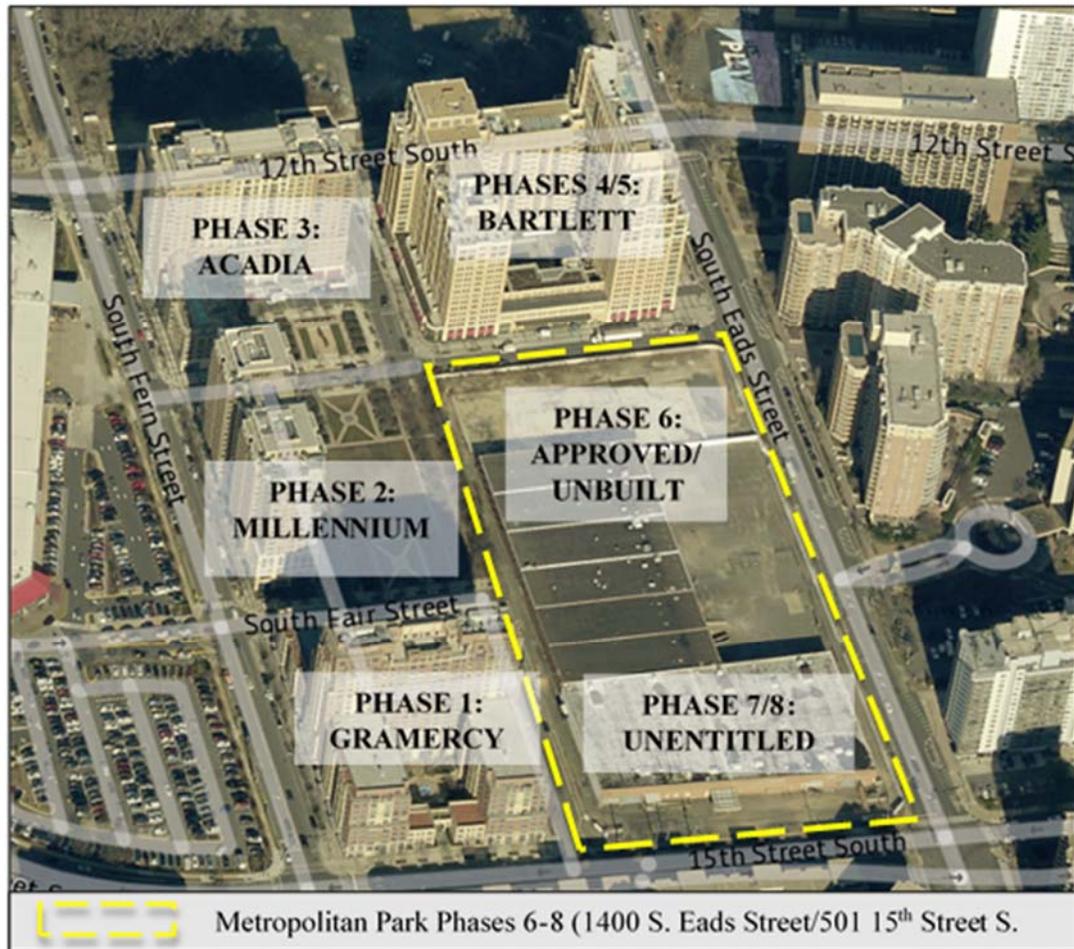


Figure 3—Metropolitan Park Phases. Courtesy Pictometry

Discussion

Amendment of Uses for Metropolitan Park.

The applicant proposes to build two office buildings in the last three phases of Metropolitan Park (Metropolitan Park Phases 6, and 7/8). Currently, Metropolitan Park consists of four buildings containing 1,809 dwelling units with ground floor retail. The “C-O-2.5” zoning district is a mixed-use zoning district that permits a mix of office, residential, retail, and hotel uses.

As stated above, the Pentagon City PDSP originally in 1976 had anticipated a mix of office, commercial, and residential uses on most of the parcels, including Parcel 3, the future Metropolitan Park. [However, the PDSP has been amended](#) numerous times since 1976, and the County Board has approved shifting approved uses between parcels several times. The economy in the first two decades of the buildout of the Pentagon City PDSP heavily favored office and commercial development rather than residential. As a result, commercial uses and density were being transferred to facilitate such development, and exclusively residential uses were eventually concentrated on Parcel 3 through various actions. Most recently, in 2013, the County Board shifted 930 dwelling units from the Pen Place parcel (Parcel 1D) to Parcel 3. Because of these actions, Metropolitan Park is currently entitled exclusively for residential uses (with ground floor retail), while to the north, the 12-acre Pen Place is entitled for primarily office and hotel uses.

Although the applicant proposes an office use, the applicant proposes a total of 67,000 square feet of ground floor retail in both buildings. Furthermore, the proposed change of use will not affect the size, location and delivery of the last segment of the planned public central park in Metropolitan Park.

The below two charts show the effect of the applicant's proposal, if approved, on the use mix within the Pentagon City PDSP, and in the larger Pentagon City Metro Station Area.

Table 2: Use mix within Pentagon City PDSP

	Office	Commercial	Hotel	Residential
Existing Entitled ³	27%	14%	6%	53%
With this proposal	43%	13%	6%	38%

Table 3: Use Mix within Pentagon City Metro Station Area

	Office	Commercial	Hotel	Residential
Existing Entitled ⁴	23%	12%	5%	60%
With this proposal	35%	11%	5%	49%

Although the principal use of the last three phases of Metropolitan Park buildings is proposed to change, the design of the proposed buildings will still be guided by the Metropolitan Park Design Guidelines in all other respects, to integrate into the existing Metropolitan Park community.

The proposed change from residential to office use for the final three phases of Metropolitan Park may be appropriate for the following reasons:

- The conversion to office use would not affect the size, location and delivery of the final segments of the planned public central park located on the Metropolitan Park site.
- Although this proposal may shift the overall balance of uses within the Pentagon City PDSP area slightly towards office use, when considering the larger Metro station area, the result is a more balanced mix of uses.
- Finally, it should also be noted that the Planning Division work plan includes a forthcoming planning study to evaluate the western half of the Pentagon City PDSP area which will present an opportunity to consider appropriate use mixes as part of any future growth scenarios.

³ Including Pen Place entitlements

⁴ Including Pen Place entitlements

Maximum Heights within Metropolitan Park.

The Pentagon City Phased Development site plan currently permits two residential buildings in Metropolitan Park to be up to 22 stories in height. To date, only one 22-story residential building has been constructed (The Bartlett). The approved, but unbuilt, Metropolitan Park 6 was approved for 22 stories. The applicant proposes to amend the Condition #54 of the Phased Development Site Plan to permit one residential building (The Bartlett, already built) and two office buildings of up to 22 stories in height.

The *Metropolitan Park Design Guidelines* anticipated three residential buildings of up to 22 stories in height on the east side of Metropolitan Park, subject to tapering recommendations (see Figure 3), to “anchor the site and complement existing development to the east”. While the *Design Guidelines*, along with the PDSP height allocations, set the height cap in stories, but not feet, a 22-story office building will be taller than a 22-story residential building, due to the higher ceiling heights for offices. The proposed office buildings would be, at their tallest portions, 300 feet above average grade to the main roof. However, The Bartlett has a pool deck and other tenant amenities at the penthouse level above the 22nd floor, whereas the proposed penthouses at Metropolitan Park 6 and 7/8 will be used solely for mechanical equipment.

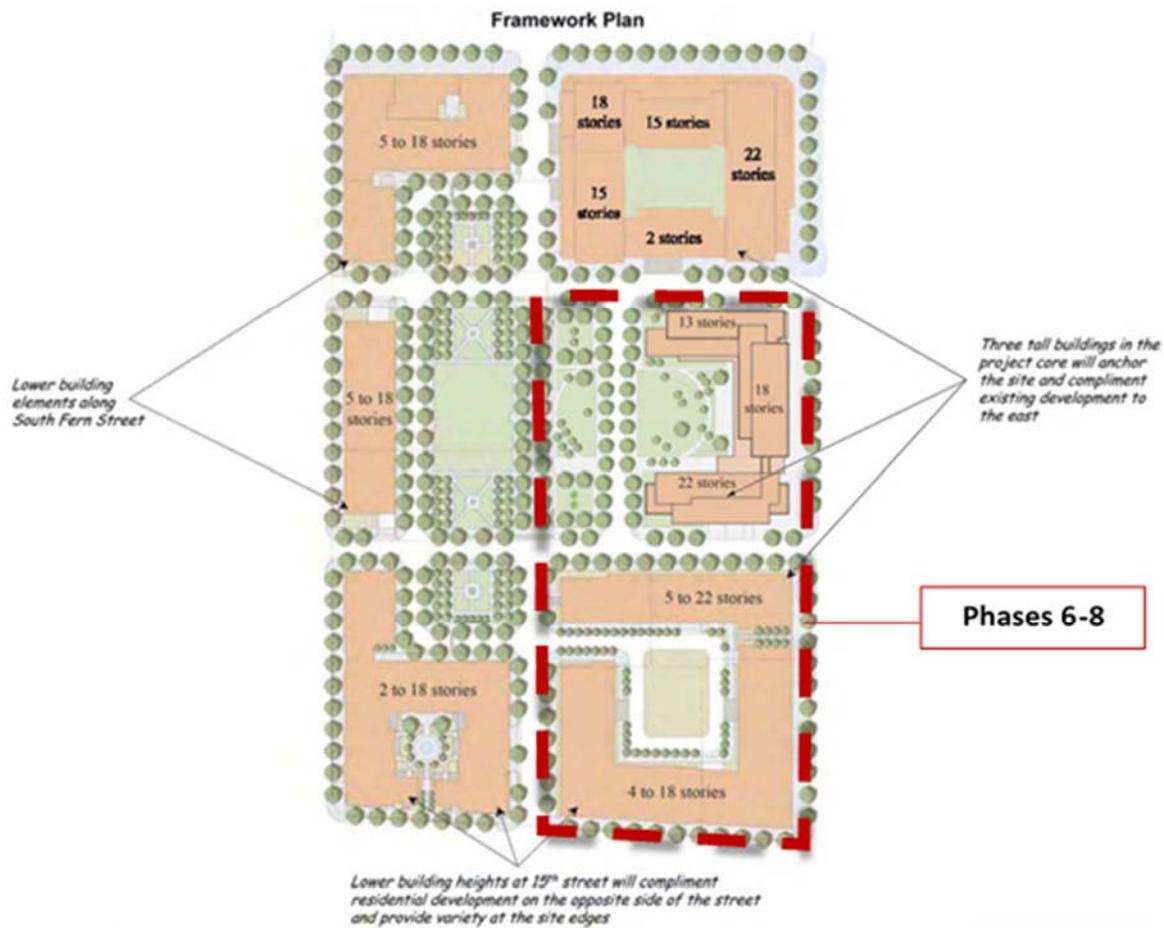


Figure 4--Metropolitan Park Design Guidelines, as amended 2016

Table 4: Building Height Comparison	
Main Roof Height (above average grade)	
The Bartlett	243 feet
<i>Approved Met Park 6</i>	235 feet
Proposed Phase 6	300 feet
Proposed Phase 7/8	300 feet
Penthouse Height	
The Bartlett	21 feet
<i>Approved Met Park 6</i>	23 feet
Proposed Phase 6	23 feet
Proposed Phase 7/8	23 feet
Number of Stories	
The Bartlett	22 stories
<i>Approved Met Park 6</i>	22 stories
Proposed Phase 6	22 stories
Proposed Phase 7/8	22 stories

The impact of height can be mitigated by meeting the tapering recommendations of the *Design Guidelines* which is intended to avoid flat, slab-like structures. The applicant is proposing buildings that respond to the tapering recommendations of the *Guidelines*, and the areas of greatest height are concentrated away from 15th Street and towards S. Eads Street and Crystal City, which is a principle of the original Pentagon City PDSP approval.

Regarding permitted heights in adjacent development, to the North, the Pen Place tract (which is also in the Pentagon City PDSP), is approved for at least three office buildings, two of which are approved to be up to 22 stories. Across South Eads Street in the Crystal City Redevelopment District, building heights are planned for up to 200 feet above grade.

The proposed change in applying the maximum height of 22-stories to office buildings for the final three phases of Metropolitan Park may be appropriate for the following reasons:

- The impact of height can be mitigated by the guidance provided in the tapering recommendations found in the *Metropolitan Park Design Guidelines* which are intended to avoid flat, slab-like structures. The applicant is proposing buildings that respond to those tapering recommendations, by locating the areas of greatest height away from 15th Street and closer towards South Eads Street and the general Crystal City area, consistent with original principles established in the 1976 Pentagon City planning framework. Discussion of the applicant's proposed tapering is scheduled to occur as part of the Site Plan Review Committee's analysis of this project.
- The proposed heights do not affect the provision of public open space at the ground level, including the last 0.56 acres of the Central Park, and additional proposed public open space;
- Similar heights (22-stories) have already been considered within planned adjacent developments including within Metropolitan Park (Bartlett—Phase 4/5; and Phase 6) and PenPlace (2 office buildings).

Density

Unlike a speculative development, the proposed office development has an identified tenant, Amazon, which has specific space needs for the first phase of its development and a corporate culture that it wishes to foster through the internal layout of offices and the amenities it offers to employees. Conversely, the applicant is limited by sculpting the building in a way that responds to the *Metropolitan Park Design Guidelines*

The applicant's proposed change of use from residential to office for the last three phases of Metropolitan Park will be accomplished by converting the remaining, unbuilt 1,403 dwelling units assigned to Metropolitan Park to office density using a conversion factor of one dwelling unit per 1,100 square feet of gross floor area, or 1,543,300 square feet of gross floor area. This conversion factor has been used several times before, including in the approvals for office density at Pen Place. The applicant's total proposed density, including the amount above what can be achieved through a conversion of use, must be accomplished through contributions to affordable housing initiatives, sustainable design elements, and other commitments to community facilities.

Table 5: Proposed Density for Phases 6 & 7/8

	Proposed by Applicant	Available Allocated Density	Density to be Achieved through Community Benefits
Office	2,082,566	1,543,300	-
Retail	67,115	23,064	-
Total	2,149,681	1,566,364	583,317

Table 6: Floor Area Ratio over entire Pentagon City PDSP

Existing FAR (including Pen Place entitlements)	2.23
Proposed FAR	2.34
<i>Max. Permitted "C-O-2.5" FAR</i>	2.5

The requested additional density for the final three phases of Metropolitan Park may be appropriate for the following reasons:

- The proposed conversion of residential units uses an accepted conversion factor that has been used in Pentagon City as recently as 2013, and [reaffirmed in a staff study from 2018](#).
- Continued discussions between the applicant and Arlington County should continue to develop an appropriate community benefits package that is proportional to the level of development and considers the site's context; and
- The overall Floor Area Ratio (FAR) within the Pentagon City PDSP is 2.23 FAR, which includes all approved but unbuilt density, including the entitled density for Pen Place. The overall FAR for the PDSP, should the additional density be approved for the Met Park office buildings, would only increase to 2.34 FAR, which is still under the 2.5 FAR limit set for the C-O-2.5 zoning district.

Master Transportation Plan

The applicant is requesting an amendment to the Master Transportation Plan to eliminate a dead-end segment of 14th Road South that would act as access to an internal courtyard in Metropolitan Park 7/8. The planned street is shown on the Master Transportation Plan Map as a Local Street, and the Metropolitan Park Design Guidelines designates the planned street as a “tertiary street” to service parking and loading entrances. The request is identical to an approved MTP amendment for Metropolitan Park 4/5, which also eliminated a dead-end segment of street. The applicant’s proposed parking and loading for Met Park 7/8 would instead occur off adjacent Elm Street. The developer proposes to construct all other planned new street segments, including 14th Street South, and a new segment of South Elm Street.

The proposed Master Transportation Plan amendment may be appropriate for the following reasons:

- The request is similar to Metropolitan Park 4/5, to accommodate the proposed uses in the building;
- The private, internal open space recommended in the *Design Guidelines* is proposed instead to be a public plaza adjacent to the central park (figure 5);
- The remainder of the proposed street network will be constructed per the *Design Guidelines* and MTP.

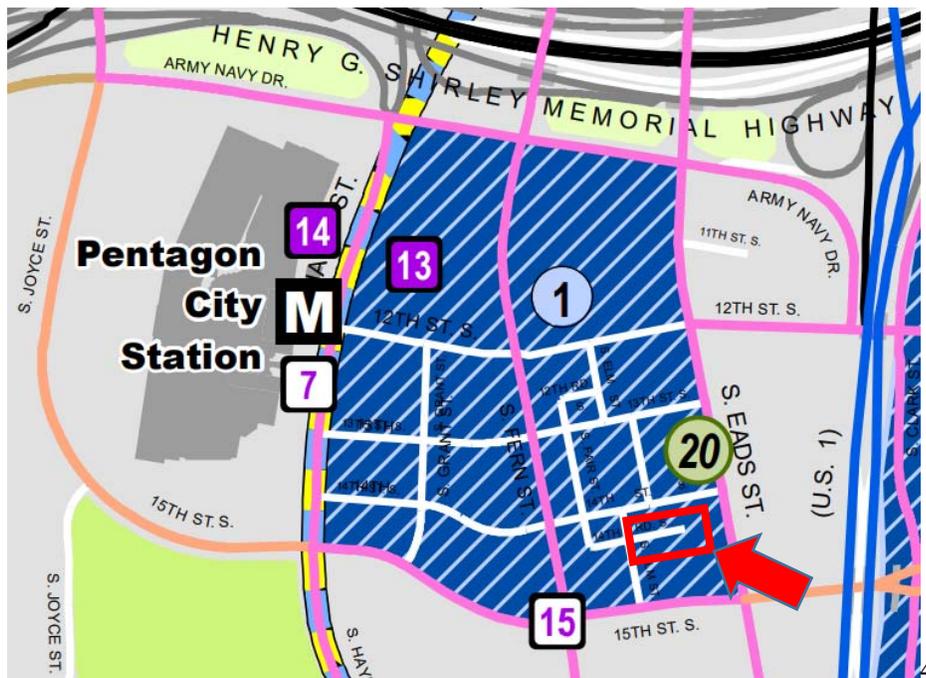


Figure 5--Master Transportation Plan. Segment of 14th Road South to be eliminated

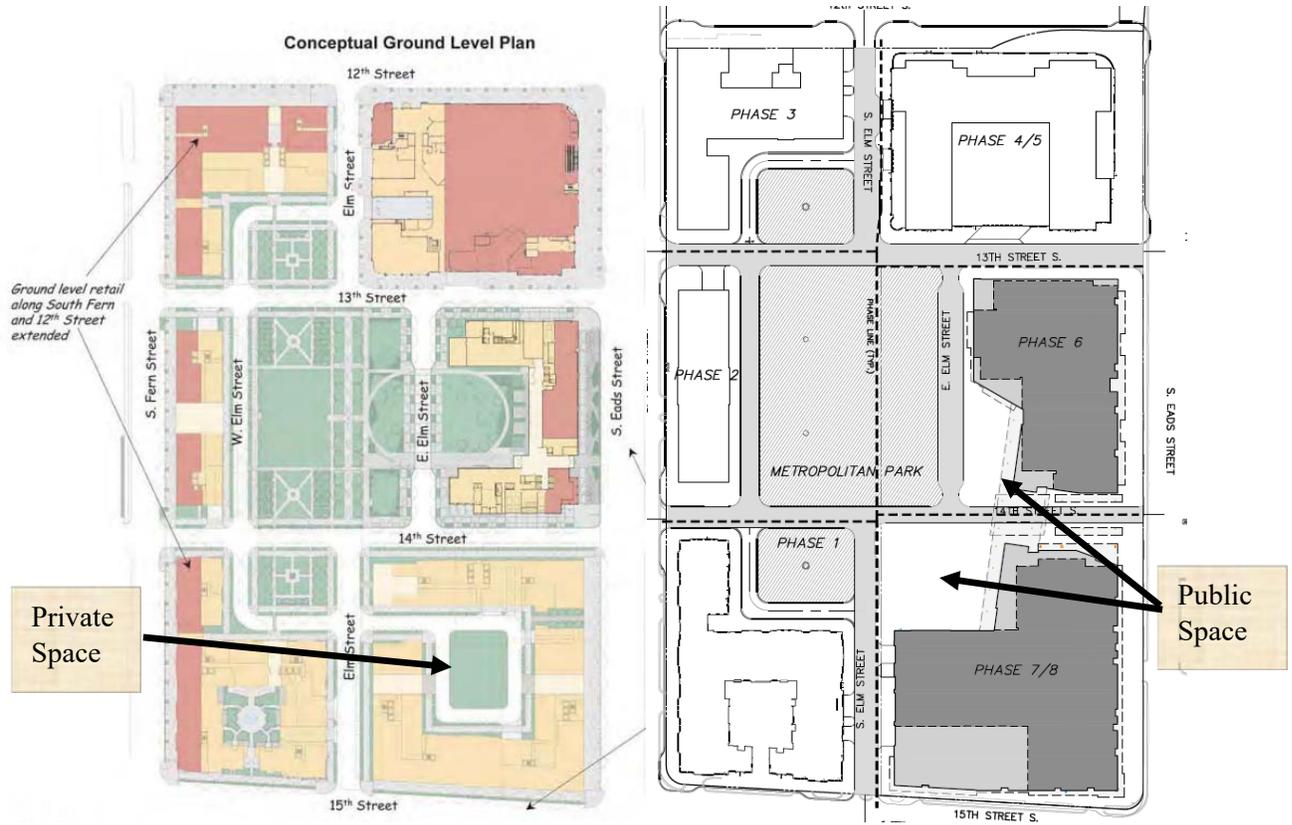


Figure 6--Design Guidelines (left); Applicant's proposal (right).

Appendix A

Existing PDSP Condition #2:

2. The following is a summary of the approved uses and densities by Parcel for the Pentagon City Phased Development Site Plan, as approved by the County Board on November 16, 2013:

Parcel	Office GFA	Comm. GFA	Hotel Units	Res. Units	Park
1A/2A	-	300,000	-	830	-
1B/2B	172,000	1,080,200	366	-	-
1C	1,078,000	-	-	-	-
1D	1,809,000 ¹	50,000	599	300 ²	-
2C	-	-	-	624	-
3	-	100,000		3,212 ³	-
4	-	-	-	-	Park
5	-	2,500	-	820	-
Totals	3,059,000	1,530,200	966	5,786	Park

- ¹⁾ In the event of the development of 300 residential units on Land Bay C-East of Parcel 1D, the available office GFA shall be decreased by the GFA approved for the residential building.
- ²⁾ In the event of the development of an office building on Land Bay C-East of Parcel 1D, the residential units allocated in the density table shall not be available for development on Parcel 1D, or elsewhere.
- ³⁾ Up to fifty (50) residential units on Parcel 3 may be used for hotel use and may be arranged for short term stays of less than thirty (30) days for rent or lease. The use of residential units for hotel use is a temporary use that has been approved for a limited two (2) year period, and not longer, and will terminate on December 31, 2018 without further action by the County Board.

Existing PDSP Condition #54:

54. At the time of final site plan, building heights of up to 22 stories for not more than six apartment and/or hotel buildings shall be considered, for the purpose of improving the overall design without increasing density. In addition, at the time of final site plan, building heights only on Parcel 1D shall be considered to include two (2) office buildings to 22 stories, one (1) office building up to 19 stories, one (1) office building up to 16 stories or in its place one (1) residential building up to 18 stories, and one (1) hotel building up to 18 stories.