

**July 29, 2019 Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) | 7-9:30pm**  
Parks & Natural Resources Conference Center (2700 S. Taylor Street)

**Agenda:**

**Met Park Phases 6-8**

Land Use and Zoning, Site Design and Characteristics, and Building Architecture.

**CLARIFYING QUESTIONS:**

- Tops of the new buildings – can the applicant demonstrate where the “crowns” of the buildings are provided? *A. It depends on the angle of view, but the shoulder elements create a larger “crown” for the tallest elements of the buildings which meets the guidelines for Met Park.*
- Blue Goose building in Ballston also had a good application of Terra Cotta (helpful precedent).

**SITE DESIGN & CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Daycare – how are the kids going to enjoy the outdoor space (required by the County)? *A. 75 sq.ft. of outdoor space per child is required. Shared tot lot (approx. 4,000 sq.ft.) is proposed within the open space – design and shade considerations will be refined later through separate public space process.*
- Will the daycare rely on the adjacent public park through a Public Access Easement (PAE) like some of the other daycares in the County? *A. Yes. SPRC members indicated their preference for including the daycare in the PAE. PAE also covers this pedestrian street (elm + 14<sup>th</sup>) – still discussing with real estate/transportation staff on the PAE details.*
- Is the treatment of the park design as a separate process (to occur post-approval) the County’s decision or applicant preference? *A. A County-led park master planning process will commence after approval of the site plan (it the County’s decision request a County-led process). SPRC Meeting #2 in September will dive further into the open space discussions, POPS recommendations and the subsequent process to define the open space components for the Met Park block.*
- How will we define the boundaries of the open space – can we clarify what’s in/what’s out early to set expectations for subsequent process? *A. The open space elements will be discussed in detail at SPRC Meeting #2 (September).*
- How will the postponed park process influence/guide the transportation discussion? Since transportation will be discussed first, will those issues end up restricting the options for future open space?
- How will dogs be accommodated? Will they rely on the private terraces or public park? *A. Dog parks are anticipated in both the public park (at grade) and within each building’s elevated terraces.*
- Some of the Irregular-shaped spaces seem to work well and make the interior space interesting, however, would it be desirable to have a greater emphasis on the main entrance (and its impact

on the overall grid for this block). A. Viewsheds were considered when setting the buildings back along 14<sup>th</sup>.

- View from the park looking out through 14<sup>th</sup> is very nice and benefits from the overhangs (inside/outside play on public/private). A. Lobbies are 2-stories and the overhangs are 30+ feet high. Area below is for outdoor café seating and lobby space for each building. This approach invites the public open space/nature into the buildings. Space will feel public, but County standards prevent the covered portions from being approved under PAE.
- What can we anticipate as the construction schedule for this? A. Early 2020 to start w/ completion in late 2023. Buildings should be fairly occupied shortly thereafter (2024). Separate use permit process will be envisioned for the daycare once the buildings are complete.
- Are we trying to discourage the use/access of vehicles along 14<sup>th</sup>? (is that the purpose for this roadway?)
- What is the logic behind the exclusion of daycare uses from the density calculations? A. Staff supports the use but has not evaluated the proposal to exclude the area from total calculation.
- SPRC raised concern from a past example where the exclusion was approved, but the daycare ultimately left the space. This is not the same as a grocery store policy.
- Can we set aside space for “affordable daycare”? If the daycare is supporting Amazon employees, community would not be supportive of proposed exclusions. A. The daycare will be privately operated without any prioritization for Amazon employees.
- Do we anticipate how many of the daycare seats may be taken by Amazon? A. Would need to analyze that further.
- If these two buildings are to become the block’s center piece – are they quite distinctive enough? Perhaps something else could be done with the crown to improve the impact these will have on the area’s skyline.

#### BUILDING ARCHITECTURE:

- Elm St should be treated as a critical pedestrian pathway/connection in its relationship to the building
- The Eads entrance becomes secondary (acts as the building’s back door) since the primary entrance is from the park (feels like the building’s front door)
- SPRC members were curious as to how the neighborhood will use this space throughout the entire year
- These two buildings will become the area’s centerpiece and should therefore be memorable (as referenced in the guidelines) with how they engage the skyline.
- Please demonstrate how the color palette meets the “earth tones” – setting up this contrast with the new brighter colors on the fins
- Retail store front strategy works well (by mixing it up) – as the retail tenants change, how do we condition the spaces to ensure they have longevity and minimize our typical admin changes based on changing tenants/use.
- For open space – need to assess how the space would have been used with a residential use (1,400 planned units to complete Met Park) and now it will now be utilized with the amount of office workers anticipated.

- How similar are the color fins between here and Seattle? [A. Metal and glass is utilized to achieve a level of richness and color and may be refined throughout this review process \(colors will have subtle change throughout the time of day\).](#)
- SPRC members would like to know where this color choice ends up and how reminiscent are these fins of HQ1 in Seattle?
- SPRC is generally excited about the use of limited color as an accent on both buildings since it helps bring a multi-dimensional element to the facades and helps relate the two buildings together.
- Penthouse treatment and the overall roofline should continue to be evaluated, however, we need to be careful about just asking for more “interesting” approaches.
- The natural entrance for those coming from the south (Crystal City) will become that “jump lobby” along 15<sup>th</sup> – perhaps it therefore deserves greater attention.
- Earlier slide suggests just as many people will arrive from the VRE (vs Metro)...how does that influence the configuration of the entrances?
- Thank you for not delivering another beige building...perhaps this is the emergence of a “color district” as it begins to show up in JGB Smith’s Crystal City applications
- Goal for Eads street is to be a complete street where bike lanes will be located and many of the bus lines will be dropping people off. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, on the other hand, should draw pedestrians into the Met Park site.
- What about operable fenestrations (like in Seattle)? [A. Still studying operable windows \(however Seattle has a different climate – need to be considered in this review\).](#)
- Is the penthouse completely mechanical? Will it have any lighting? [A. Not internal illuminating anticipated but the fins will help create a small glow \(certain times of the day\).](#)
- How many employees expected with this project? [A. 12,500 employees for Phases 6-8.](#)
- Phase 6 seems fairly wide and doesn’t address Eads St the same way Phase 7/8 addresses 15<sup>th</sup> Street (and its neighbors across the street). [A. Applicant will get back to the group on this.](#)
- Sculpting works well for Phases 7/8...SPRC members appreciate the different gestures that bring it down to a human level. What’s happening on the roof and how much of it will be visible from the outside?
- Everything seems very innovate and attractive, however, some continue to be considered about height. The applicant should continue to demonstrate how this meets the Met Park and PDSP guidelines.
- As proposed, the two buildings do not create anything that interesting for the skyline in this area – suggest evaluating this further with additional renderings capturing various angles.
- The approach to sculpting the 15<sup>th</sup> Street façade works well. Concerns over height should not automatically translate to the skyline issue. Some members expressed support for even taller heights (in the range of 25 or 27 stories) in this location. The current proposal is not just adequate, but actually also attractive.
- Met Park 6 looks very tall and flat (but both are taller then what’s approved for Pen Place) – how does that get reconciled?
- Can the applicant speak more about their choice of glass? [A. Proposal relies on a very non-reflective \(bird friendly\) glass.](#)
- Disappointed we’re only getting LEED Gold (thought it would be net zero). If Met Park 6-8 cannot achieve LEED Platinum, could we expect it with Pen Place?

- Will the proposed Meeting Center be accessible to the public? *A. Public access for that space is under consideration by applicant.*
- Do you plan for any temporary uses if retail doesn't lease up? *A. Pop up spaces would be envisioned to further activate the site. Amazon has no vacancies in Seattle.*
- Why not shorten height of Phase 7/8 and transfer that density to Pen Place?
- What type of retail are you contemplating here and is it too much for this site? We may be running the risk of too much space dedicated to retail (given the County's vacancies elsewhere). *A. Applicant anticipates a 50/50 split between food/beverage and business/community serving uses. In-house café (located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor) will be intentionally designed to only service 25% of their internal traffic – forcing employees outside.*
- Will the retail rents be controlled and kept reasonable? Will the stores with less resources have options? *A. With over 40 buildings in Seattle, Amazon has the flexibility to curate and be selective on their retail tenants.*
- Will legacy projects (long standing/independent businesses) be supported through reduced rent or other promotions/benefits provided from the building owner?
- This site doesn't seem to have any retail fronting on other retail (could benefit from a master plan). Can you confirm if we can expect retail VS retail equivalent on this site? *A. Retail equivalent is permitted in the Retail Plan along Eads.*
- This site and its retailers should tie Pentagon City to Crystal City by converting 15<sup>th</sup> Street to a center of activity with the most vibrant/activating ground floor uses (and help draw people in the site).
- Exclusions for the atrium/other internal areas? Can we confirm? *A. Anything within two exterior walls counts as GFA. Some internal spaces to the building are typically excluded.*
- Kiosks – can the applicant specify what type of retail/activity may be anticipated there? *A. Pop-up type functions associated with events within the open space. Approach is still under review.*
- 15<sup>th</sup> Street is a 4-lane road with lots of traffic and may prove very challenging for retail along that edge. How can you make that more cozy and comfortable for pedestrians?
- Can we provide clearer views of parking access at the next meeting?
- What does universal access look like here? Which accessibility are we capturing here? *A. Given the site is extremely flat so all the entrances can be universally accessible. Other programs exist within Amazon and frequently involve consulting those individuals to help design/accommodate the interior amenities they will be working in.*

WRAP UP/QUESTIONS FOR UPCOMING AGENDA:

- Interested in the open space considerations and details about the community benefits (and how the proposed exclusions may impact them). Lots to like in the proposal...curious how the community facility will be incorporated into the equation?
- Can we have more visualizations that are based further away to better experience the new corridors? Could the terraces be opened to the community as a benefit? Conference center is definitely a great start.
- Architecture works well but the height remains an issue and would urge dropping the height of the southern building (help further sculpt the skyline here and transfer density to Pen Place)...highly unlikely the applicant can earn all of the 600,000 sf of bonus that is proposed.

- Not a huge fan of the earlier Met Park phases of development to date (except for the Bartlett). Because of the post-approval efforts, we need to make sure our condition language is as clear and detailed as possible (which will help with the community trust and patience). Public Access Easement for the community meeting space would be very welcomed in this part of the County.
- Given the amount of bonus requested, and the needs identified by the community – the livability framework should inform how we approach the community benefits package. Let's take advantage of the three Civic Associations coming together at a time where we don't have to chase these piecemeal – now that all of these projects are coming to the Board in a short period of time. Let's not wait until AFTER the SPRC process to express our preferences.
- If not here and at this height – where should/could this density go? Are there really any options/alternatives for locating this tenant in the area?
- All these projects which have open space opportunities/requirements likely means we do not have a cohesive plan to address our needs and ensure we have a diverse inventory of uses.
- Terraces look great and are very welcome (regardless of who uses them).
- Emphasis on “nature based” design – can we see more on that since it hasn't shown up yet. Serious attention to the streetscape environment will be needed later and we should continue to pursue biophilic spaces.
- Have Amazon employees already weighted into the design of Met Park and its accessibility?
- Why are the approved Pen Place buildings shorter than the proposed Met Park 6-8 buildings?
- When will Rt. 1 be lowered? This change could prove bio-friendly and help the retail on 15<sup>th</sup>
- How will activities be coordinated between this and Bartlett (along Eads St and the open space)?
- How will protected bike lanes work within the area?
- Pedestrian access to and throughout the site should be emphasized.
- Curious about the loading dock issues and how they will be treated.
- What happens beyond the 9-5 activity in the park space...is there a percentage of Amazon employees who expect to live in this area? What about the 55+ age group – how will they be accommodated/planned for?
- Too much beige and gray proposed throughout the County – thank you for finally adding color
- Market Street will be very interesting (as it's not shown on the MTP)
- Livability principles are good – but curious what the implementation and specifics might be
- Community Benefits – are we thinking about affordable housing so that we can align ourselves with the Pike community and other housing initiatives?
- What about public art – does it have a role here? Could be a great opportunity to assist with retail spaces that may have hardships getting filled.
- Can we confirm how the POPS plan will be applied here (any recommendations for this site)?
- Serious contribution of affordable housing should be considered with this proposal (especially given the change in use for this site).
- Could the conference center space be publicly accessible and assist with retail as well? Everyone needs meeting spaces – area is very short on that inventory
- Community Benefits – distinguish between a true (paid for) benefit vs a true community benefit (on-site)...transparency in the staff report and upcoming presentations will be very helpful.
- More definition around LEED and what's being proposed (can we have DES present?) Are we doing any of the add-ons (such as energy monitoring?)

- Livability agenda should focus on connectivity which leads to a sustainable community. The spine of the open space between Pen Place and Met Park is a critical component. The “heart” of this area has moved – curious as to what we think.
- Height is consistent with PDSP guidelines...proportions work well as does their re-orienting their base.
- Pentagon City PDSP – can staff share any insights along 15<sup>th</sup> Street (next door)? Misleading communication about lowering of Rt. 1 (can we clarify that during our next SPRC meeting?) and explain our timeline for what that could look like.
- Each PC member supports emphasizing affordable housing contributions here.
- Glad Amazon can help curate some of the retail uses

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Mike (Environment and Energy Conservation Commission): Preliminary review of LEED scorecard...would like to see how this will be approved using some of the new tools available.
- Doris (Disability Advisory Commission): Accessibility should be prioritized given what this project means to this area. Could be the first project done since the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the disabilities act. How will this meet the standards of accessible design (level 1-3)? All pathways on the site also carry these standards (not just within the building) – extra attention to landscaping and addressing changes in topography. Amenities and features through the building with access and directories designed so that they can be read (instead of just flat screens). 2010 standards for conference rooms and suites. Be careful of power doors and their impacts.