

SITE PLAN REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Met Park 6-8 (SP #105-9) Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) Meeting #3

October 14, 2019 | 7-9:30 p.m.

Planning Commissioners in Attendance: Daniel Weir (Co-Chair), Elizabeth Gearin (Co-Chair), Nancy Iacomini, Kathy McSweeney, Elizabeth Morton, Tenley Peterson, James Schroll, Jane Siegel, Sara Steinberger.

This was the third SPRC meeting for the Met Park 6-8 site plan amendment application.

The meeting was opened by the Chair, Elizabeth Gearin, with introductions and ground rules.

Applicant began by presenting follow up information from the two previous SPRC meetings.

Key updates from applicant:

- Protected bike lane added to 15th Street adjacent to site on both sides of the street to Rte.1;
- Elevations of loading areas were shown;
- Achieve LEED Platinum certification at minimum.
- Follow-up information on retail leasing

The applicant then made a presentation on construction timing, staging and vehicle hauling routes.

- Top out Middle of 2022 (full height will be achieved) – facades will soon follow
- End of 2022 – exterior will be complete
- 1Q 2023 opening when new employees will begin utilizing the space

COMMENTS (General questions/Construction Management)

- E2C2 – Net Zero Carbon commitment? Align with both Amazon and AC goals. How much left to close the gap?
 - Ratings around net zero carbon have “catches” so Amazon will instead attempt to lower the demand as much as possible. At 65% design, a lot of decisions still ahead of the team to be able to confirm some of these commitments. New program is not really set up for large scale buildings of this nature and many obstacles remain ahead.
- High speed electric recharging stations?
 - Yes, they will be available (as they are in Seattle)
- Will we have “shared street” typologies?
 - Staff response: No – “neighborhood local” MTP typology
- Will you rely on offsets for carbon or some other strategy for renewables?
 - The renewables will be located off-site but in the regional air shed. Strategy is to neutralize the effect by offsetting and contributing to the greater grid.

- Are there opportunities along Elm and other streets where the condition can be softened to provide a refuge?
 - Loading docks are properly sized to minimize the effect on other uses and modes of travel. Applicant worked with staff to maximize the refuge areas to the extent possible.
- How can you encourage small businesses even further (sustainability angle to ensure they thrive)?
 - Similar approach to Seattle in favoring local businesses. Unclear how it would be achieved (various ways to subsidize different tenants to make sure they stabilize here).
- Please ensure bike/pedestrian paths do not disappear during construction.
- Truck hauling map does not show trucks coming from the west from I-395, as applicant stated.
- Rooftops – what percentage of them will be pervious?
 - Balance between outdoor amenities for people and to maximize the lushness/greenery of the space. Applicant will provide for the commission meetings an actual % for all rooftop that are green, as in planted. All areas will be “permeable”.
- With that many employees, how will you manage all the deliveries (especially small ones) and pickup/drop off that is expected with so much traffic?
 - County will own and manage the right of way where most of this will happen and can adjust as necessary based on utilization. Applicant is creating multiple new street segments
- Does the daycare have an entrance on Elm Street? Just want to be careful about placing it in an area where kids can run out into.
- Will the retail diversity apply to people of color?
 - Broker has a good track record of securing minority-owned businesses.
- Will loading docks doors be closed when trucks are parked there?
 - They were sized so that this would be possible. Staff responded that it is a standard site plan condition.
- Are the two rows of trees on Eads Street possible?
 - Underground utilities prevent that from happening.
- Community Energy Plan – caution about off-site energy to make sure the effort doesn’t create new problems for the environment (Georgetown Univ. example).
- Applicant states that a Dock master will be provided, and retail tenants will be required to use this approach and rely on their service corridor.
- Are you looking at any fossil fuels for any of the restaurant businesses?
 - Do not know currently. Scorecard will be submitted by early Nov.
- Crystal City Sector Plan retail guidance should also apply here – given we are right across the street.
- Applicant asked to follow up to tonight’s questions by the PC hearing in December.
- Pen Place would be targeted as a construction staging area given its proximity and common ownership.
- Quantify the reduction in Stormwater given all the proposed landscape treatments? Would that be available by December?

COMMENTS (priorities for mitigation/community benefits)

- Are we limited to Off-site transportation improvements, Sustainability, contributions to affordable housing and Community Facilities? The way the Ordinance is written?
 - Amendment is currently being advertised to clarify and expand the terminology used to convey the intent of community facilities eligible for additional density in keeping with adopted County Board policies: affordable housing, community facilities, open space, transportation improvements, green building design.
- Street network improvements should be prioritized.
- Millennial park should really draw people and look like a public park (create a destination)
- Off-site transportation improvements (beyond the Met Park frontage) – such as extending the protected bike lanes, so they serve a greater purpose.
- Status of child care as an exclusion? 14,000 SF is not anticipated to be excluded (staff does not support excluding the Child Care Center from density)
- Other proposed exclusions are considered standard (likely to be supported)
- Assurances on the commitment to deliver the park (process, construction, maintenance)
- 18-24 Hour Clinic would be extremely beneficial
- Area wide plan to develop public art vision – continue to make progress
- Beyond just the base contribution, looking for an “extraordinary contribution to ADUs”
- Even without physically displacing residents on this site, some will be in the area as the market reacts to this project. Encourage staff/applicant to evaluate a mixed-income approach
- Don’t ignore the small level improvements (still has an impact)
- Emphasize the arts community in some of the retail space.
- **LOCAL COMMUNITY REPS: (3 Civic Associations)**
 - Key highlights – ADUs (70% locals are renters – want to stay here); park improvements (and just how much density should be earned from that); connectivity to metro stop; elevator improvements and maybe second entrance; banked fund for future ideas; how about a “maker space” that contributes to local education; green fund for future ideas and opportunities; ability to track data on the neighborhood’s evolution & changes; access to the community center; establish a community liaison beyond just construction
 - Would a dollar figure be assigned to the final set of benefits? Sometimes may be typical in Crystal City or Rosslyn – unclear if it will occur here. We will try to be as transparent as possible. Don’t just throw \$ into a fund when it won’t produce the units here. Bikeway should be extended from Army/Navy all the way to Crystal Houses.
 - Let’s be innovative and begin thinking about pilot projects to solve some of these issues; bank some of the funds that can improve the areas between development projects
 - “Mitigation” is unclear and misleading. Studies are needed to identify new community center, library, and new metro entrance (15th & Hayes). Studies can confirm the needs and quantify their urgency given the new density coming online in the near-term. Issues with the County’s process and locals would prefer to be included in the negotiations.
- Emphasis on affordable housing that coordinates with JBG Smith since they are delivering so much residential in this area. Also, some affordable child care options with slots reserved for locals (not just Amazon employees). Help fund the bike/ped trail linking Columbia Pike to the

Pentagon City area (near Hoffman Boston). Need a medical clinic (others are coming offline elsewhere in the County).

Wrap-Up Comments

- Curious as to the housing options/types that could be funded with this.
- Net zero by Amazon would send a strong signal to the commercial sector and future site plans.
- Some appreciate the TDM measures/commitments but believe too much parking is proposed.
- 2% of overall spaces reserved for EV parking still seems low compared to local governments.
- Even with a fast process, we shouldn't give up on innovation and creativity.
- Please ensure the project is not in violation of Americans with Disabilities Act when it opens (check all regs).
- How can future site plan processes engage a broader range of residents (beyond the reps).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- Growth does not automatically lead to equity...require intervention – especially in ensuring small businesses and minority contractors are involved in the construction process.
- Can there be off-peak parking along the south side of 15th Street (which would reduce the width by one travel lane); what about a midblock bow-out on the western edge (as a way to handle all of the pick-ups)? All basically intended to calm the streets.
- Improvements even a block away would be huge for this area (especially near parcel 5).
- Can you confirm how early/late the construction is anticipated? Huge concern for residents.
- Please ensure this is a model of accessibility for retail AND office uses (power doors and more); pedestrian rights of way, and accessibility to the metro; create an elevator entrance to metro.
- ADA access from drop off vehicles to the sidewalk and to cross streets within short distances should also be emphasized; Can the CC underground be made fully accessible? 10% of all ADUs should be accessible (set a new goal for Arlington County).
- Cultural and arts amenities are critical (as is a larger library); Improvements need to align with the timing of the project delivery; Inter-connected transportation options (not just bikes) across PC and CC.; Transit way is needed before the employees arrive.