Introduction
Sustainable Urban Planning Master Candidates at The George Washington University

The Purpose of the Studio Class

- Work with staff members of the Arlington County planning department on a community project to gain experience with the planning process (three years).
- Specifically, work with county staff to assist in community engagement for Shirlington’s Special General Land Use Plan Study Plus.
- Assist in analyzing feedback patterns and results from Community Meeting held in Shirlington.
- Report and present our findings, thoughts, and suggestions to the county.
Shirlington Special GLUP Study Plus

Special GLUP Study Schedule

- **JUNE 2019**: LRPC #1 6/25/19
- **JULY 2019**: LRPC #2 and Walking Tour 7/23/19
- **AUG 2019**: LRPC #3 9/25/19
- **SEPT 2019**: Community Forum 11/20/19
- **OCT 2019**: LRPC #4 12/11/19
- **NOV 2019**: LRPC #5 Planning Commission and County Board 2020
- **DEC 2019**: LRPC #5 Planning Commission and County Board 2020
- **FUTURE**
## Shirlington Character

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Total count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian walkability</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor dining</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active storefront</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public gathering spaces</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix, new and old architecture</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety in retail experience</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tree-lined Streets</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog friendly</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night lighting and night life</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic art deco detailing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Additional Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Total count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to parking garages</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual seating</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature Theater</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike friendly</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to surface parking</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biophilic elements / mature tree canopy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian pathways</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting fixtures</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street parking</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayfinding and signage</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell Avenue fountain</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Word Board: What defines Shirlington for you?**

What features give Shirlington its sense of place?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amenities/Activities</th>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Signature Theater x2</td>
<td>Highway</td>
<td>Walkable x3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance area</td>
<td>Transit station</td>
<td>Walkable with gathering options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment x2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of amenities</td>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>Feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great restaurants bring customers</td>
<td>Mature tree canopy</td>
<td>Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants/Dining x 5</td>
<td>More trees</td>
<td>Potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Open spaces/green spaces</td>
<td>Familiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gathering places</td>
<td></td>
<td>Small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>European village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town Center x2</td>
<td>Diversity x2</td>
<td>Convenience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance of Uses</td>
<td>Welcoming for all</td>
<td>Mid-century look</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small biz x2 (local and choices)</td>
<td>Dogs! x3</td>
<td>Density off of transit x2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business turnover (not stable)</td>
<td>Space to do events “holiday”</td>
<td>Mix of old and new architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>feels more organic “real” than</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>other urban centers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding Principles</td>
<td>Not Important</td>
<td>Might Be Important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Retain a mix of uses</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Focus lower heights along the core and higher heights along the periphery</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Ensure appropriate transitions to existing/future residential development</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Retain, enhance, and, where appropriate, add pedestrian connections</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Retain, enhance, and, where appropriate, add public gathering spaces</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Consider the historic features, buildings, scale, etc.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Preserve mature trees to the extent possible</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Incorporate sustainability into any redevelopment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Look for opportunities to green Shirlington (tree canopy, etc.)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Accommodate additional above-grade parking (vs. surface or underground)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Retain alleys for loading and service functions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Guiding Principles - Comments

**Land Use**

1. **Retain a mix of uses (office, apartment, hotel, retail, civic, entertainment, etc.).**
   
   Need to look at economic model to ensure diversity of small business and their viability. We currently have much vacancy in Shirlington.

2. **Focus lower heights along the core and higher heights along the periphery.**
   
   Maintain height supremacy of Hilton and condos on S. Arlington Mill Dr - don’t dwarf existing apartments.
   Higher heights near highway and taper down from there.

3. **Ensure appropriate transitions to existing/future residential development.**
   
   This question was not clear to many.
Guiding Principles - Comments

**Access & Circulation**

4. Retain, enhance and, where appropriate, add pedestrian connections.

**Placemaking**

5. Retain, enhance and, where appropriate, add public gathering spaces.

Need for more civic spaces (indoor) for meetings
Increase frequency of pedestrian-only days for Campbell Ave - Sundays?

6. Consider the historic features, buildings, scale, etc.

This question was not clear to many.
Keep Campbell Avenue’s character and maintain the Main Street / Village vibe
Authenticity counts - was lost in the R-B corridor
Guiding Principles - Comments

**Sustainability & the Environment**

7. Preserve mature trees to the extent possible

8. Incorporate sustainability into any redevelopment.

   This question was not clear to many.
   Sustainability is more than just buildings and should include infrastructure and the total built environment.
   Sustainability must include biophilic principles, not just LEED standards.

9. Look for opportunities to green Shirlington (i.e. tree canopy, etc.).
Guiding Principles - Comments

Parking
10. Accommodate additional above-grade parking (vs. surface or underground) in certain circumstances.

More parking needed at the transit center.

Loading
11. Retain alleys for loading and service functions.

Service alleys should be separate from pedestrian functions. Retain loading and service functions to support businesses without pedestrian traffic interference.
Recurring Themes

“Sustainability = more than just buildings; should include infrastructure & total built environment.”

“Keep original buildings particularly along Campbell = authenticity counts, and we’ve lost it in the R/B corridor.”

“Main Street feel of Shirlington is important.”
Shirlington
GLUP Study Plus

Observations on Process

Special GLUP Study Schedule

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Shirlington LRPC Meeting

Context for Meeting
“LRPC is a committee of the Planning Commission. The public may observe the meetings, but participation in the discussion is limited to members of the Planning Commission unless otherwise recognized by the Committee chair.”

Observations/What We Learned
● Set expectations and be patient!
● Have a strong facilitator (Elizabeth Gearin did an exemplary job!)
  ○ Focus the group on the objectives and keep the meeting moving
  ○ Be a good, independent buffer between the community and the staff
  ○ Actively listen, maintain eye contact, take notes, repeat back what you hear
  ○ Give everyone a chance to speak and treat everyone with respect
  ○ Don’t engage in a debate on every idea suggested
● Be disciplined - make sure the meeting has a hard stop

Committee Feedback Highlights: Develop a Vision, Retain the Village Look & Feel, Preserve Views and Connections to the Park, Add Height on Perimeters
The Community Forum

Objectives
● Community input on modelling and preliminary principles

Getting the Word Out
● Flyers
● Civic and citizen associations
● County website, county newsletters, social media

Meeting Format
● A charrette with seven stations organized by topic with details to learn more about each issue, ask questions, and many ways to give feedback
The Community Forum: Feedback Themes

Preserving the Village of Shirlington

- Keep original buildings and historic character of the Village, especially Campbell Avenue
- Preserve walkability
- Preserve tree cover
- Improve wayfinding
- Keep/add community cultural anchors

Source: The Village at Shirlington Facebook Page
The Community Forum: Feedback Themes

Growth is Good

- Height acceptable, with restrictions
  - Step backs, especially in core
  - Favor height along periphery
  - Concerns about boxed-in, canyon feel with added height

- Height Concerns

- Concern over local economic success

Source: The Village at Shirlington Facebook Page
The Community Forum: Feedback Themes

Concerns About Growth

- Concerns about the impacts of building on the surface lot
  - Effect of height on surrounding areas
  - Reduction of parking

- Parking Concerns
  - Unified parking plan needed
  - Access to local businesses should be prioritized

- Traffic concerns

Source: The Village at Shirlington Facebook Page
The Community Forum: Final Thoughts on Process

Overall Support for Moving Forward

- SUCCESS!
  - Ideally, more residents would be better
- Change is necessary to keep Shirlington vital, attract new residents, compete for new employers and increase foot traffic
- Growth is welcomed!

Source: Federal Realty Investment Trust
Shirlington
GLUP Study Plus

Process Evaluation Measures
Process Evaluation Measures

● **INTENTION**
  ■ Deeper assessment of the meeting’s impact on stakeholders
  ■ Creation of Key Performance Indicators
  ■ Benchmarks for success

● **METHODOLOGY**
  ■ Attendance
  ■ GWU Survey
  ■ Public Feedback
  ■ GWU Feedback

● **DESIRED OUTCOME**
  ■ Provide data and structured feedback to Arlington County
SIGN-IN SHEET SUMMARY

- Resident / CA: 44%
- GWU: 39%
- FRIT: 15%
- WETA: 2%
GWU SUP Community Meeting Survey

Survey Note: responses will be summarized and used by George Washington University Sustainable Urban Planning students for course work in evaluating the community engagement process for the Shirlington General Land Use Study (GLUP).

Were you provided with the information you needed to participate in a meaningful way? (Circle one)

Agree Strongly / Agree Somewhat / Neutral / Disagree Somewhat / Disagree Strongly

I believe that my input was heard. (Circle one)

Agree Strongly / Agree Somewhat / Neutral / Disagree Somewhat / Disagree Strongly

What is your relationship to Shirlington Village? (Circle all that apply)

Renter / Homeowner / Employee / Business Owner

How long have you lived, worked, or played in Shirlington Village? __________________________

How did you hear about this event? __________________________

What have you learned from your participation that you found helpful?
Were you provided with the information you needed to participate in a meaningful way?

- Agree Strongly: 6
- Agree Somewhat: 1
- Neutral: 9
- Disagree Somewhat: 1
- Disagree Strongly: 0
I believe that my input was heard.
What is your relationship to Shirlington Village?

- Renter: 5
- Homeowner: 6
- Employee: 1
- Business Owner: 1
- No Response: 2
- Visitor: 1
- Civic Assoc.: 1
How did you hear about this event?

- Email: 4
- Flyer: 1
- Word of Mouth: 3
- Online: 3
- No Response: 1
- Civic Assoc.: 1
Feedback from the Public

“What have you learned from your participation that you found helpful?”

● Brief, seemingly positive sentiments:
  ○ “options” “affinity with my neighbors” “plans” “different perspectives”
● Sentiments echoing the narrative of the session:
  ○ “there is a process that will be thoughtful” “there will be a plan to preserve most of Shirlington (Campbell Ave) while adding density at the edges”
● Positive comments on process:
  ○ “multiple choice options for various scenarios was very helpful to organize my thoughts”
● Ongoing themes/concerns:
  ○ e.g. parking “this plan needs more thought on how to manage what could become an extreme parking problem” “I hope parking concerns are addressed (e.g. the top floor of HT garage)”
● Clarification requests:
  ○ “greater definition of a potential future... pedestrian connections and secondary pedestrian paths. Are they pedestrian priority streets? Shared streets? Plazas? We need clear definition and design guidelines for reference.”
● Negative impressions:
  ○ “Nothing. The format is juvenile and a waste of time. Way too many staff members present! Very few citizens from the area.”
Feedback from GWU Students

- Room set-up: chairs and boards
- Additional lead time for flier distribution
- Presentation: “planner-ese”
- Boards: technical terms and images
  - Timing for class preparation
- Type of feedback requested
Suggestions

- Standards for Self-Assessment
- Community Organizing Efforts
- Plannerese crib sheet
Standards for Self-Assessment

- What is your measure of success?
- Benchmarks for KPIs
- Process evaluation survey
Minneapolis Community Engagement Survey

1. To what extent do you Agree or Disagree with the following statements: (Leave the response blank if you “Don’t Know” or have “No Opinion”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree Strongly</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Disagree Strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. It is important to me that I be involved in government decision-making.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I feel that I can influence decisions made by the City Government.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I understand the current organizational structure of the City.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The City’s decision-making processes are clear and open.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The City’s decision-making processes are predictable and consistent.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. City elected officials are held accountable for their decisions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. City staff are held accountable for their decisions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Communication about City decision-making is open and two-way.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The materials and information that the City provides me on pending issues is clear, complete and understandable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Anyone who wants to participate has access to the decision-making processes of the City.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. A community engagement system should seek out and facilitate the involvement of those who are potentially affected by or interested in a decision.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Please respond to the next questions by checking all of the options that apply to you.

1. What sources do you use to get information about City decisions? (Check all that apply)

- Family
- Mass media (TV/radio/major newspaper)
- Neighborhood organizations
- Faith based groups
- Neighborhood newsletters
- City employees
- City website
- US Mail
- Telephone system/311
- Elected officials
- Ethnic and cultural organizations
- Employer Groups
- Electronic e-mail
- Friends and neighbors
- Other (Please describe)
2. What methods do you use to participate in or give your opinion to City decision-makers? (Check all that apply)

___Attend public hearings
___Serve on a City Board or Commission
___Participate in blogs or e-mail groups
___Write a letter to neighbors
___Organize a block
___Attend meetings dealing with specific issues
___Attend ethnic or cultural community meetings
___Attend regularly scheduled neighborhood meetings
___Attend a City Council Committee meeting
___Organize or participate in protests
___Call the media
___Send letters to the editor
___Join a group
___Get together with my neighbors
___Go to the City website
___Contact elected officials
___Other

IV. The following recommendations were proposed in the City Community Engagement report. How involved do you think the community should be in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Involved</th>
<th>Somewhat Involved</th>
<th>Not Involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of all official advisory groups.

2. Establishing predictable, base-line community engagement expectations for each type of decision.

3. Developing accessible, consistent, two-way communication systems.

V. The City will need to clarify which groups it relies on to engage the community in different decisions. For each type of City decision described below, please tell us which groups should engage the community. (Check as many as you want.)

**Citywide Decisions:** Such as:
- Setting the City's five-year goals and strategic plans
- Developing Citywide plans and zoning codes
- Developing Citywide projects (i.e. wireless internet access project or the 311 phone information system)
- City boards and commissions
- City appointed short-term advisory committees
- block, neighborhood or business organizations
- cultural, ethnic or issue-specific organizations

**Community Decisions:** Such as:
- Developing small-area, multi-neighborhood or corridor plans and projects (i.e. Midtown Exchange or 35W access project)
- Approving community-specific zoning and regulations
- Approving community-specific policies or programs (i.e. those affecting youth, seniors or immigrants)
- City boards and commissions
- City appointed short-term advisory committees
- block, neighborhood or business organizations
- cultural, ethnic or issue-specific organizations

**Local Decisions:** Such as:
- Site-specific zoning and development approvals
- Neighborhood planning activities, including development and approval of Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) action plans
- Approval of block or neighborhood projects or program funding
- City boards and commissions
- City appointed short-term advisory committees
- block, neighborhood or business organizations
- cultural, ethnic or issue-specific organizations
Community Organizing Efforts

- How and when are you reaching out to residents?
Plannerese Crib Sheet

- Defines relevant technical terms
- Provides any relevant zoning info for the project.
Thank You!