

Libby Garvey, Chair
Christian Dorsey
Katie Cristol
Matt de Ferranti
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, Virginia 22201

July 13, 2020

RE: Joint Request for Deferral of the Village at Shirlington Special General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Study Plus and Concept Plan July 2020

Dear Members of the Arlington County Board:

On behalf of Federal Realty Investment Company (“FRIT”) and Washington Educational Telecommunications Association (“WETA”), we request a deferral of the consideration of the July 2020 Village at Shirlington Special General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Study Plus and Concept Plan (the “Planning Study”). We request a deferral until the September 12, 2020 County Board hearing as recommended by the Transportation Commission, and due to the lack of consensus between the Planning Commission, Shirlington Civic Association, Green Valley Civic Association, and the Fairlington Civic Association.

At this point, this project has undergone over two and a half years of review and discussion as a part of the Planning Study process. This process has included seven Long Range Planning Committee (“LRPC”) meetings, dozens of meetings with civic groups, and coordination with Arlington County planning staff. The overwhelming majority of issues raised by community members and staff have been addressed through this Planning Study process and with Planning staff. Yet there still are few important questions to be resolved, highlighted by the discussions in recent public meetings at the Planning Commission and the Transportation Commission.

During the Planning Study process, there has been significant collaboration with Planning staff. We have been responsive to the community, the County, and the immediately surrounding neighborhoods. A few examples of this flexibility during this process include:

- Coordinating with local employers to promote transportation updates to make commuting for employees easier;
- Recognizing the importance of the existing character of Shirlington that community members value, including the importance of open space, diverse retail and arts resources, the retention of WETA’s headquarters and their reinvestment in Shirlington, and to finally create an effective wayfinding program for parking and amenities;
- Allowing reinvestment in Shirlington that achieves a reorientation of Shirlington outwards to connect Shirlington to neighboring communities and the planning

achievements of Four Mile Run Valley and the revitalization plan in place for Green Valley, while also connecting Shirlington to greater Arlington County, Washington, DC, and the City of Alexandria.

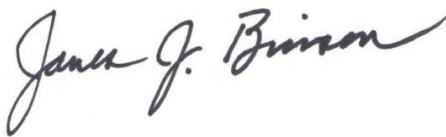
The balance between spurring reinvestment to achieve these collaborative goals and what has so far been recommended in the GLUP Study has not yet been achieved. On July 2, 2020, after finally receiving staff recommendations for the draft Planning Study four months following the last public meeting at LRPC in February 2020, and just a few days before the Transportation Commission meeting, FRIT submitted a letter with several concerns to the Arlington County Board, Planning Commission, and Planning staff. Some of these issues have been resolved while other substantial concerns still require time to find a resolution, including limitations on building heights and form, and clarifications for architectural and character preservation. We attempted to address these issues with Planning staff before public meetings. Planning staff recognized our concerns, but we have not yet been able to adequately resolve these critical issues.

The potential heights proposed in the draft Planning Study are too limiting and not reflective of heights already approved for other sites in Shirlington. The heights proposed will prevent a variety of uses and building form, and viability of potential reinvestment in key areas of Shirlington. We recognize that the concept of higher building heights along Arlington Mill Drive is of particular concern to the Green Valley Civic Association. We seek time to address this specific concern with members of the Green Valley Civic Association and Planning staff while being cognizant of the Shirlington community's recommendations for higher heights in these locations. While we have provided insight and feedback that attempted to be responsive to the question of building heights at the recent Planning Commission meeting, we do not feel any community stakeholder has had an opportunity to review and adequately discuss these concept proposals and there has not been a venue to allow resolutions to occur. Similar topics were raised during these public meetings, including:

- The Transportation Commission, while not being adverse to height and density, recommended deferral because they felt the plan did not provide an adequate amount of information on the transportation system goal details beyond parking and intersection traffic to make an informed decision.
- The Planning Commission discussed clarification issues regarding the Historic Preservation requirements and principles and there were divided motions relating to building height.
- The Green Valley Civic Association and Fairlington Civic Association requested that staff ensures a welcoming Shirlington for surrounding neighborhoods, especially along Arlington Mill Drive, which has been our goal since the initial proposal, and for some reason while the Guiding Principles speak to this, the technical recommendations in the Planning Study do not adequately marry building form and height to these principles.

It is in this light that we hereby request a two-month deferral of this matter to the September 12, 2020 meeting of the County Board. We will use this time to attempt to resolve views between FRIT, WETA, Signature Theatre, our retail community, and Shirlington Civic Association on the one hand, and Green Valley Civic Association and staff on the other, as well as the points raised by members of the Transportation Commission and Planning Commission related to the draft Planning Study just recently released by staff. We welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns with you and other stakeholders and look forward to productive discussions and updates.

Respectfully submitted,



Jay Brinson
Vice President, Development
Federal Realty Investment Trust



Jason R. Daisey
Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer
Washington Educational Telecommunications Association

CC: Planning Commission Chair Elizabeth Gearin
Planning Commission Vice-Chair James Lantelme
Transportation Commission Chair Chris Slatt
County Manager Mark Schwartz
Planning Director Bob Duffy
Margret Tulloch-Rhodes, Principle Planner, Comprehensive Planning