



July 15, 2020

The Honorable Libby Garvey
Chair, Arlington County Board
Arlington, VA 22201

Re: Item #54, Shirlington Special General Land Use Plan Study Plus and Concept Plan

Dear Mrs. Garvey:

Over the past year, as the Green Valley Civic Association has participated in the committee studying the Shirlington Special General Land Use Plan, we have made two requests.

The first is to ensure that the plan includes a welcoming south-side of South Arlington Mill Drive. This means improving upon public movement, pedestrian flow, interactive entrances, and green space. The study report and concept plan capture well these issues on page 66.

Related to these Arlington Mill Drive issues are the heights of the potential buildings on the current surface parking lot. While there is a general consensus in Green Valley that heights of 8-10 stories are appropriate for this specific area, the recommendation for heights not to exceed 10 and 12 stories for new buildings on that part of the street is an acceptable compromise. It is also important for visual impact, skyline and shadowing that these heights be lower than the existing anchoring buildings.

We also are pleased with the unanimous recommendation of the Planning Commission to articulate design guidelines, specifically requiring welcoming entrances, set-backs and tapering along the periphery of Shirlington. We encourage your support here as well.

It is necessary to explain that the potential applicant for this site has a penchant for building developments with fortress-like boundaries. It is antithetical to what is welcoming. Please find attached photos of the boundaries of some of the applicant's current properties in Maryland.

The wording of the concept plan, height recommendations, and suggested design guidelines should help to mitigate these concerns.

The second issue raised by the Green Valley Civic Association is infrastructure considerations. While we recognize assessments related to environmental impact, transportation, schools and utilities are not germane to this particular report, we believe it is important to raise these matters early in the process.

Finally, we are greatly concerned with how Green Valley itself is captured in the report. There are several Green Valley locations that are referenced, but only one – the town square – is noted as part of our community. This is a misrepresentation of our community and it is troubling. Jennie Dean Park, Shirlington Park, the dog park, and a future arts & industry district are all in Green Valley, yet the report fails to recognize this fact. Our southern border actually extends to the middle of Arlington Mill Drive. We are pleased that the staff has acknowledged these oversights and has issued revisions in a matrix amended to the report.

With these corrections, along with the other recommendations mentioned, we urge your adoption of the concept plan report and its revisions. After a year long process and a number of compromises, this plan fairly outlines a positive concept for Shirlington's next generation.

If you have questions or need additional information, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Portia Clark
President
Green Valley Civic Association

Robin Stompler
Chair, Community Affairs
Green Valley Civic Association

Cc: Members, Arlington County Board