

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission Members

FROM: Richard Tucker, Principal Planner DATE: November 5, 2015

SUBJECT: Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments Related to
Implementation of the Western Rosslyn Area Plan

A ZOCO meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, November 10th at 7:00 pm** in the Azalea Room (1st Floor) 2100 Clarendon Blvd. The purpose of the meeting is to review proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments related to the Western Rosslyn Area Plan, including revisions that have been made since the October Joint ZOCO/LRPC meeting.

Overview

This past July, the County Board adopted the Western Rosslyn Area Plan, which included several short-term action steps to be implemented post-adoption. These action steps included amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and General Land Use Plan, which will facilitate the fulfillment of the vision for the area. The following is a brief summary of the proposed changes, which includes updated recommendations that have been developed since the October meeting:

Zoning Ordinance

- 1. S-3A Zoning District: Add a provision giving the County Board the authority to modify school height within the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District.**

Consistent with the vision expressed in the Area Plan, this mixed-use urban area was deemed to be an appropriate location for a multi-story secondary school with height up to 175 feet. With the proposed change, the County Board would have the flexibility to consider a range of building heights, up to 175 feet, for projects within the WRCD for schools and school administrative buildings developed consistent with the Area Plan. The general height limit for schools (45 feet), in areas outside of the WRCD, is not proposed to be amended.

Update: At the October ZOCO/LRPC meeting, it was suggested that the maximum height specified in the proposed amendment be reduced from 175 feet to some other lower height based on Arlington Public School's latest building design. As the school design process is ongoing, it was further suggested that the height specified in the Zoning Ordinance could be

taller than the building height that is currently being considered in the design process, in order to allow some flexibility, should the design change. It continues to be staff's recommendation that the height specified in the proposed amendment be 175 feet. Staff's proposal would provide the maximum amount of flexibility as the school design process proceeds. This height would be consistent with the building height that was modeled during the WRAPS planning process and deemed to be appropriate for this location, as articulated in the adopted Area Plan.

2. RA4.8 Zoning District: Add provisions setting parameters for when the County Board may approve additional density, above 3.24 FAR, to achieve the goals of the Area Plan, such as additional affordable housing, within the WRCRD (APAH site).

The future vision for the Queens Court site, as expressed in the Area Plan, is for up to 250 units of affordable housing. To facilitate this development, the plan calls for a rezoning of the site, upon consideration of a site plan, to "RA4.8" which is a multi-family designation allowing density up to 3.24 FAR (plus applicable bonus density provisions). The proposed Zoning Ordinance amendment would allow the County Board to consider additional density, up to 6.0 FAR, if the proposed development is consistent with the Guiding Principles and other policy guidance of the Area Plan, provides publicly-accessible open space, and maximizes the number of affordable dwelling units to be achieved on the site. The proposed amendment also stipulates a maximum height of up to 12 stories, which was studied as part of the planning process and reflected in the adopted Area Plan.

Update: At the October ZOCO/LRPC meeting, staff explained that the proposed amendment language was drafted to reinforce the community's understanding that additional density and/or height could be considered by the County Board if, among other things, the proposed project were 100% affordable [as defined by the Zoning Ordinance]. However, staff also sought, in drafting the language, to provide the County Board with some flexibility to approve a project that did not meet this strict criteria, if there were other important considerations to be weighed. ZOCO members questioned why flexibility was needed and what criteria or standards the County Board would use to assess a development proposal that consisted of less than 100% affordable units.

In light of the October discussion, staff has revised the proposed amendment language to say that the County Board could consider a development proposal consisting of less than 100% affordable units if it determines that a different percentage should be approved, consistent with the Affordable Housing Master Plan, in order to achieve other goals of the Western Rosslyn Area Plan. The revised staff recommendation is consistent with the goals of the Area Plan and the community's expectation with respect to the amount of affordable housing to be attained, but does also afford the County Board some flexibility to consider an alternate development proposal, where a broader range of income levels may be addressed.

3. C-O Zoning District (§7.13) and Special Planning Area Regulations (§9): Add reference in the C-O Zoning District to Article 9; add provisions to Article 9 specific to the WRCRD

to allow height and density, above that permitted in C-O, for properties located within the WRCRD and designated “High” Office-Apartment-Hotel.

Update: In October, it was proposed that the “C-O-Rosslyn” Zoning District be amended to include references to properties designated as “High” Office-Apartment-Hotel and located within the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District, as shown on the proposed GLUP Map, and to include the goals of the WRCRD. These changes to the zoning text would have enabled the County Board to consider redevelopment of the County parcel and the 1555 Wilson Blvd site with density up to 10.0 FAR; which would be consistent with the Area Plan. ZOCO members expressed concerns about use of C-O-Rosslyn for areas outside of the RCRD and asked staff to consider use of the C-O Zoning District to implement the Area Plan’s recommendations for the County parcel and 1555 Wilson Blvd.

In response to the input received in October, staff reviewed the intent and purpose of the “C-O” Zoning District and found them to be similar to the “C-O-Rosslyn” Zoning District and consistent with what would be allowed under the proposed amendment. Staff also determined that the provisions found in the “C-O” Zoning District could be amended in a more straightforward and clear manner, as compared to those found in the “C-O Rosslyn” Zoning District.

Therefore, staff has revised its recommendation by proposing changes to the “C-O” Zoning District and Article 9. Special Planning Area Regulations of the Zoning Ordinance, which accomplishes the intent of the Area Plan, and our previous recommendation, in a more concise manner. The proposed amendment would add provisions to Article 9, where regulations pertaining to special planning areas shown on the General Land Use Plan are located.

For more information about the Western Rosslyn Area Plan, please consult the WRAPS [webpage](#).

Timeline (revised)

A “Request to Advertise” staff report will be scheduled for County Board review in December 2015; with final County Board consideration in February 2016.

Key:

Black / no underline = existing text

Red/underline or strikethrough = proposed text

Purple/underline or strikethrough = text revised after October ZOCO meeting

Article 4. Public (P) Districts

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§4.2. S-3A, Special District

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§4.2.4. Density and dimensional standards

A. By-right

Development allowed by-right in the S-3A district shall comply with the following area, width and height requirements, except as otherwise expressly allowed or stated.

Type of Standard	One-family Dwelling	All Other Uses
Lot area, minimum	3 acres	6,000 square feet
Lot width, average minimum (feet)	60	60
Height, maximum (feet)	35	45

B. Special exception

All development allowed by special exception in the S-3A district shall comply with the following standards, except as otherwise approved by the County Board.

Type of Standard	Colleges, Hospitals, and Social Service Institutions	All Other Uses
Lot area, minimum	5 acres	6,000 square feet
Lot width, average minimum (feet)	--	60
Height, maximum (feet)	45	45

C. Bulk, coverage and placement

For bulk, coverage and placement requirements not listed in this section see §3.2.

D. Exceptions

The height of schools and school administration buildings may be increased, subject to approval of a use permit, as follows:

- on sites For development projects that are 19 acres or more, to a height may be increased to a height not to exceed 75 feet, subject to the approval of a use permit.
- For development projects within the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District as shown on the General Land Use Plan, where the County Board finds that the development project is consistent with the Guiding Principles and other policy guidance recommendations in the Western Rosslyn Area Plan, to a height not to exceed 175 feet.

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Article 7. Commercial/ Mixed Use (C) Districts

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§7.2. RA4.8, MULTIPLE-FAMILY DWELLING DISTRICT

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§7.2.3. Density and dimensional standards

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B. Special exception

Development allowed by special exception in the RA4.8 district shall comply with the following standards, except as otherwise approved by the County Board

Type of Standard	Two-family Dwellings		Low or Moderate Income Housing	Townhouse, Semi-detached, and Existing One-family Dwellings	Multiple-family	All Retail and Food Establishment uses	All other uses		
	Semi-detached	Duplex							
Site area, minimum (sq. ft.)	7,000	7,000	See 12.3.7	See 12.3.4	30,000		5,000		
Lot, minimum (sq. ft.)									
Lot area	3,500	7,000					30,000		5,000
Lot area per dwelling unit	3,500	3,500					--		--
Lot width, minimum average (feet)									
Lot width	56	56					150		150
Lot width per dwelling unit	28	--					--		--
Height									
Maximum (feet)	35	35					136 (including mechanical penthouse and parapet walls)		35
Maximum (number of stories)	3 ½	3 ½					--		--
Floor area ratio	--	--			3.24 (including all commercial uses)	0.5 (street level only)	--		
Floor area, minimum (sq. ft.)									
Floor area per dwelling unit, exclusive of basement or attic	750	750			--		--		

C. Bulk coverage and placement

For bulk, coverage and placement requirements not listed in this section see §3.2.

D. Exceptions

1. Minimum lot area and width

The County Board may authorize application for rezoning to the RA-4.8 district where a lot or

45 plot having less width or less area which is any part of a block surrounded by streets and/or
46 buildings that generally comply with the provisions of this section.

47 **2. Floor area ratio Density**

48 (a) Maximum floor area, including any commercial uses permitted on a given site, shall be
49 determined by multiplying the site area by 3.24. Any mechanical penthouse area in excess
50 of that used for elevator, mechanical or maintenance equipment shall be counted as gross
51 floor area.

52 (b) Where a development project is within the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment
53 District and designated High-Medium Residential on the General Land Use Plan, the
54 County Board may, in accordance with §15.5.5, permit additional height and density
55 above that provided in §7.2.3.B, approve a site plan with density up to 6.0 F.A.R, provided,
56 however, under no circumstances shall application of this provision for additional density
57 be applied to permit a height greater than 12 stories. In approving such site plan, the
58 County Board shall find that:

59 (1) The development project is consistent with the Guiding Principles and other policy
60 guidance recommendations of the Western Rosslyn Area Plan;

61 (2) One hundred percent All of the dwelling units in the development project are
62 affordable to persons of low or moderate income, unless the County Board
63 determines that a different percentage should be approved, consistent with the
64 Affordable Housing Master Plan, provided, however, the County Board may modify
65 this requirement in order to achieve other goals of the Western Rosslyn Area Plan;
66 and

67 (3) The development project provides publicly accessible open space.
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§7.13. C-O, Mixed Use District

§7.13.1 Purpose

The purpose of the C-O, Commercial Office Building, Hotel and Multiple-family Dwelling District is to provide for limited office building land use, and under appropriate conditions, to encourage rebuilding with high-rise office buildings, hotels, or multiple-family dwellings in the vicinity of Metrorail stations. Determination as to the appropriate mixtures of uses and densities shall be based on the General Land Use Plan designation or approved plans for the area, characteristics of individual sites and the need for community facilities, open space and landscaped area, circulation and utilities.

§7.13.2 Uses

Uses shall be as specified in §7.1.

§7.13.3 Density and dimensional standards

A. By-right

Development allowed by-right in the C-O district shall comply with the following standards, except as otherwise expressly allowed or stated.

Type of Standard	One-family Dwellings	All Other Uses
Lot area, minimum (sq. ft.)	6,000	20,000
Lot width, minimum average (feet)	60	100
Height, maximum (feet)	35	35
Floor area ratio, maximum		
Site area up to 9,999	--	0.40
Site area 10,000 to 19,999	--	0.50
Site area 20,000 and above	--	0.60

B. Special exception

Development allowed by special exception in the C-O district shall comply with the following standards, except as otherwise approved by the County Board.

Type of Standard	Office, Commercial	Multiple-family	Hotel
Lot area, minimum (sq. ft.)	30,000	30,000	30,000
Lot width, average (feet)	125	125	125
Height, maximum, including mechanical penthouse and parapet walls (feet)	153	180	180
Floor area ratio, maximum	3.8	4.8	3.8

C. Bulk, coverage and placement

For bulk, coverage and placement requirements not listed in this section see §3.2.

D. Exceptions

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1. Lot area and width

The County Board may authorize application for rezoning to the C-O district where a lot or plot having less width or less area is part of a block surrounded by streets and/or buildings that generally comply with the provisions of this section.

2. Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District

Properties in the area designated as the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District on the General Land Use Plan may be developed in accordance with the regulations of §9.5

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Article 9. Special Planning Area Regulations

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§9.4. Radnor Heights East Special District

When a site within the area designated as the Radnor Heights East Special District on the General Land Use Plan is sought to be used in a manner inconsistent with the existing regulations for setback, yard, coverage or parking, the County Board, in its discretion, may allow exceptions to those regulations after application for site plan approval consistent with §15.5, in order to achieve a design which is appropriate for the site, project, and the surrounding area and meets the standards for special exception site plan approval set forth in §15.5. By site plan approval multiple-family dwellings may be permitted at densities up to 48 dwelling units per acre.

§9.5. Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District

Where a development project in the C-O district is within the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District and is designated "High" Office-Apartment-Hotel on the General Land Use Plan, the County Board may permit additional height and density above that provided in §7.13.3.B, where it finds that the development project is consistent with the Guiding Principles and other policy guidance for the Western Rosslyn Coordinated Redevelopment District, offers important community benefits identified in the Western Rosslyn Area Plan, and meets the other special exception criteria of the Zoning Ordinance, and subject to the following:

- A. In considering such modification, the County Board may also consider characteristics of the site and the area as described in §15.5.7 and the plans and policies adopted for the area, provided, however, under no circumstances shall the application of the modification of use provisions of §15.5.7 be applied to permit a density of more than 10.0 FAR;
- B. The provisions of §15.5.9. for the approval of additional height and density shall not be applicable to site plans approved under this §9.5;
- C. Building heights shall under no circumstances, exceed 270 feet, east of the North Park Street located between Wilson Boulevard and 18th St N., or 240 feet, west of North Park Street located between Wilson Boulevard and 18th St N., as designated in the adopted Arlington County Master Transportation Plan.

[Note: It is proposed that a Master Transportation Plan amendment, designating the new North Park Street, will be enacted and will precede action on this matter.]