
Joint Zoning (ZOCO) and Long Range (LRPC) Committees of the Planning Commission Meeting Summary, February 24, 2016. PC Members in Attendance: Ginger Briggs Brown (LRPC chair); Jane Siegel (ZOCO chair); Steve Cole; Elizabeth Gearin; Erik Gutshall; Nancy Iacomini; James Schroll. **Process Panel Members**

(invited to participate in the Rosslyn discussion) in Attendance: Stuart Stein (RAFOM CA); Terri Prell (North Rosslyn CA); Tim Helmig (Rosslyn BID); Katherine Elmore (PRC). **Staff:** Deborah Albert; Matt Ladd; Matthew Pfeiffer; Richard Viola; Elizabeth Weigle.

Car rental facilities. Staff gave a brief presentation highlighting the comments received through public outreach and proposed revisions to the preliminary text since the previous ZOCO meeting. Comments from ZOCO members are summarized as follows:

- Staff confirmed the following in response to use standards for the proposed new zoning districts where the use is proposed to be allowed:
 - Within the zoning districts where the use is proposed, rental vehicles would be required to be stored within a parking structure.
 - Prohibition of multiple vehicle delivery from a truck would apply both to car rental vehicles and vehicle showrooms.
- Consider the following:
 - Revising “time and mileage” in the car-sharing definition to ensure that the car-sharing definition is flexible for different future tracking technologies
 - If vehicle showrooms could be located in a second floor space
 - How light/medium truck is defined in the Zoning Ordinance and consider clarifying this issue with respect to industry standards.
 - Rewording “saleable inventory” to ensure to account for vehicle showroom models that might be for sale.

Rosslyn Sector Plan Implementation. Staff gave a brief overview of proposed amendments to the GLUP and MTP and provided a conceptual overview of the Zoning Ordinance amendments with the focus on the approach to codifying building height and setbacks. Comments from LRPC/ZOCO and Rosslyn Process Panel members are summarized below.

Proposed General Land Use Plan (GLUP) amendments

- GLUP Map Text
 - Description of Rosslyn as having the “greatest concentration” of activities is not accurate; consider different language such as “varied activities”
 - Existing bullet regarding preservation areas should be updated to better reflect all the residential areas surrounding the RCRD, including River Place; consider also whether the description reflects the current intent for these areas
 - Somewhat confusing to describe “Plan features” when, in fact, there are multiple plans for each station area; staff explained that this was standard language on the GLUP map and was meant to reference multiple plans
- GLUP Booklet

- Not appropriate to strike “over the next 25 years” from the description of the RCRD; the timeframe acts as a reminder that plans need to be refreshed over time
- When describing C-O Rosslyn zoning district, clarify that additional height and density is earned above base heights/density
- Are bullets just examples or meant to be complete description of the plan’s vision and goals? Staff confirmed that the list is a summary of highlights and not inclusive of all the vision, goals, policies and recommendations in the Plan.

Proposed Master Transportation Plan Amendments

- Concurrent process to amend MTP to include Pedestrian Street as a new street typology
 - Addition of new street typology should be part of a broader County-wide process and discussion, rather than grouped together with Rosslyn implementation. Staff confirmed that the new typology will be proposed as a County-wide update and go through a separate process prior to Rosslyn amendments.
- Street typologies
 - What is the significance of changing streets from Type A to Type B? Staff responded that the types reflect the intended mixed-use character and anticipated level of activity.
- Bike and Trail Network Map
 - The bicycle element of the MTP has not been updated to differentiate between bike lanes and cycle tracks. Can these be distinguished from one another on the map? Staff responded that the County has long-term plans to update the bicycle element, but this has not been done yet.

Proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments – Approach to Building Height and Stepbacks

- Clarifying Questions and Comments
 - Can staff provide examples of project/site specific conditions that would warrant a modification of the heights map? Staff provided example list.
 - Where in the Plan is the basis for Option 3? Staff clarified that the Plan does not recommended how heights should be codified.
 - Could you codify heights for each site without a map? Staff stated that heights could be codified in other ways through text.
 - How would option 3 ensure neighborhood transitions if all buildings could be proposed at 390’? Staff stated that this option would require that the County Board make a finding that a site plan is consistent with the recommendations of the Plan.
 - Option 1 is like Clarendon – a Zoning Ordinance amendment would be required if Plan height was proposed to be exceeded. Option 3 is like Fort Myer Heights North, with only maximum height codified.
 - Is criteria for “upholding vision goals and recommendations” to include all elements of the Plan? Staff: Yes.

- How are single-tower sites defined? Staff explained that this would be determined at the time of site plan, but the Plan made assumptions about which sites would be single-tower sites based on modeling.
- Are there any districts that have no height caps? Staff: yes, the C-O districts except COA.
- Option 1
 - Reflects the intent of the Plan and the heights vetted through the public process
 - Provides predictability and clarity
 - Good option, but good to consider the experience in Clarendon
 - Opposed to substantial changes to the approach outlined in the Plan
 - Some flexibility (for single-tower sites) is allowed under Option 1
 - Leaning towards 1 as it provides the most predictable outcome for neighbors. However, there are times when modifications are important to the community due to unforeseen circumstances.
 - Limited modifications (moving towards Option 2) may be appropriate
- Option 2
 - Could be an option, but want to see staff's ideas for limits on modification; prefer more codification than less
 - Flexibility could be considered for "compelling reasons"
 - If Option 2 had enough specificity, could support it
 - Look for solution between Options 1 and 2
 - Example of Red Top site plan (Clarendon) – required text amendment, which seemed like a lot of process; would prefer if text amendment could be avoided when modification is appropriate
 - Map should be codified; question is where should the flexibility be?
 - Additional flexibility could be considered for unique and challenging conditions (want to discourage the modification from becoming standard site plan request)
 - Flexibility allows for consideration at SPRC
 - Option 2 could be just as flexible as Option 3 because Option 2 does not include a cap on height – not necessarily in the right place on the spectrum as both are at risk for not upholding the Plan.
- Option 3
 - Don't think this option is in line with the intent of the Plan – would not address edge transitions or peaks and valleys
 - Too open-ended; does not provide predictability and clarity
 - Same place we are today with 300 feet maximum but with 90 feet added; does not reflect the peaks and valley approach that was vetted through the Plan process
 - Flexibility allows for all proposals to be considered through site plan process
 - Flexibility assists developers in recruiting tenants who may have requirements that do not fit exactly fit the Zoning parameters (members asked some clarifying questions on how this process works for developers)
 - Sets us on a course that could be irretrievable
 - Heights map does not need to be codified to result in future site plans that are proposed below 390'

- Do not want to see this option explored
- Key Considerations
 - Neighborhood transitions and setbacks
 - Protected view corridors from the public observation deck and peaks and valleys concept
 - Predictability for neighbors
 - Flexibility for specific, challenging circumstances (modification should be the exception, not the norm)
 - County Board, in resolution adopted with the Plan, indicated a desire for flexibility
 - Avoid re-negotiating heights policy during every site plan review
 - Plan provides strong vision, but it does not need to be codified; sentiment of flexibility is key to adapting to a changing marketplace
 - Consider all goals and policies of the Plan (not just those on page 168)
 - If a proposal warrants a change, County Board could always amend the ZO; alternatively, this would add too much of a hurdle and flexibility should be incorporated into the ZO
 - Is there a way to incorporate review process in the ZO (e.g., a project with no modifications has a faster process than one with modifications)?
 - If height modifications are explored, there should be an ultimate cap on height.
 - Public observation deck, transitions, sculpting and many other considerations factored into the heights recommended in the Plan
 - Public observation deck is not yet built, and view corridors were modeled around assumptions
 - The ordinance should not leave the burden on citizens to determine whether each site plan meets the vision of the Plan; the burden should be on the applicant to prove why they should be able to deviate from the Plan
 - A certain level of codification could result in precluding some potential tenants from even considering development in Rosslyn
 - Maximizing the value of one site does not necessarily maximize the value of the neighborhood as a whole
 - Before the Clarendon Sector Plan and Ordinance were adopted, every site plan was a fight. Afterwards, site plans have been much easier to review. However, the Clarendon heights plan is more straight-forward than Rosslyn. Map should be codified; question is level of modification. Criteria similar to page 168 should be turned into findings in the ZO.
 - Flexibility will allow sites to develop differently than as modeled in the Plan, while still meeting the intent. For example, Ordinance should not govern how buildings are oriented.
- Wrap up
 - The chair summarized the discussion as follows:
 - Most are uncomfortable with Option 3
 - Appears to be greater level of comfort with Option 1 but willingness to go toward Option 2 as long as there are bounds for flexibility that are consistent with the goals of the Plan

- Wrap up comments
 - Open to Options 1 or 2 depending on the details; staff should draft bounds and how to determine a unique situation; consider modification limits, such as stories/feet or limiting modifications to certain sites
 - Not sure the single-tower height flexibility is enough; therefore, leaning toward Option 2; include specific findings starting with criteria on page 168; if you can't meet all criteria would need zoning ordinance amendment
 - Support Plan as drafted; flexibility should be provided and ultimately evaluated through site plan process
 - Goal of planning is livability (businesses don't thrive if people aren't there after 6:00); support Option 1, maybe support Option 2
 - Difference between Options 1 and 2 boils down to specifics; should include height cap, specific findings, and only be available for unique circumstances.
 - Option 1 most effectively upholds plan, but need to provide solutions to unanticipated challenges
 - Leaning towards Options 1 and 2; is there another way to answer the question on how to provide flexibility other than Option 3?
 - Should continue discussing Options 1 and 2; want to understand the specific flexibility that developers want and why
 - Option 2 as written is not achievable; flexibility needs to be provided only under limited and defined criteria; p. 168 criteria is a good starting point but not the end
 - Option 1 is too restrictive; lean toward Option 2 but want to hear more about what certainty developers want; developers should enumerate how proposals otherwise meet the goals of the Plan
- Next Steps
 - Staff will take input into consideration and provide draft text for review at future ZOCO meetings
 - Request that staff provided comment-response matrix or other means for sharing comments from the broader public
 - The next meeting date is TBD; notice will be sent and posted on website once date is determined.