

# Long Range Planning Committee, Meeting Summary

January 22, 2019; 7-9:00pm

2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Rooms C/D

**Subject: Special General Land Use Plan (GLUP) Study Process Revisions**

**(Meeting #2)**

Planning Commission Members in attendance: Nancy Iacomini (Chair), Daniel Weir, Jim Lantelme, Jane Siegel, Elizabeth Gearin, David Ricks, Elizabeth Morton, Kathleen McSweeney, and James Schroll. Staff members in attendance: Margaret Rhodes and Kelsey Steffen. Members of the public in attendance: Scott Pedowitz, Frank Poli, Matt Roberts, Dough Plowman, Tom Viles, Tad Lunger, John Kusturiss, John Helms, Mary Beth Avedesian, Evan Pritchard, Matt Allman, Bob Basalcoff, and Phil Dales.

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## Welcome

- Welcome and opening remarks provided by LRPC Chair.

## LRPC Discussion on the Special GLUP Study Process Revisions Proposal

Staff gave a presentation on the typical Special GLUP Study process and walked through the proposed process revisions. After staff's presentation, the LRPC discussed the proposed changes. Comments and questions were then posed by members of the public. Comments and questions included:

- A commissioner asked if this LRPC meeting was envisioned to be the last LRPC meeting on this topic, or if staff planned to attend again for further discussion.
- A commissioner then asked why the Washington and Kirkwood Special GLUP Study was considered a Special GLUP Study Plus? Was it because of the number of sites or property owners? Was it because the Planning Commission was pushing to expand the review?
- A commissioner followed up that question, asking if staff looks at the size of a proposed site when considering a Special GLUP Study.
- Following up on the comments above, another commissioner asked what would have been different if the Washington and Kirkwood Special GLUP Study Plus had been an area plan process.
- A commissioner then asked about the new fee proposal for Special GLUP Studies. How much would the new fees be and what methodology was used to determine the new fees?
- A commissioner then asked how fees were handled for the Washington and Kirkwood Special GLUP Study. Did each property owner pay the fee? Or was it one fee for everyone? How would this work in the new process?
- The commissioners then asked staff to provide a memo on the similar processes from neighboring jurisdictions for comparison.
- A commissioner then asked about timing of the initial review period proposed by staff. They wanted to know more details about the timing and what would lead to either accepting or declining an application for study.

- Next, a commissioner asked about the proposed application window. She wanted to know why this window was necessary and what the applicants would gain through this revised process. She then asked staff to confirm that their reasoning for making this proposal is because they believe it will allow for better planning and faster review than the current process.
- The commissioner also asked about what would happen to applications not accepted for full study. If the applications were good and valid, but were rejected due to staffing/budget issues would they still be required to reapply and pay the fees again? Are there options for flexibility in the scheduling even if a study cannot be accommodated in the coming year?
- Another commissioner asked staff if it was possible to budget time for one to two studies each year, rather than propose this revised process with the application window.
- The commissioner then commented that with the window, it could take nine months for an applicant to know if their study proposal will be selected. This sounds like too much time.
- Another commissioner noted that there are many complexities to staff time prioritization.
- A commissioner commented on the potential need for looking at the GLUP itself.
- Another commissioner asked if staff had been pushed into doing a Special GLUP Study Plus for the Washington and Kirkwood site. Under this new process, would staff have said no? What would have been the outcome?
- A commissioner then requested that the representative from the Chamber of Commerce provide a comment once the discussion opens to the public about why they did not mention the fourth process proposal that includes a rolling submission window in their letter.
- The same commissioner asked what staff would do if five great proposals for Special GLUP Studies were submitted. How would they be prioritized under this new process?
- This led to a discussion of the criteria for the acceptance of study applications. A commissioner asked if a study was deemed appropriate, but deferred, what would be the criteria for selecting or deferring the project amongst others in the following year.
- Another commissioner asked about the staff proposal to have applicants provide 3D modeling as part of their application. She wanted to know if the technology and programs would be compatible with the County's systems.
- A commissioner asked about the possibility of putting a time limit on at least when the first LRPC meeting can be scheduled once an application is submitted.
- Another commissioner asked if the County would be setting standards for what is submitted with a Special GLUP Study application. She wanted to ensure that staff was not looking to add requirements beyond the developers' current abilities.
- Regarding applicants submitting 3D modeling, a commissioner suggested that people look at the 9<sup>th</sup> Street Special GLUP Study for examples of the types of modeling expected.
- A commissioner added that the additional County actions proposed by staff [the associated Zoning Ordinance and GLUP Booklet amendments] were good steps to codify the new process.
- The LRPC Chair suggested that based on this conversation, staff may want to return to LRPC in February.
- A representative of the Economic Development Commission (EDC) stated that he would like County staff to present the proposed process changes at one of the commission's meetings. He then stated that the proposed process change is a solution in search of a problem. He added that the reason the EDC's letter did not comment on the fourth option presented by staff was because it was not mentioned previously. He also noted that adding a year or two to the existing

process with increased fees is not okay. There needs to be a shorter timeline and this proposed change could have major economic ramifications on the Arlington development community. He shared an interest in being involved in the discussion on fees.

- Another member of the public commented that Special GLUP Study projects start with County discussions early in the process and therefore should be able to be accommodated. This same member stated that the issue is not with the fees, it is with the timing created by the proposed review window.
- Another member of the public stated that he echoed all of the previous comments. He added that this procedural change appears to be moving too quickly and that additional input should have been sought out in the development of this process. He also stated that the County should not be shelving proposals for month at a time.
- Another public comment focused on the current process. This member of the public felt that in her experience the process worked and was pleasant. She added that if applications are held up for a year or two, then the projects would not happen. She then pointed at the list of past Special GLUP Studies, stating that most had been successful.
- A member of the public talked about the comparison with Fairfax County's SSPA process. He said the introduction of an application window might result in a flood of applications due to the constricted timelines. He also noted that the Fairfax's SSPA process includes no applicant fees. He then said that the conversation should continue and that the current proposal does not solve the staff resources issues.
- The last public comment was that a group from the development community should work with the LRPC so that the committee can better understand their points of view.