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January 12, 2024

Mr. Michael Swidrak, AICP
Urban Planner III, Development Division
City of Alexandria
Department of Planning & Zoning
301 King Street
Room 2100
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: Compiled City Comments for Combined Waterfront Open Space, Rail Corridor Open Space and Linear Park Segment 2, Concept #1
CDSP#2023-00008 – Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) Site

Dear Mr. Swidrak:

We are in receipt of your comments dated June 7, 2023 and offer the following responses to each of the comments.

CDD Concept Plan #2021-00004, Condition 116 sets forth the requirements of the Old Town North Developer Contribution as contemplated in the Old Town North Small Area Plan (OTNSAP). The contribution amount is \$21,495,167 in 2022 dollars (and expected to increase with the cost-of-living adjustment) and is to be made either monetarily or in-kind for the acquisition, design, and construction of portions of the Old Town North Linear Park (Segment 2) and adjacent on-site open space, and on-site and off-site Waterfront Open Space. The design presented in this Open Space Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) Concept 2 submission is based on the priorities established in the OTNSAP, feedback from City staff, initial community comments received in November of 2022, and feedback received in the May 2023 Open Space survey that received over 800 responses from the public. While all desires cannot be accommodated within the contribution amount, the Applicant has worked diligently to create a thoughtful design that creates or improves approximately 14 acres of open space in a way that achieves the vast majority of priorities discussed with the City and vocalized by the community, including dramatically improving waterfront access and activation, water sheet activation, fitness opportunities, nature enjoyment, programming, and a wide variety of passive and active recreational opportunities. While the required contribution is quite substantial, especially for a project that is primarily residential, it must also be spread across a significant amount of on- and off-site acreage. Please note that the current conceptual estimate is over the contribution amount by more than \$2 million. Applicant is committed to continuing to work with City staff on refining these plans to deliver meaningful open space accessible to the public that meets the goals and priorities of the community, the City and the development.

PLANNING & ZONING

Findings

1. The combined concept plan can be divided into two separate DSUP submissions at the first preliminary plan or “completeness” stage. The Waterfront Park DSUP with improvements to the Mount Vernon Trail will be separated from the Rail Corridor Park/Linear Park segment plan.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

2. The park DSUPs will be reviewed by:
 - a. The Park and Recreation Committee (PRC) will be reviewing the concept plans per the City park review process. The concept plan(s) will likely be reviewed next by the PRC in September.
 - b. the Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC) in compliance with the OTN-PRGS Design Guidelines or Design Excellence Prerequisites & Criteria. The date will be tentatively scheduled based on the Concept 2 submission timing (likely in September or October).

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. Applicant presented the Concept 1 plans and received feedback from the Waterfront Commission at their February 20, 2023 meeting, PRC at their February 25, 2023 meeting, and UDAC at their March 6, 2023. Applicant will work with City Staff to coordinate additional meetings, as necessary. See the Design Excellence Matrix attached hereto as Exhibit One as it relates to Open Space.

3. Staff will provide additional comments to the applicant in the next few weeks that will incorporate community input, survey results and RPCA analysis. This comment addendum will provide additional clarification on the location of proposed uses and facilities and park design that will work in tandem with the comments below.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. Applicant received additional comments on July 11, 2023 and specific responses to those comments are located at the end of this letter.

Site Plan/Park Comments

General

4. The parks/open spaces will be designated as a Destination/Regional typology. The park/open space design will attract users from beyond the region, because of particularly unique features.

RESPONSE: The development will create approximately 14 acres of new open space and will improve approximately 5.5 acres of existing open space. This is significantly less than the City's Destination/Regional typology defined as open spaces of 50-75 acres. Applicant acknowledges the potential regional draw of this location given its proximity to the Potomac River and the City's future rails to trails like conversion of the Norfolk Southern rail line but doesn't believe Destination/Regional typology is the appropriate destination. In the May 2023 community survey conducted by the Applicant, over 70% of respondents said they would access the site by walking to it, indicating that the majority of users are likely to be from the adjacent neighborhood.

5. Confirm what types of park-related structures (i.e. shade structures, restrooms or changing rooms, pavilion/gazebo, etc) would be permitted within the transmission line easement per the agreement with Pepco.

RESPONSE: New, permanent structures are not permitted within the transmission line easement. Existing structures (such as the guardhouse) may remain. Materials related to hardscape and landscape such as paving for roads, sidewalks, pedestrian & cyclist trails, and grass, plants and bushes are permitted within the transmission line easement.

6. Study additional areas where different types of shade areas could be provided, including a larger area by the waterfront.

RESPONSE: Applicant has studied a variety of types and locations for shade structures throughout the open spaces for incorporation in the Concept 2 submission, including one proposed for the great lawn, and shade trees of various fast and slow growing species to provide a balance of shade as the landscape matures.

7. Provide tree and vegetation information (existing and proposed) in line with the requirements of the 2019 Landscape Guidelines with the next Concept submission.

RESPONSE: Proposed tree species and sizes are provided per Landscape Guidelines Concept 2, see sheets C205-C211, and L600.

8. In coordination with NPS review, consider options for a fishing pier in addition to the kayak launch as feasible.

RESPONSE: In coordination with City staff, Applicant continues to work with NPS regarding improvements to the federally owned property managed by NPS. A fishing program is not proposed on the personal non-motorized watercraft launch given both the shallow depth of the adjacent water and potential for conflicts on the launch itself.

9. Provide more detailed contour information overlaid on the park plans with the next submission.

- a. Provide more information on the grading of the Linear Park and how the bike path and programming elements will be reconciled with the grades on the properties to the southwest and the PRGS site to the northeast.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. See sheets L101-L109.

10. The interpretation of the history of this area can be expressed through the landscape design. Incorporation of select existing building and site elements and artifacts, play elements, site furnishings, site walls, and others to mention a few can be utilized to provide both a sense of place and an interpretation of the past. Provide details in conjunction with the future historic interpretation plan coming with the first DSUP completeness submission for the PRGS site.

RESPONSE: The historic interpretation plan will be submitted with the first preliminary plan submission for the first DSUP. Historic interpretation elements are proposed in the form of repurposed materials in the future Linear/Rail Corridor Open Space, see sheets L103 and L201.

11. Provide an interim park design for portions of Waterfront Park and for the Rail Corridor Park which will be constructed per the approved Phasing Plan in Phases 1 and 2.

RESPONSE: Open Space CDD Phases 1 and 2 are intended to be constructed in parallel with the adjacent blocks and delivered as specified in the CDD Phasing Plan. An interim condition of the Rail Corridor Open Space may be necessary, depending on when the City acquires the Norfolk Southern (NS) land as some proposed elements (i.e. children's play area, recreational lawn, dog run) span both the Applicant's property and the NS property. Potential interim conditions at either the Rail Corridor or Waterfront Open Space may include debris removal, soil and seed, as may be necessary at the time of determination.

12. In coordination with the upcoming public art plan to be submitted by the applicant, begin to identify potential public art locations and connections.

RESPONSE: Applicant will provide an overall art plan with the first preliminary DSUP submission, however, since the property will not be conveyed to the City in fee simple, the art will be owned and controlled by Applicant. L101-L109

13. Park spaces should be designed with the infrastructure to accommodate special and City-sponsored events.

RESPONSE: Appropriate infrastructure to support potential future events will be provided in Open Space Final Site Plan (FSP) submissions.

14. To the extent feasible, provide separate bicycle and pedestrian paths per the OTNSAP recommendations (page 65). Staff acknowledges this may be better accomplished in the Rail Corridor/Linear Park.

RESPONSE: Existing paths in the area (i.e. Mount Vernon Trail and City bike path to E. Abingdon Drive) are generally designed to be multi-use paths. The project is introducing new paths that encourage the separation of pedestrian and cyclist flows by providing alternate paths within the same area, allowing the differentiation of flows. For example, the proposed Linear Park path, which is 10' wide per City staff request, is designed to prioritize commuter cyclists while parallel paths in the Rail Corridor Open Space are designed for pedestrian priority to encourage separation of pedestrians and cyclists. See sheets L101-L103.

15. Provide a narrative and identify/include elements on the site plan that are tied into the sitewide recommendations for implementation in the Coordinated Sustainability Strategy.

RESPONSE: Please see the CSS Matrix provided on sheet C213 as relates to site wide sustainability strategies.

16. Provide Comprehensive Open Space Plan and open space calculation sheets included in the Infrastructure DSP as references.
- Add the acreage/square footage totals for the Linear Park segment included in the plan set, noting it as off-site open space.
 - Provide open space exhibits and calculations that for the scenarios that show the construction of the east-west connection and N. Pitt Street connection as options/alternatives.
 - The table on the cover sheet and Sheet L000 should reflect these calculations.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. See Cover Sheet and sheets L000 and L103.

Waterfront Park

17. Event lawn (south of Block A) comments (Sheet L101):
- Consider the three-dimensional design of the backdrop for the event lawn and the placement of temporary stages, screens, etc.
 - Provide information on flexible seating area alternatives to the south/southwest of the event lawn.
 - Provide more information on its interconnectedness to the potential arts use in Block A.

RESPONSE:

- A gently sloped area is incorporated into the design of the proposed lawn to provide views to the Potomac River and Capital Skyline and to a potential stage or screen that could be located along the southern façade of Block A. The design

- of the proposed event lawn may evolve once a user for Block A is identified. See sheet L101.
- b. Flexible seating areas provide space for movable tables and chairs that can be used and rearranged as needed to accommodate a variety of activities and events held at or near the event lawn.
 - c. Given that a ground floor tenant has not yet been identified, the open space adjacent to Block A is designed for flexibility and to allow for and promote connections to the Waterfront and Linear/Rail Corridor Open Spaces as well as the potential future arts/cultural user in Block A. Applicant will work with City staff to make any changes to this space based on the Block A user, if necessary, once identified.
18. Provide information for the promenade (Sheet L101) that is adjacent to Block A and how this area can serve as a potential “spillover” patio for the Block A building while feeling fully accessible and traversable to the public.

RESPONSE: The Open Space zone along Block A’s eastern façade is designed to provide public passage around Block A and also some public seating with views of the Potomac River and Capital Skyline. This is anticipated to be coupled with outdoor seating adjacent to the Block A façade serving the ground floor users of Block A. This will be further defined in Block DSUP’s and/or as ground floor tenants are identified.

19. Consider the alignment of Road B and the creation of a stronger terminus and/or the alignment of the potential overlook as part of a system of such a terminus (recognizing that the overlook may be below sight lines).

RESPONSE: The intersection of Road B at N Fairfax is a significant horizontal and vertical distance from the waterfront making an overlook connection here challenging. Overlooks are proposed at other appropriate locations where views are available. See response to Comment 23 below.

20. The mounded areas do not appear to relate to a particular program. Consider incorporating stormwater BMPs into the design of such a system to enhance the effect (i.e, magnifying the contrast of hills versus valleys) and relate the design to a programmatic need.

RESPONSE: The mounded areas have been replaced in the Concept 2 submission with flat lawn area to provide for a variety of activities. BMPs are proposed throughout the open spaces to process runoff from impervious surfaces, create interest in the landscape, and provide potential educational opportunities. BMP sizes and locations will be finalized as required in Open Space FSPs.

21. Further explore the development of a backing/background for the Great Lawn along the street.

RESPONSE: The great lawn is designed to both support overflow from special events programming on the woonerf and create a unique identity separate from the shared

roadway when no event is taking place. Street trees along the southwestern edge of the Great Lawn act as a visual and spatial buffer and additional trees to the northwest and southwest further frame the lawn and provide pockets for entry from the Woonerf and other directions.

22. Continue to coordinate with staff and NPS on the proposed reuse of the Pumphouse.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

23. Provide more information on seating areas in wooded areas with Potomac River vistas. Identify possible overlook spots as feasible through the development area and adjacent areas in coordination with NPS (when applicable).

RESPONSE: NPS has requested low maintenance overlooks in keeping with their maintenance needs and to reflect the natural environment. The proposed overlook locations in the Concept 2 submission were identified in coordination with NPS and City staff. See proposed overlook location on L105 and the overlook precedent image on sheet L201.

Riverfront overlooks on PRGS property are proposed on the southern edge of the pump house rooftop and along the promenade that runs adjacent to Block A. See sheets L101 and L106.

24. Provide a section through the Pumphouse and nearby mounded landscape areas from N. Fairfax Street to the Potomac River to explore potential of the spaces that can be created by the grade separation.

RESPONSE: See sheet L202.

25. Further explore the connection between the Central/Waterfront Plaza and the Waterfront Park.

- a. Provide initial elements for the plaza so the open spaces can be coordinated in design in a synergistic manor.
- b. Focus on the viewshed from the plaza through the Woonerf and park to the river.
- c. Shade structures in Waterfront Park should be visually light and sited so they do not obscure views to the river.

RESPONSE:

- a. **Waterfront Plaza elements are identified on the Comprehensive Open Space Plan. See sheet L000. The design for this space will be further developed as future blocks DSUPs are submitted, as agreed upon in CDD Conditions.**
- b. **Acknowledged.**
- c. **Acknowledged.**

Rail Corridor/Linear Park

26. Coordinate possible location alternatives of the restrooms in Rail Corridor Park/Linear Park and other prominent areas with staff.

RESPONSE: New permanent structures are not permitted in the Linear/Rail Corridor Open Space due to the underground transmission line easement. Public restrooms are proposed in the guardhouse.

27. Further consideration is needed where the Mount Vernon Trail spur bike path combines with neighborhood pedestrian traffic at N. Fairfax Street and N. Royal Street to ensure pedestrian and bicycle safety and a safe and effective crossing of the street. Continue to coordinate with staff on the design of these intersections and adequate integration of bicycle trail traffic.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. Trail locations at N. Fairfax and N. Royal intersections have been revised in response to City staff comments. See sheets L101-L102.

28. Recreation courts should be sited and designated to accommodate multiple activities and uses.

RESPONSE: Significant recreational area is proposed in the Linear/Rail Corridor Open Space. This large, flat, grassy area can accommodate a wide variety of sport activities including volleyball, soccer, bocci ball, and other activities. See sheets L103-L104.

29. Provide more information on the proposed reuse of the guard house.

RESPONSE: Applicant is considering a retail use and public restrooms for the guardhouse that will be submitted separately in a building permit once a retail user is identified.

30. Ownership and maintenance of any active recreational courts or elements that are located within both the Rail Corridor and Linear parks will have to be coordinated.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

31. Explore appropriate tree and/or shrub plantings between the bike path and the area to the south adjacent to Harbor Terrace.
- a. Coordinate with Harbor Terrace on the edge between the park and the condo property and any potential connections.

RESPONSE: This area is limited in size so additional plantings, if any, would be minimal. Applicant has contacted Harbor Terrace’s HOA to coordinate this discussion.

32. Coordinate with the City on a more integrated connection between the bike path and E. Abingdon Drive that prioritizes pedestrian and bicycle safety. This connection is listed as an “enhanced trail connection” on page 66 of the OTNSAP.

RESPONSE: E. Abingdon Drive is not included in the redevelopment of the site. However, based on a conceptual design provided by the Applicant and submitted to City and NPS staff, the City is implementing an integrated protected bicycle lane on E. Abingdon that was approved by the Parking and Traffic Board.

33. Coordinate with staff on the design of the “Screening Plants Area” based on its potential use as a future right-of-way.
- a. The applicant should provide two designs for this area – one (as currently proposed) that serves as an interim greenspace if the right-of-way connection is constructed, and another design that provides habitat, extensive tree canopy and/or other passive recreational elements.

RESPONSE: The “Screening Plants Area” that runs along the southern property of the substation is designed to accommodate both a potential future road connection and create a walking area that screens the existing substation in interim and permanent conditions. Walking paths are highly ranked in the May 2023 Open Space survey to the public.

34. Coordinate the location of the “potential passive lawn” (Sheet L104) with staff based on needs, programming and community input review.

RESPONSE: The potential passive lawn is relocated in Concept 2 to align with the potential future Pitt St connection and serve as a transition between the play area and recreational lawn.

35. Provide two designs for the area within and surrounding the potential future N. Pitt Street connection.
- a. One design would show the full right-of-way extent and show street trees and sidewalk between Road A and the southern property line of the Norfolk Southern property (and integrating a bike trail crossing).
 - b. The other design (if the connection is not built) would build on what is shown in the Concept 1 submission, with additional tree plantings, a shade structure or covered area and recreational programmatic elements as feasible.

RESPONSE: The Open Space area where the potential N Pitt Street connection could occur is designed to serve as both an interim and permanent condition. See sheet L103.

36. The playground should be designed based on the submitted community input and identified needs.
- Consider expanding playground area to accommodate a range of ages and play experiences.
 - Incorporate the City of Alexandria's playground standards.
 - Restrooms and a covered area with tables/seating should be provided within minimal distance from the playground.

RESPONSE: Applicant has taken the City's playground standards into consideration in its proposed design for the children's play area. Public restrooms are proposed in the existing guardhouse located in close proximity to the play area. The play area was moved to the west of N Royal Street per request by City staff. As a result of this change, the play area expanded in size by approximately 25%. Natural shade provided by tree canopy and seating opportunities are located within the play area. See sheets L102-L103.

Board of Architectural Review

37. The westernmost section of the parcel is located within the Old and Historic Alexandria District (OHAD) due to its proximity to the George Washington Memorial Parkway. Any permanent structures or new construction in this area other items designated in the City's Zoning Ordinance, must be approved by the Board of Architectural Review (BAR). The Open Space Concept 1 Plan submission dated 4/28/2023 indicates that this area will be rail corridor open space with a parks and recreation easement. Staff strongly supports a parks and recreation easement in this area of the development.
- Provide the BAR OHAD line on the relevant plan sheets to help identify if any permanent structures could require BAR approval.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. See sheet C202.

38. Historic Preservation staff finds that the documentary study provided by Thunderbird Archeology fulfills the recommendation in CDSP2022-00024 that the applicant provide such a study.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

39. If any part of the project would be considered a federal undertaking, the applicant will be required to properly adhere to all applicable requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. This process should begin early and must engage all interested parties.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

40. Staff recommends that the applicant provide on-site interpretive signage based on the findings of the documentary study.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. Applicant will submit a historic interpretation plan with the preliminary plan submission for the first DSUP.

RP&CA

1. The Park Planning team will thoroughly examine the community's feedback and requirements, take into account the RPCA park analysis, and collaborate with the applicant to create new concept plans that will encompass various park types and activities, addressing the demand for open spaces in the northern part of Old Town. Per the CDD, include phasing plans and, as applicable, an interim park design for each open spaces once the Park planning team and the applicant agree on the open space concepts that consider community input and RPCA team analysis.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. The Concept 2 submission reflects significant public feedback, including the initial open space poll shared in November 2021, comments from Open Space community meetings held on November 29, 2021 and May 24, 2023 as well as comments provided throughout the three-year community engagement process both in-person and virtually, and the responses to the Open Space Survey conducted the entire month of May 2023. Applicant will continue to work with City staff on open space design elements as part of this DSUP process.

2. Provide programmatic elements that solidify the park/open space as a one-of-a-kind destination/regional park while also meeting the City's park and open space needs. Elements can include a sprayground, water feature, innovative playgrounds and dog parks, multipurpose amenities, etc.

RESPONSE: The Concept 2 submission includes many of these programmatic elements, including a playground, dog run, water features, multipurpose recreational lawns gardens and tree groves. Precedent images are provided on sheets L201 and L202.

3. This City has many competing active use needs, to accommodate this, sports courts should be designed and lined to be multiuse (tennis, pickleball, basketball, and/or futsal).

RESPONSE: The flexible recreational fields in the Linear/Rail Corridor Open Spaces are designed to accommodate different types of sports activities and uses. This large, flat, grassy area can accommodate a wide variety of sport activities including volleyball, soccer, bocci ball, and other activities. Space is reserved for the potential future installation of courts should additional funds be available.

4. Proposed dog park(s) will need to meet the City of Alexandria's 2011 Dog Park Master Plan design guidelines. The design guidelines can be found:

<https://media.alexandriava.gov/docs-archives/recreation/parks/dog-park-booklet=for-web02712.pdf>

RESPONSE: The dog run is not subject to the City’s design guidelines, however, as currently proposed, it does meet the minimum space requirements. This would change if the potential road connection to E. Abingdon is made.

5. The 2019 RPCA Needs Assessment identified rock climbing walls, outdoor public art, community gardens, and fishing areas as facilities of higher importance with higher unmet needs. Use the identified needs listed above to help further the design and programming of the parks/open space for the site.

RESPONSE: The Concept 2 submission reflects public input received from multiple sources, including the May 2023 Open Space survey. The proposed play area includes a climbing structure, a popular element requested in the survey. Less than 1% of survey respondents expressed an interest in fishing. This use is not included in the proposed open space design due to conflicts at the personal watercraft launch and shallowness of water near the site.

6. Update the precedent images to relate to the context of the site (i.e. removal of images of skyscraper buildings).

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. See sheet L201.

7. Design open space within future road reservations to be passive open space to accommodate for easier transition in use.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. See response to Comment 34 above.

8. Relocate trees away from potential future right-of-way locations.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. Trees have been removed from the potential N Pitt St. connection but have been maintained in the potential Abingdon connection as screening for the existing substation. This can be modified if a roadway is constructed.

9. In future submissions, include support infrastructure for events and park and open space maintenance as outlined in the CDD. Include utilities such as power and water, storage, maintenance access and other accommodations to ensure long-term maintenance.

RESPONSE: Electrical outlets to service temporary programming in appropriate locations will be included in future Open Space FSP submissions, subject to the requirements of the transmission line easement. Drinking fountains are proposed in appropriate locations with bottle fillers and dog bowls.

10. In future submissions, include infrastructure for Wi-Fi and the City fiber optics.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. Infrastructure related to fiber for future public wi-fi will be coordinated with the Infrastructure FSP.

TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES (T&ES)

Findings

1. DROW, AlexRenew, Traffic Engineering, OEQ, have no comments.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

2. DASH, VAWC, PWS and Resource Recovery provided no comments.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

3. To address noise code requirements appropriately, OEQ will want clarification on whether there is an anticipated use of an outdoor PA system proposed with this plan and if live entertainment is anticipated. (OEQ)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. There is currently no outdoor PA system anticipated, however, live entertainment could be proposed for a future use or temporary program in which case, Applicant will work with City staff to meet noise ordinance requirements.

4. All uses in this plan must comply with the noise code. (OEQ)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

5. The final design of all streets, roadways, and intersections (e.g., vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, etc.) shall conform to the [Planning Commission's] approved infrastructure DSP (DSP#2023-00001)– which goes to hearing in June of 2023. (Transportation Planning)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. The IDSP was approved by the Planning Commission on June 6, 2023.

Comments

1. Reminder that no new impervious surfaces may be placed within the RPA except for allowable uses per the City's Environmental Management Ordinance and uses outlined in the CDD. (SWM)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

2. For the completeness submission provide preliminary design details for all BMPs proposed with the open space plan. (SWM)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

3. For the completeness submission, the applicant should provide the Virginia Runoff Reduction Method (VRRM) worksheet. (SWM)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

4. For completeness submission, comply with Alexandria water quality volume default requirements in Section 13-109(E)(6) of the Environmental Management Ordinance. Determination for meeting the WQVD must consider the contents of Section 13-110. To meet WQVD requirements, the first ½” inch of runoff over all impervious surfaces must be treated through a water quality BMP. Contributions to the water quality improvement fund in lieu of impervious area treatment will only be considered if specific site constraints, such as grading, prevent 100% of the WQVD from being treated. (SWM)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

5. For the completeness submission, provide preliminary plans for educational signage that stress the importance of water quality and RPA buffers. (SWM)

RESPONSE: A signage plan will be submitted prior to the release of the first block's final site plan.

6. Reminder that the SWM Master Plan must be updated prior to the release of the final open space DSP. (SWM)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

7. Ensure all areas within the future street reservation are designed to be free from any programming – including but not limited to public art, trees and landscaping, utilities, etc.. All reservations for future street extensions shall also include the necessary width for amenities such as sidewalks, street trees, etc. (Transportation Planning)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. The areas reserved for potential future street reservations are designed free of permanent programming and with the necessary width to accommodate the potential roadway and related amenities, if and when the

land is available for roadway construction. Some trees are located to screen the Pepco substation in the area reserved for the potential roadway along the substation's southern property line. See response to Comment 35 above.

8. The open-space plans shall be in conformance with the approved Infrastructure DSP. **(Transportation Planning)**

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

9. Generally speaking, avoid trail and intersection designs with dead-end features and/or large “mixing areas” for pedestrians and cyclists; especially near intersections where people and cyclists are anticipated to queue. **(Transportation Planning)**

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

10. The Mt. Vernon Trail is a bicycle “highway” that runs through Alexandria and is heavily trafficked by commuters, recreationalists, residents, etc. – particularly during rush-hour. Considering these facts, study and design a high-comfort intersection (in accordance with the IDSP conditions) where the trail intersects with N. Royal Street and Bashford Lane. **(Transportation Planning)**

RESPONSE: The Concept 2 submission reflects changes made to the city trail at the intersection of N Royal and Bashford Lane in coordination with City staff and included in the Infrastructure FSP 2 submission. See sheet L102.

11. All intersections shall be designed to minimize (to the greatest degree possible) conflict points with motor vehicles and must also provide the most direct and efficient connection to the latter portions of the trail beyond – as the trail is heavily trafficked during commuter hours. **(Transportation Planning)**

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

12. Sanitary sewer flow from any facilities (e.g., guard house, amphitheater etc.) proposed under this plan which generates sanitary sewer flow shall be accounted for in the sewer flow estimate and re-evaluate the capacity of the sewer onsite as well as offsite. **(Sanitary)**

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

13. Coordinate between the Infrastructure DSP Plan and individual building/open space CDSP site plans to ensure sewer computations and sewer layout are consistent and updated on all site plans. **(Sanitary)**

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

14. On Concept 2: for all layout sheets please show property lines that match the current subdivision submissions for this development. For any of these subdivisions that have yet to be recorded, please include the DSUP and/or SUB # to reference those particular property lines for clarity. (Survey)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

15. On Concept 2: for all layout sheets (such as L101) please depict all property line annotation. And note the preceding comment for how to label any proposed lines that have not yet been recorded. (Survey)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

16. On Concept 2: for all layout sheets please include all existing and proposed subdivision lot numbers. For any proposed lots that have been submitted but not yet recorded, please include their associated DSUP or SUB # for clarity. (Survey)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

17. On Concept 2: Please label all proposed public park/access easements and all proposed park/parcel fee simple dedications. (Survey)

RESPONSE: See sheets C214-216.

ARCHAEOLOGY

Open Space and Landscaping

1. The applicant has hired EHT Tracerics to work with staff and the landscape designers to develop an overall Historic Interpretation Plan that will incorporate and interpret elements of the historical character into the design of the open space and to prepare interpretive elements, which shall be erected as part of the development project. The site plan shall indicate themes and locations of interpretive elements. The interpretation plan will be submitted before or contemporaneously with the first preliminary DSUP plan submission and is subject to approval by the Office of Historic Alexandria/Alexandria Archaeology and the Directors of P&Z and/or RP&CA.* (Arch)(P&Z)(RP&CA)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

2. Certificates of Occupancy shall not be issued for this property until interpretive elements have been constructed, interpretive markers have been erected. *** (OHA) (P&Z) (Arch)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged that interpretive elements will be provided before final inspections are approved for the open spaces. Issuance of Certificates of Occupancy for buildings on adjacent blocks are not subject to Open Space DSUPs.

Archaeology Conditions

1. The applicant hired an archaeological consultant who completed a Documentary Study and an Archaeological Evaluation. Based on the degree of prior disturbances within the study area, the consultant recommended that no further archeological work is necessary for the study area. Alexandria Archaeology concurs with this recommendation.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

2. Call Alexandria Archaeology immediately (703-746-4399) if any buried structural remains (wall foundations, wells, privies, cisterns, etc.) or concentrations of artifacts are discovered during development. Work must cease in the area of the discovery until a City archaeologist comes to the site and records the finds. If significant resources are discovered, the consultant shall complete a Resource Management Plan, as outlined in the City of Alexandria Archaeological Standards. Preservation measures presented in the Resource Management Plan, as approved by the City Archaeologist, will be implemented. (Archaeology). The language noted above shall be included on all final site plan sheets involving any ground disturbing activities. (Archaeology)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

3. The applicant shall not allow any metal detection and/or artifact collection to be conducted the property, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology. The applicant/developer shall not allow any metal detection to be conducted on the property, or allow independent parties to collect or excavate artifacts, unless authorized by Alexandria Archaeology. Failure to comply shall result in project delays. The language noted above shall be included on all final site plan sheets involving any ground disturbing activities. (Archaeology)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

4. Certificates of Occupancy shall not be issued for this property until interpretive elements have been constructed, interpretive markers have been erected, and the final archaeological

report (if warranted) has been received and approved by the City Archaeologist.***
(Archaeology)

RESPONSE: Acknowledged that interpretive elements will be provided before final inspections are approved for the open spaces. Issuance of Certificates of Occupancy for buildings on adjacent blocks are not subject to Open Space DSUPs.

Archaeology Findings

- F-1 The Bellevue Plantation was established on the subject property shortly after the American Revolution. By 1801 William Hodgson and his wife Portia Lee began leasing the 17-acre plantation that bordered the Potomac River. At that time the main house was described as a “50 ft. long & 28 ft. wide, 1 story high with a Dutch roof and was constructed of wood.” The house had a 20 ft. by 23 ft. brick cellar. Nearby stood a wood frame 28 ft. by 18 ft. kitchen and the yard was populated with a stable, smokehouse, and dairy. The estate was valued at \$4,000 in 1795, one of the more valuable plantation properties in the area. Hodgson was a local merchant and regularly sold goods from his store on Prince Street. By 1820 Bellevue Plantation was put up for sale. Later in the 1840s John Slater acquired Bellevue, built greenhouses, and established a floral business. Slater had learned the trade from William Yeates, a prominent local horticulturalist. During the Civil War there are at least three small “farms” (possibly greenhouses) depicted on the property, each fenced and planted in orchards or other formal plantings, such as might have been part of Slater’s floral business. The property remained in the Yeates family into the twentieth century and continued to operate as a productive farm.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged

- F-2 If this project is a federal undertaking or involves the use of any federal funding, the applicant shall comply with federal preservation laws, in particular Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. The applicant will coordinate with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources and the federal agency involved in the project, as well as with Alexandria Archaeology.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged

- F-3 All required archaeological preservation measures shall be completed in compliance with Section 11-411 of the Zoning Ordinance.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Response: this section did not include any comments.

RPCA Addendum Comments Received July 11, 2023

General Comments

1. The applicant will work with RPCA on prioritizing specific uses and facilities based on the progress of the future acquisition of the Old Town North Linear Park.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged.

2. The whole site should have a variety of amenities to cater to everyone. These should include (to the extent feasible) a playground suitable for all ages and abilities, dog parks, multi-use/flexible courts, water features/playgrounds, trails, sitting areas, and open lawns for various activities such as concerts and festivals. When designing open space Concept II, it is essential to consider the most popular uses identified by the community in the survey conducted in May in addition to City-identified needs.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. This Concept 2 submission reflects input received from multiple sources, including the May 2023 community Open Space survey. The Concept 2 submission includes many of these programmatic elements, including a playground, dog run, water features, multipurpose recreational lawns gardens and tree groves.

3. Continue collaborating with RPCA personnel to determine the optimal locations for the amenities in Rail Corridor Park and Linear Park. It is recommended that all court designs should prioritize flexibility for year-round use.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. Significant recreational area is proposed in the Linear/Rail Corridor Open Space. This large, flat, grassy area can accommodate a wide variety of sport activities including volleyball, soccer, bocci ball, and other activities. Space is reserved for the potential future installation of courts should additional funds be available. See sheets L103-L104.

Focused Comments

4. Consider expanding the available multi-age play areas in the event lawn and pump house areas, including dog parks, restroom facilities (recommended for at least one location in the Rail Corridor Park and one in/near Waterfront Park), and those uses.

RESPONSE: Applicant has thoughtfully coordinated the location of active recreational considering appropriate adjacency such as locating the children's play area in proximity to the guardhouse, where a restroom is anticipated to be located. It should be noted that the Waterfront Open Space as approved in the CDD Conditions calls for primarily passive uses.

5. Incorporate site elements into the Waterfront Park area and/or adjacent retail and commercial area that accommodates a small children's play feature and visitors and residents who bring dogs to the open space areas.

RESPONSE: The program for Waterfront Open Space is focused on enjoyment of the natural riverfront which aligns with the passive recreational use of the adjacent NPS land. Proposed improvements are designed for all ages and include a personal watercraft launch, improved Mount Vernon Trail bridge at the pumphouse, pedestrian connections to the Mount Vernon Trail, natural overlooks, woodland walks, integrated seating facing the Potomac River, the great lawn designed for flexible programming, and a riverfront walk adjacent to Block A. It should be noted that the Waterfront Open Space area as contemplated in the approved CDD Conditions calls for primarily passive uses, a preference also reflected in the May 2023 community open space survey. More active programming, such as children's play area and dog area, are located on the Liner/Rail Corridor Open Space in keeping with the OTNSAP and CDD Conditions.

6. Incorporate a water feature into the Waterfront Park.

RESPONSE: A water feature is not currently contemplated for the Waterfront Open Space which is characterized by a Great Lawn, passive walking paths and planted/shaded areas. However, improved access to the Potomac River will also be created with the personal watercraft launch, natural overlooks, widened and improved MVT at the pumphouse, and integrated seating from which to enjoy the Potomac River to the south of the pump house.

7. Based on the open space survey results, design the children's play spaces to incorporate nature-based play, water play (i.e. splash pad), slides, climbing structures, swings, and interpretive play elements. The playspaces shall serve all age groups and shall include accessible activities/components, surfacing, and pathways. Play areas shall be shaded with natural shade or shade sails/structures throughout the day.
 - a. Collaborate with staff on the playspace designs and provide precedent images.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. The proposed children's play area is revised in the Concept 2 Submission to focus on nature-based play for various abilities and age groups. Various play structures using natural materials are proposed for the future play area. Accessibility and natural shade elements and seating are proposed in the design. See sheet L201 for precedent imagery.

8. Include pet waste stations throughout the space for dog walkers.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. See sheets L101-L109.

9. Include water bottle fillers and dog fountains.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. See sheets L101-L109.

10. A signage package will be part of this project and should include mile markers, informational/historical signage and kiosks, and wayfinding.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged, a historical interpretation plan will be submitted with the preliminary plan submission for the first DSUP and a coordinated sign program will be provided before the release of the first building's final site plan.

11. Provide a lighting plan identifying pathway lighting and other facility lighting for the ballcourts, plaza areas, performance spaces, dog exercise areas, and other activity areas.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged, a lighting plan will be provided in accordance with the City's guidelines in the first Open Space FSP.

12. Demonstrate how sustainability measures are integrated with the overall park design.

RESPONSE: The Concept 2 Open Space design includes concepts in the Coordinated Sustainability Strategy (CSS) endorsed by City Council on May 13, 2023. See CSS Matrix provided for site wide considerations at sheet C213.

13. In coordination with RPCA, identify the locations and types of all site furnishings, including benches, picnic tables; moveable furnishings; bicycle parking, trash/recycling receptacles, pet waste stations, bottle fillers, etc. Locations shall be carefully sited to ensure optimal access and service to users.

RESPONSE: Acknowledged. Conceptual layouts are shown in the Concept 2 submission. Specific selections for those items will continue to be coordinated in future submissions. See sheets L101-L109

14. Provide a conceptual landscape plan/framework and/or planting palette, showing potential phasing, tree canopy, and cohesive planting areas throughout the open spaces.

RESPONSE: See sheets L000 – L109. Phasing of the open space areas will be accomplished in compliance with the CDD. A planting schedule is included on sheet L600.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mary Catherine Gibbs". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Catherine Gibbs

Attachments:

Exhibit One – Design Excellence Matrix

cc: Michelle Beaman Chang, VP, Mixed Use Development, Hilco Redevelopment Partners

Exhibit 1
Open Space Design Excellence
Prerequisites:

PREREQUISITE	TEXT	YES/NO	APPLICANT COMMENTS	STAFF COMMENTS
P1: Superior Urban Form	<p>Within an individual DSUP application, a building or group of two or more buildings, which, as a composition, create a unique and memorable urban place, through a combination of their spatial relationships, public spaces, exterior design, materiality, and massing. Blocks are planned with a mix of uses and developed and designed with site-wide consideration of individual buildings and spaces. Buildings or spaces in a prominent location or with a prominent use are designed to reflect their contextual importance, including key locations such as the North Fairfax and Slater’s Lane gateways, and the central plaza.</p> <p>Examples include – Interplay of uses between levels; forms that frame water views; controlled relationships between ground plane & upper levels; and architecture & landscape designed holistically.</p>		<p>The development of open space across the site complements the thoughtful siting of Blocks A, B and C and helps tie together planned and future buildings and landscape at ground level. The Rail Corridor Open Space is envisioned as a unifying element along the length of the western edge of the site, including gateway plazas at site entry areas designed to complement adjacent building massing. It also includes programmatic elements serving community needs such as a children's play area, recreational lawn and dog run. The Waterfront Open Space is designed to provide a transition between the water's edge and the development and includes both passive elements such as woodland walks and waterfront overlooks and more active elements such as access to a personal watercraft launch and the Great Lawn that can host community activities. As an ensemble, the open space provides a unique and varied experience for users emphasizing the site's natural beauty and waterfront location, while simultaneously creating a sense of wonder and discovery. While designed to be enjoyed from ground level, the view of the open space from above also complements overall vistas from the site.</p>	
P2: Environmental Innovation Leader	<p>Environmental Sustainability is integrated into the design of infrastructure, open spaces, and buildings. The Applicant will demonstrate an integrated approach to building design, open space and infrastructure to meet or exceed the sustainability goals as outlined in the Coordinated Sustainability Strategy (CSS). A building or group of buildings and site design must demonstrate a high level of commitment to environmental stewardship and responsibility using innovative technology and a holistic environmental response. This may include visible environmental measures for educational and demonstrative purposes. The project will demonstrate, implement or meet the goals and targets established by the site’s Coordinated Sustainability Strategy, OTNSAP, and voluntary Carbon Neutrality Analysis (CNA).</p> <p>Examples include – Green roofs; integrated stormwater strategies at street level; on-site photovoltaic; and balanced hardscape & landscape.</p>		<p>The open space plan includes a broad range of sustainability measures as outlined in the CSS. These measures include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balance of landscape and hardscape elements to mitigate urban heat island effect• Creation and conservation of natural habitats• On-site stormwater management, independent of the municipal stormwater system, including stormwater gardens, native meadows and planted berms• Reduction of potable water used in open space• Reduction of embodied carbon in the selection of materials• Promotion of alternative modes of transportation through creation of new pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure	

PREREQUISITE	TEXT	YES/NO	APPLICANT COMMENTS	STAFF COMMENTS
P3: Quality + Durable Building Materials are Specified	<p>Exterior building materials will be limited to natural or engineered stone, metal, porcelain tile, terra cotta, brick, wood, concrete, photovoltaic panels, glass or materials of equal quality, performance, and longevity.</p> <p>Examples include – Glass/aluminum; wood/glass; metal/glass; brick; and glass/metal panel/terra cotta.</p>		The hardscape palette for exterior spaces will feature materials that complement the overall design aesthetic for the development, including masonry pavers, locally sourced stone features, decorative concrete, concrete pavers, decorative aggregate, metal, durable woods, and wood sourced and reused from the removal of on-site trees.	
P4: Off-Street Parking is Located Below Grade	<p>Off-street parking will be provided entirely below grade. Adequate soil depth above the below-grade parking must be provided to support canopy trees, surface paving materials, and innovative water management strategies at key locations. These features will be integrated into the site design and will be provided at grade. Creative integration of parking and service functions enhances the public realm (e.g., combined parking and loading across the site with no on- street maneuvering, etc.).</p> <p>Examples include – Attractive service & pedestrian alleyways; shared approach to pedestrian & vehicle movement; and clear & distinguishable parking wayfinding.</p>		All off-street parking is located in a below-grade garage and parking and loading entries for Blocks A, B, and C have been consolidated along Road B in order to provide a cohesive and uninterrupted public realm experience. Street design includes ample pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, new street trees and plantings, and stormwater bioretention facilities. The public realm is designed to delineate places where pedestrians and vehicles move separately, with natural movement paths reinforced by appropriate buffers and plantings.	
P5: Exceptional Site Response	<p>A building or group of buildings that captures or enhances its setting in creative ways. This could include the integration of waterfront and city views with circulation, the relationship and engagement with public open space, and the creation of unique amenities within or on top of a structure, or subsurface structure with usable roof (such as the Pump House or other infrastructure).</p> <p>Examples include – Activation of building roofs as a “fifth elevation”; building forms that frame open space & waterfront views; framing waterfront views; enhanced amenities at roof level; and green space at many heights.</p>		The Waterfront Open Space has been planned as a unique multi-tiered space that simultaneously provides scenic views of the Potomac River and Capital Skyline while also allows visitors to use the space in a passive or active way, according to their preferences. It includes publicly accessible overlooks, seating and wildlife immersion opportunities, an improved Mount Vernon Trail bridge, a Great Lawn for programming and watersheet activation with access to a personal watercraft launch. The Rail Corridor Open Space provides a beautifully landscaped transition into the site with a series of thoughtfully arranged programmatic elements to respond to a wide range of public interests and provide users with a varied experience.	

Criteria:

C1: Architectural Excellence	<p>Architectural excellence should be achieved using one of the two following paths:</p> <p>Landmark/Iconic Structure; or Contextual Character.</p>		Contextual Character	
C1A: Landmark/Iconic Structure (where identified)	<p>A single building that, through its architectural expression, unique massing, strong roof form or other element, solar response, or exterior cladding of exceptional quality, becomes a place-defining element for the site.</p> <p>Examples include – Interesting and responsive forms; dynamic integrated signage; and jewel-box elements at ground level.</p>		Not Applicable	

C1B: Contextual Character	<p>A building or group of buildings whose design responds to its contextual location to create a meaningful place through its spatial relationships within the site and response to aerial views, waterfront views, and views from and to Old Town North.</p> <p>Examples include – Façade variation with varied character; site responsive massing; façades that respond to interior uses; and well-proportioned, contemporary façades.</p>		<p>The open space is designed to be highly responsive to the surrounding context. The Waterfront Open Space includes thoughtful physical connections to NPS property and the Mount Vernon Trail as well as native plantings, creating a sense of continuity despite the different ownership. The Linear/Rail Corridor Open Space provides both active and passive amenities responsive to community requests. It is designed to connect seamlessly to the Old Town North neighborhood and will incorporate elements of the site industrial history. Both the existing Pump House and the Guard House are being preserved and adaptively reused as contextual and historical elements.</p>	
C2: A Variety of Open Spaces/High Quality Open Spaces	<p>A variety of open spaces on, within, or adjacent to the site which contribute to the regional open space network, are provided. The site includes public and/ or private open spaces that support a variety of active, social, and passive uses in a mix of urban plazas, lawns, shared streets, rooftop open spaces, and recreational areas.</p> <p>Examples include – Intimately-scaled public spaces; multi-use public green spaces; moveable furniture; flexible outdoor areas; and varied connections to the water.</p>		<p>In both the Waterfront and Rail Corridor Open Spaces, a mix of high quality passive and active recreation areas have been planned for the benefit of Alexandrians of all ages and abilities. Amenity spaces that help support active uses (such as the temporary kayak storage area) have been identified as well. A Great Lawn and Event Structure along the waterfront has also been included to help provide diversity in size of potential events. Working alongside these active spaces are a series of smaller spaces, like terraced seating and well-located benches for individual or smaller group activity.</p>	

C3: An Active Public Realm	<p>The public realm dynamically engages the pedestrian experience and ground floors of buildings include active uses, interior- exterior visibility, and high- quality architecture. A dynamic public realm will create street- level vibrancy through the design of differentiated and unique storefronts with a higher level of design detailing and quality of materials, innovative lighting, high quality sign design, frequent building entries, and the potential integration of art into building façades.</p> <p>Streetscape design incorporates the City's <i>Complete Streets Design Guidelines</i>, with amenities and infrastructure for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit. Site design incorporates high quality paving materials, site furnishings, and lighting. Service areas will be designed to be compatible with the public realm and pedestrian experience while remaining as unobtrusive as possible.</p> <p>Examples include – Areas for shared movement; connected retail & open space; spaces planned for multiple uses; and distinctive & fluid streetscapes.</p>		<p>The project includes approximately 14 acres of new or improved publicly accessible open space designed to complement and celebrate the unique attributes of the site with a specific focus on the pedestrian experience and the creation of a dynamic public realm. The Open Space design incorporates a variety of thoughtfully located passive and active recreational areas providing connections to the surrounding context and to the development Blocks. The design encourages indoor-outdoor connections and spillover of activity from the buildings to the sidewalks to the adjacent open space. For example the ground floor of Block A has been developed in concert with the landscape elements surrounding the building. Features include integrated seating along the promenade that could be used as a potential extension of the indoor arts use planned at this Block. A flexible event lawn at the south of Block A can also help provide an extension of the ground floor use, creating an interior-exterior relationship. The Waterside Dining location at the Pump House provides a dynamic engagement between the existing structural elements and the Potomac and helps to provide an interesting opportunity for accessible connections and terraced seating overlooking the water. The streetscape design incorporates amenities and infrastructure from the City's Complete Streets Design Guidelines and will include high-quality materials and furnishings.</p>	
C4: Inclusive Design of Buildings and Open Spaces	<p>Building and open space design responds to the needs of diverse users and meets or exceeds the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Across the site, buildings and open spaces invite users of different ages, interests, and abilities to engage with the spaces.</p> <p>Examples include – Accessible open space & features; an accessible urban realm designed for all abilities; and shared streetscapes.</p>		<p>Diverse spaces have been planned to appeal to a wide range of users considering interests, age and abilities. From an accessible children's play area, to bird watching, to outdoor dining, to cycling infrastructure there is something for everyone offered with universal design in mind.</p>	