



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

Barney Heath
Director
Planning & Development

Members

Peter Doeringer, Chair
Kelley Brown, Member
Sudha Maheshwari, Member
Jennifer Molinsky, Member
Sonia Parisca, Vice Chair
Chris Steele, Member
Barney Heath, *ex officio*
Kevin McCormick, Alternate
James Robertson, Alternate

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PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD JOINT MEETING WITH LAND USE COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 27, 2021

Members Present:

Peter Doeringer, Chair
Kelley Brown, Member
Sudha Maheshwari, Member
Jennifer Molinsky, Member
Barney Heath, *ex officio*
Kevin McCormick, Alternate

Land Use Members Present: Councilors Lipof (Chair), Kelley, Greenberg, Lucas, Markiewicz, Downs, Bowman, and Laredo

Also Present: Councilors Oliver, Albright, Wright, Malakie, Krintzman, Crossley, and Humphrey

Staff Present:

Senior Planner Katie Whewell, Senior Planner Michael Gleba, Director of Planning and Development Barney Heath, Associate City Solicitor Jonah Temple

Meeting held virtually by Zoom Meeting

1. Public Hearing on #91-21, Zoning amendments to MU3-TOD for Riverside Project

The Planning and Development Board joined the Land Use Committee for this item. Attorney Stephen Buchbinder introduced several members of their team and spoke a bit about the evolution of the Riverside project in the past year.

Keenan Rice, the president of MuniCap, gave a brief presentation about the fiscal impact of the project. He talked about some of the implications of the change from a proposed hotel and office space to life science and lab space. There are advantages to this change- consistent with city economic plan and is more realistic because demand for hotel space is not high in the wake of the pandemic. Mr. Rice said that life science space is in more demand right now than typical office space. He explained some of the anticipated fiscal impacts of the project on the city. This project is likely to cause a small amount of additional traffic but does not add new roads, and the infrastructure will be maintained by the property owner. Mr. Rice explained some of the fiscal benefits of a life science use to replace the hotel use.

Jesse Baerkahn of Graffito SP then spoke about neighborhood strategy and retail development on the site. He said that Graffito has worked with Alexandria on several projects in the area involving ground floor retail in a lab building that have been successful. The core retail change in this revised plan is the reduction in square footage of retail in the grocery use. He explained that this would create a smaller market space rather than full grocery store, which has some benefits for pedestrians and to ensure the tenant for that space will have the flexibility to adapt to a changing retail market.

Damien Chaviano, Principal at Mark Development, then explained some of the changes made to the favorable housing program. He presented a revised plan for the affordable units based on feedback from the March application. Mark Development is now proposing a total of 111 affordable units, the same number as proposed in March, but they have shifted 5 units into the 50-80% AMI tier, which is equal to the amount of affordable units in that tier approved back in July 2020.

Staff then gave a brief presentation overviewing the changes proposed in the project. HR&A, who has conducted a peer review on the fiscal analysis, agree with MuniCap about fiscal impact and evaluate the change in use to life science positively.

Members of the Land Use Committee and the Planning & Development Board then discussed the item. Several questions were posed to the petitioner about the methodology of the fiscal analysis and the market forces included in the analysis, and whether it made sense to pivot to a small artisanal food market rather than a more practical and affordable grocery store.

Several members spoke favorably of the return to deeper affordability for the affordable housing units.

Due to the late hour, Chair Lipoff set aside half an hour at the next meeting for public comment. Chair Doeringer explained that the Board's plan is to continue the item and discuss Riverside at their next regular meeting on May 3. Upon a motion by Ms. Maheshwari and unanimously approved, the item was continued, with Mr. Heath abstaining. The meeting was then adjourned.