

Subject: AHCA comments to March 9 PC meeting re: Crystal City PDSP
From: "Scott Miles, Aurora Highlands Civic Association" <president@aurorahighlands.org>
Date: 3/9/20, 6:16 PM
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AURORA HIGHLANDS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

March 9, 2020

Planning Commissioners:

We appreciate the holistic look by putting these sites in a PDSP. We are especially pleased with the provision of affordable housing units in the area, the investment in long-awaited open space, and the transportation improvements along 23rd Street. We express the following objections, however, to the proposal:

The building at 101 12th Street has not gone through an SPRC process. The applicant is proposing to put \$300k toward planning Gateway Park, where Crystal Drive bends around to become 12th Street. They are also proposing to build a new connector street that would cut from 12th to 10th St., a street that would primarily serve JBG's building but may also have big traffic implications for Crystal Drive traffic. See Figure 13.

We therefore request:

1. Funding for Gateway Park be flexible and be put toward other green spaces in Crystal City if the priorities expressed at SPRC show that using it here is not desired. We don't know what the community would want--left mostly open green space or planned to have recreational and passive uses.
2. Although the connector street is in the Crystal City Sector Plan, it was not requested as a community benefit. With concerns about traffic, we ask that a study of anticipated effect on traffic be conducted first.
3. We also do not think that any additional density should be awarded for having a LEED Silver building. Although it is up to the County to rectify this provision in its Density Incentive Program, it does not align with the County's newly passed goals for becoming carbon neutral.

79% of emissions come from buildings. If we do not require more ambitious sustainability requirements than LEED Silver for new high rise construction, it is hard to see how Arlington will meet its targets.

4. Finally, we agree in general that the "E/W Connection" would be a great pedestrian-only area if it can be accommodated as such. However, this puts even greater pressure on the County to address the terrible conditions for pickup/drop-off along Crystal Drive. This has a direct relation to the lack of protected bike lanes along Crystal Drive, which are a frequently cited safety and convenience issue for area residents. Protected bike lanes and adequate pick-up/drop-off along Crystal Drive should be a part of this community benefits package; failing that, an implementation plan should be put forth concomitant with approval of this proposal.

I regret getting this to you at the last minute and hope it can be reflected in your deliberation tonight.

Sincerely,

/ Scott Miles /

President,

Aurora Highlands Civic Association