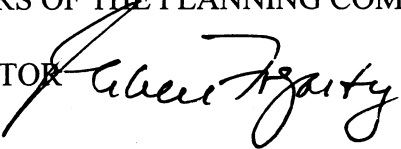


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 23, 2004

TO: CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: EILEEN FOGARTY, DIRECTOR
PLANNING AND ZONING 

SUBJECT: POTOMAC YARD DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PYDAC)

At its February 3 hearing, the Commission deferred consideration of Text Amendment #2004-0001, regarding the composition of the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC), asking staff to present additional alternatives based on the Commission's discussion. The text amendment creates a zoning ordinance provision regarding PYDAC, instead of having its composition be governed by the SUP condition that has been part of the Potomac Yard concept plan approval. The purpose of the recommended change in composition is to specifically include residents of the Potomac Yard area as members of the Committee.

Concerns expressed by the Commission and residents at the February hearing included the fact that areas of the city beyond Potomac West and Potomac Yard will be affected by the development of the Yard, and should have an opportunity to be on the Committee. Commissioners also discussed whether the category requirements could be stated as goals or targets instead of as rigid requirements. Based on these concerns, the Commission may want to consider the following three new alternatives, shown on the attached chart, as it makes its decision:

OPTION 1

status quo; no change

OPTION 2

text amendment as proposed

OPTION 3 (new)

Include one designated member from each of the following: Potomac West, Potomac Yard, Northeast; plus one at large member; one business representative and two architects/urban designers.

OPTION 4 (new)

Make all four representatives of the residential neighborhoods at large members.

OPTION 5 (new)

Make all members of the Committee at large representatives, except for the two members to be architects or urban designers, with the goal of including representatives of the surrounding neighborhoods, including Potomac West, Potomac Yard, and Northeast, and representatives of the business community.

POTOMAC YARD DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE COMPOSITION ALTERNATIVES

Option 1 (Status Quo)	Option 2 (Proposed)	Option 3 (New)	Option 4 (New)	Option 5 (New)
2 Architects/Urban Designers	2 Architects/Urban Designers	2 Architects/Urban Designers	2 Architects/Urban Designers	2 Architects/Urban Designers
3 Residential Neighborhoods and the Business Community	1 Business Community	1 Business Community	1 Business Community	
2 Potomac West area	2 Potomac West area	1 Potomac West area		
	2 Potomac Yard area	1 Potomac Yard area		
		1 Northeast area		
		1 At Large (resident)	4 At Large (representation of residential neighborhoods)	5 At Large (with goal of including representatives of Potomac West, Potomac Yard, Northeast and Inner-City neighborhoods and the business community)
7 Total	7 Total	7 Total	7 Total	7 Total

Docket Item #18
TEXT AMENDMENT #2004-0001

Planning Commission Meeting
March 2, 2004

CASE: TEXT AMENDMENT #2004-0001
POTOMAC YARD DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PYDAC)

ISSUE: Consideration of an amendment to Section 5-602 of the Zoning Ordinance to provide for the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, MARCH 2, 2004: On a motion by Ms. Fossum, seconded by Mr. Leibach, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the text amendment with the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee to include: 2 architect/urban designers, 1 business representative, 1 Potomac West resident, 1 Potomac Yard resident, 1 Northeast resident and 3 at large resident members, increasing the size of the committee to nine members, and eliminating the proposed language in Section 5-602 (E)(3). The motion passed on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Commission generally agreed with staff's "Option 3," but increased the number of at large members, as well as the total number of committee members, in order to allow representation of new communities at Potomac Yard, as well as residential communities throughout the city. The Commission also found the language in Sec. 5-602 (E)(3) to be unnecessary.

Speakers:

Amy Slack, representing Del Ray Citizens Association, spoke in support of keeping the committee status quo or growing the committee by two to include members of Potomac Yard community.

David Fromm, representing himself and the Del Ray Citizens Association, discussed the fact that existing neighboring communities were extensively involved over many years in the development of the Design Guidelines that apply to new development at Potomac Yard. Of the options before the Commission, he believed either Option #3 or Bill Hendrickson's was best.

Poul Hertel, resident, felt that the committee structure proposed by Council excluded Northeast residents. He believed that the status quo, Option #5, or the Lillian White option, expanding the number of members, was best.

Sylvia Sibrover, resident, spoke in support of Option #5 because it includes the most at large representation.

Lillian White, resident, suggested increasing the committee to nine members to include 1 architect/urban designer, 1 business representative, 2 Potomac West (to include Del Ray), 2 Potomac Yard and 3 at large members. Ms. White felt that the current membership is too specific and her suggestion would allow more representation from surrounding communities.

Richard Cooper, 1219 Powhatan Street, would prefer the status quo. If the committee is modified, he preferred either Option #5 or #3.

Katy Cannady, resident, spoke in support of having 3 non-designated seats for citizens at large because there are so many areas of the City affected by changes made to Potomac Yard.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION, FEBRUARY 3, 2004: On a motion by Mr. Dunn, seconded by Mr. Robinson, the Planning Commission voted to defer the text amendment. The motion carried on a vote of 7 to 0.

Reason: The Commission was very concerned about the composition of the PYDAC, the affect of Potomac Yard development on neighboring areas, on existing and future residents of Potomac Yard, and on the city as a whole. Members suggested several different ideas including, that composition categories should be stated only as guidelines, not requirements; changes in the wording to make membership more flexible; keeping the status quo; and expanding the committee to accommodate more members. The Commission asked staff to return with a few of the alternatives discussed by the Commission as options for them at the next meeting.

Speakers:

Mariella Posey suggested that representatives from all areas of the city, or at least one member, should be eligible for membership because what happens on Potomac Yard affects all areas of the city.

Silvia Sibrover spoke in favor of broader representation.

Justin Wilson, President, Del Ray Citizens Association, explained the Associations involvement in the original proposal, and supports the original language which includes at least one resident from the city at large. (See p. 8)

Brian Detter, President, Old Town Greens Townhomes Association, spoke in support of the originally proposed language at p. 8 of this report.

Poul Hertel argued in favor of the status quo, urging the Commission not to vote in favor of the proposed text amendment, so that representatives of other neighborhoods, including Northeast, Inner City, Old Town North, as well as Potomac Yard residents, could be included.

Richard Cooper, 1219 Powhattan Street, spoke in support of the status quo; in the alternative, there should be seats for residents at large.

Lillian White recommended expanding the membership of the committee to allow at least three at large resident members.

TA #2004-0001

POTOMAC YARD DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the following text amendment:

ARTICLE V: MIXED USE ZONES

Sec. 5-600 Coordinated development district

.....

5-602 Coordinated development districts created, consistency with master plan, required approvals.

.....

(E) There is hereby established a Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC)

- (1) The purpose of PYDAC is to review applications for preliminary development plan approval under this ordinance for compliance with the Potomac Yard Urban Design Guidelines and make recommendations to the Planning Commission and the City Council.
- (2) PYDAC shall consist of ~~nine~~ **seven** members to be appointed by the City Council for staggered terms of no more than two years each. The Committee shall include ~~one~~ **two** members representing the Potomac West area; ~~one~~ **two** members representing the Potomac Yard area; ~~one~~ **one** member representing the Northeast area; ~~three~~ **at large resident members**; one member representing the business community; and two qualified professionals skilled in architecture or urban design.
- (3) ~~Meetings of PYDAC shall be called by the director as necessary to accomplish the purpose of the Committee.~~
- (4) Nothing in this section shall be deemed to alter the authority of the Carlyle Design Review Board, or any other committee or advisory group established by a CDD SUP after the date of the adoption of this section.

DISCUSSION

This text amendment is designed to change the composition of the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee previously established under the authority of the Potomac Yard CDD Concept Plan approval. The amendment would modify the Committee's membership to include two representatives of the area covered by the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens small area plan.

The text amendment responds to a request from Councilman Ludwig Gaines, as recommended by the City Manager. (11/21/03 Council memo attached.) The text amendment was initiated by City Council by resolution on November 25, 2003, and referred to the Planning Commission for an amendment to the zoning ordinance, to provide full and adequate public representation on the Committee. (Resolution attached.)

CDD Condition

As a condition of the approval for the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens CDD concept approval, City Council required that a PYDAC be established to assist the City in reviewing applications for preliminary development plan approval. Condition 17 of the CDD SUP establishes PYDAC and, as to membership, states:

The PYDAC shall consist of seven members to be appointed by the City Council for staggered terms of no more than two years each. The Committee shall include two members representing the Potomac West area; the remaining five members shall be from the City at large and shall include three representatives of residential neighborhoods and the business community and two qualified professionals skilled in architecture.

PYDAC is authorized to review applications for preliminary development plan approval for compliance with the Potomac Yard Urban Design Guidelines, and to provide recommendations for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council.

PYDAC has held five meetings over the last year. The last four meetings were held in October and December 2002, and January and February 2003 to review development proposals for Potomac Greens (Parcel A), Potomac Plaza (Parcel C), and Rail Park (Parcel D).

Concern has been expressed regarding PYDAC composition, and specifically that the above language does not expressly include representatives of the area covered by the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens small area plan area as members of the Committee.

POTOMAC YARD DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Proposed Text Amendment

Generally consistent with Councilman Gaines' proposal, the City Manager has recommended and Council resolved to change the membership of the Committee by adding representatives from the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens area. Specifically, the recommendation, included in this text amendment is:

The PYDAC shall consist of seven members to be appointed by the City Council for staggered terms of no more than two years each. The Committee shall include two members representing the Potomac West area; ~~the remaining five members shall be from the City at large and shall include three representatives of residential neighborhoods and the business community and two qualified professionals skilled in architecture.~~ two members representing the Potomac Yard area; one member representing the business community; and two qualified professionals skilled in architecture or urban design.

With these changes,

- the Committee will continue to include seven members;
- two members will continue to be from Potomac West;
- two members will continue to be architects or urban designers;
- instead of three members from the "residential neighborhoods and the business community," there will be
 - two members from the Potomac Yard area, and
 - one member from the business community.

The only difference between Councilman Gaines' proposal and the City Manager's recommendation is specifying that one member of the Committee be from the business community.

A text amendment is necessary because the city does not have the power to change the conditions of the SUP without the applicant's involvement.

The ordinance adopting this text amendment will provide for the continued terms of existing members of the Committee under current guidelines.

STAFF: Eileen Fogarty, Director, Planning and Zoning
Barbara Ross, Deputy Director
Jeffrey Farner, Division Chief, Development

Attachments: 1. Councilman Gaines' Memo to City Council 11/21/03
2. Resolution adopted by Council 11/25/03

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: NOVEMBER 21, 2003

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST TO MODIFY THE MEMBERSHIP OF
THE POTOMAC YARD DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PYDAC)

ISSUE: Consideration of request from Councilman Ludwig Gaines to amend the membership of the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (Attachment 1).

RECOMMENDATION: That Council adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 2) which initiates and refers the matter to the Planning Commission for an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that will establish the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee by ordinance and will modify the committee's membership to include two representatives of the area covered by the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens small area plan.

DISCUSSION:

The Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee was established by Condition 17 of the Concept Plan for the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens Coordinated Development District. The Committee reviews applications for preliminary development plan approval for compliance with the Potomac Yard Urban Design Guidelines and makes recommendations to the Planning Commission and the City Council. Councilman Gaines has requested that the PYDAC membership be amended in accordance with language amending Condition 17 submitted by the Del Ray Civic and Old Town Greens Townhome Owners Associations. This amended language is as follows (old language has strike-throughs; new language is underlined):

The PYDAC shall consist of seven members to be appointed by the City Council for staggered terms of no more than two years each. The Committee shall include two members representing the Potomac West area; ~~the remaining five members shall be from the City at-large and shall include three representatives of residential neighborhoods and the business community and two qualified professionals skilled in architecture.~~ two members representing the Potomac Yard area; the remaining three members shall be from the City at-large, including two qualified professionals skilled in architecture or urban design.

I would recommend a slight change to language suggested by Councilman Gaines. Under that language, the business community no longer has any representation on PYDAC and its slot is effectively replaced by a member from the "City at-large." I would retain a representative of the business community on the committee, and remove the "City at-large" member. Thus, I recommend the following language:

The PYDAC shall consist of seven members to be appointed by the City Council for staggered terms of no more than two years each. The Committee shall include two members representing the Potomac West area; ~~the remaining five members shall be from the City at-large and shall include three representatives of residential neighborhoods and the business community and two qualified professionals skilled in architecture.~~ two members representing the Potomac Yard area; one member representing the business community; and two qualified professionals skilled in architecture or urban design.

The attached resolution refers this matter to the Planning Commission with a request that the Zoning Ordinance be amended to establish PYDAC as "a formal advisory committee to the Planning Commission and City Council, and to provide full and adequate public representation on such committee," such representation reflecting the amendment to current Condition 17 of the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens concept plan that Council prefers.

STAFF: Rose Williams Boyd, Executive Secretary for Boards and Commissions

ATTACHMENTS:

1. November 3 Memorandum from Council Gaines to Philip Sunderland
2. Proposed Resolution

~~ATTACHMENT 1~~



City of Alexandria, Virginia

*301 King Street, Suite 2300
Alexandria, Virginia 22314*



Ludwig P. Gaines, Esq.
Member of Council
TO:

PHILLIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER
ROSE BOYD, CITIZEN ASSISTANCE ✓

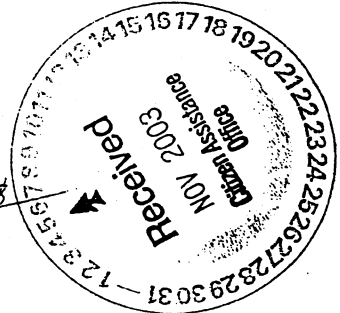
Home: (703) 823-6116
Cell: (703) 328-7526
Fax: (703) 838-6433
councilmangaines@aol.com
www.gainwithgaines.com

WILLIAM D. EUILLE, MAYOR
REDELLA PEPPER, VICE MAYOR
ANDREW MACDONALD, MEMBER OF COUNCIL
ROB KRUPICKA, MEMBER OF COUNCIL
PAUL SMEDBERG, MEMBER OF COUNCIL
JOYCE WOODSON, MEMBER OF COUNCIL

FROM: LUDWIG P. GAINES, MEMBER OF COUNCIL

DATE: NOVEMBER 3, 2003

RE: PYDAC AMENDMENT DOCKET ITEM



On October 14, I sent you a correspondence seeking your support and stating my intention to offer an amendment to the 1999 Potomac Yard Design Guidelines to require that 2 representatives on this 7-member Board be residents who represent Potomac Yard. The underlying principle of this amendment is that residents who live inside Potomac Yard are most immediately impacted by the evolving development process in Potomac Yard, and, thus, should have comparable representation on the committee (PYDAC) responsible for shaping their community in the years ahead.

I am pleased to report that the Del Ray Civic (DRCA) and Old Town Greens Townhome Owners Associations (OTGTOA) have agreed on language that accomplishes this important objective. Accordingly, I request this amendment be docketed for Council consideration. I look forward to working with all of you, and others to make this change to ensure citizen stakeholders are adequately included as part of the ongoing development process in this important part of our City.

The specific amendment for your consideration is set forth in the fourth full paragraph of the joint letter we each received today from DRCA President Justin Wilson and Brain Detter, OTGTOA President (copy attached).

I applaud the leadership of the civic and townhome associations involved for working together on this issue and collaborating across neighborhood lines on a workable solution. And, I also wish to thank Council member Krupicka for his efforts in this matter.

LPG

"Home Town of George Washington and Robert E. Lee"

Del Ray
Citizens Association
P.O. Box 2233
Alexandria, VA 22301

Old Town Greens
Townhome Owners Association
c/o 717 Catts Tavern Drive
Alexandria, VA 22314

November 4, 2003

Honorable Mayor & Members of the City Council,

We are writing to ask that you amend the Potomac Yard Design Guidelines to ensure that residents who live in Potomac Yard can be an integral part of the citizen review process.

In 1999, when the initial guidelines were developed, residents were still moving into new town homes and condominiums in the Old Town Greens development. Today, there are 272 units with about 600 residents. In the months ahead, another 228 units are expected in the Potomac Greens development approved by Council this past spring.

To ensure that the City and the developers of Potomac Yard receive valued inputs from all of the appropriate stakeholders impacted, we join in asking your support to modify the makeup of the 7-member Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC), to include two members from Potomac Yard.

Specifically, we support replacing paragraph (a) with the following:

(a) The PYDAC shall consist of seven members to be appointed by City Council for staggered terms of no more than two years each. The Committee shall include two members representing the Potomac West area; two members representing the Potomac Yard area; the remaining three members shall be from the City at-large, including two qualified professionals skilled in architecture or urban design."

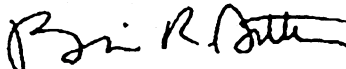
Furthermore, to the extent possible, we ask that these changes go into effect in a manner that allows current members to complete the remaining portion of their terms under the existing guidelines.

We believe these changes will benefit the City, Potomac Yard, and the surrounding communities and we appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,



Justin M. Wilson
President
Del Ray Citizens Association



Brian R. Detter
President
Old Town Greens
Townhome Owners Association

Forwarded Message:

Subj: **PYDAC**
Date: 10/14/2003 8:55:40 AM Eastern Standard Time
From: Councilmangaines
To: Alexvamayor, DELPepper, council@joycewoodson.net, ludwig@gainwithgaines.com,
macdonaldcouncil@msn.com, rob@krupicka.com, PaulCSmedberg

Dear Colleagues:

We will have the opportunity this evening to appoint two (2) members to PYGAC this evening.

Two things:

First, I encourage everyone take a very close look at Susanne Carnell for PYDAC. She is an Old Town Greens resident, active in their civic association, has appeared before planning commission several times and been an outstanding and informed advocate for her community. Her professional credentials are also impressive. She will receive one of my two votes for this important committee.

Secondly, there is concern in the Old Town Greens community that there currently are no designated seats on PYDAC for actual residents of Potomac Yards. Having designated representation for those most immediately affected by future development/planning in this community not only makes sense, but is the most fair approach in my estimation. I have spoken with Old Town Greens President Brian Detter and my recommendation reflects his thinking.

Accordingly, in the coming weeks, I will submit for council's consideration a recommendation that PYDAC's membership requirements be amended to include at least two (2) seats for Potomac Yards residents. This community will grow significantly in the months and years to come and should have fair representation as a formal part of the PYDAC ordinance's membership requirements.

Ludwig

Ludwig P. Gaines, Esq.
Alexandria City Councilman
City Hall: (703) 838-4500
Cellular: (703) 328-7526
Home: (703) 823-6116
www.gainwithgaines.com
Aide: Kathryn Huber, (703) 838-4930

RESOLUTION NO. _____

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council may initiate the amendment of the Alexandria Zoning Ordinance whenever it determines that public necessity, convenience, general welfare or good zoning practice requires an amendment; and

WHEREAS, Condition No. 17 of the approved concept plan under Alexandria Zoning Ordinance Section 5-602(A)(10), CDD No. 10 (Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens), establishes the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC) to review further zoning approvals required by Section 5-602(A)(10) for development within the concept plan area, and formally advise the Planning Commission and City Council thereon; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a committee such as PYDAC, which has the duty and authority formally to advise the Planning Commission and City Council in performing their public regulatory functions, as part of the Zoning Ordinance, and not merely as a condition of the approved concept plan, represents good zoning practice that is important to the public necessity and convenience and the general welfare; and

WHEREAS, PYDAC, as currently structured under the approved concept plan, does not provide for full and adequate public representation on the committee, including future residents and others within the concept plan area; and

WHEREAS, full and adequate public representation on an advisory committee such as PYDAC represents good zoning practice that is important to the public necessity and convenience and the general welfare;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Alexandria:

Section 1. That the public necessity, convenience, general welfare or good zoning practice requires consideration of a Text Amendment to establish PYDAC in the Zoning Ordinance as a formal advisory committee to the Planning Commission and City Council, and to provide full and adequate public representation on such committee.

Section 2. That the City council does hereby initiate such Text Amendment, and refer the same to the Planning Commission for public hearing and consideration in the manner provided by law.

ADOPTED:

WILLIAM D. EUILLE MAYOR

ATTEST:

JACQUELINE M. HENDERSON, CMC, CITY CLERK

RESOLUTION NO. 2089

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council may initiate the amendment of the Alexandria Zoning Ordinance whenever it determines that public necessity, convenience, general welfare or good zoning practice requires an amendment; and

WHEREAS, Condition No. 17 of the approved concept plan under Alexandria Zoning Ordinance Section 5-602(A)(10), CDD No. 10 (Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens), establishes the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC) to review further zoning approvals required by Section 5-602(A)(10) for development within the concept plan area, and formally advise the Planning Commission and City Council thereon; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of a committee such as PYDAC, which has the duty and authority formally to advise the Planning Commission and City Council in performing their public regulatory functions, as part of the Zoning Ordinance, and not merely as a condition of the approved concept plan, represents good zoning practice that is important to the public necessity and convenience and the general welfare; and

WHEREAS, PYDAC, as currently structured under the approved concept plan, does not provide for full and adequate public representation on the committee, including future residents and others within the concept plan area; and

WHEREAS, full and adequate public representation on an advisory committee such as PYDAC represents good zoning practice that is important to the public necessity and convenience and the general welfare;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia:

Section 1. That the public necessity, convenience, general welfare or good zoning practice requires consideration of a Text Amendment to establish PYDAC in the Zoning Ordinance as a formal advisory committee to the Planning Commission and City Council, and to provide full and adequate public representation on such committee.

Section 2. That the City council does hereby initiate such Text Amendment, and refer the same to the Planning Commission for public hearing and consideration in the manner provided by law.

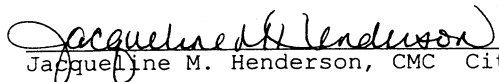
ADOPTED: November 25, 2003



WILLIAM D. EUILLE

MAYOR

ATTEST:



Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk

Planning Commission
Public Hearing
February 3, 2004

My name is Sylvia Sibrover. I live at 915 Second Street near Potomac Yards. I am here today to request a modification of the proposed ordinance if you intend to approve Docket Item 5.

I am specifically referring to Article V: Mixed Use Zones (E) (2) on page two of the report (TA#2004-0001). This changes the composition of PYDAC and eliminates all at large membership.

There are many Alexandrian that are interested in the City as a whole and may be able to supply an alternative point of view.

The last paragraph under "Discussion" on page 3 states that there was a "concern ... expressed regarding PYDAC composition, and specifically that the ... language does not expressly include representatives of the area covered by the Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens small area plan area as members of the Committee." However, the new language expressly eliminates most of the citizens of Alexandria from applying for a position.

I suggest that the language should be for 1 member from Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens and one at large. The language could be phrased in such a way as to allow an additional Potomac Yard/Potomac Greens member is no other person applies.

I appreciate your listening to my concerns. Thank you.



<WHendrick@aol.com>

02/18/2004 10:22 AM

To: <eileen.fogarty@ci.alexandria.va.us>

cc: <barbara.ross@ci.alexandria.va.us>, <erwagner@comcast.net>, <RichLeibach@aol.com>, <donna_fossum@rand.org>, <komorosj@nasd.com>, <John.komoroske@nasd.com>, <hsdunn@ipbtax.com>, <jlr@cpma.com>, <JssJennings@aol.com>

Subject: PYDAC membership

To: Eileen Fogarty, Director of Planning, City of Alexandria

From: Bill Hendrickson

February 18, 2004

Dear Eileen:

At its February meeting, the Planning Commission deferred a proposal to change the membership of the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC) and asked staff to develop alternative proposals. I would like to make some suggestions.

The proposal to change PYDAC's membership originally came from some residents of the Old Town Greens townhouse development, who oppose a dog park in their neighborhood that is included in the approved Potomac Yard concept plan as well as a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks that would connect neighborhoods east and west of the tracks. It is understandable that residents of Old Town Greens would like to be members of PYDAC (three of PYDAC's current seven members come from Old Town Greens) to pursue these specific concerns. However, PYDAC's mission, as established by the City Council, is NOT to make judgments as to whether a specific piece of the Potomac Yard plan should be approved or not. Rather, PYDAC's purpose is to review projects to ensure that they meet the very high design guidelines that the plan established.

In thinking about changes to PYDAC's membership, it is important to remember several things. First, as I stated above, PYDAC's main purpose is ensuring the highest possible design quality. Second, the many citizens in neighborhoods surrounding the Yard who took part in the lengthy process that led to the plan's approval insisted on very high design standards and have a continuing interest in ensuring that those standards are met. Third, ALL of the remaining development in Potomac Yard (except for the dog park and one end of the pedestrian bridge) will take place in the area WEST of the rail tracks. (Ironically, if Old Town Greens residents succeed in stopping the pedestrian bridge, the area east of the tracks will be cut off even more from the west side than it already is.) That said, here is what I propose for PYDAC's membership:

1 citizen who is an architect

1 citizen with urban design expertise, who may also be an architect

2 citizens representing neighborhoods in Potomac West (Note: Citizens from these

neighborhoods, which include part of Rosemont, Del Ray, Mount Jefferson, and Hume Springs, were actively involved in the Potomac Yard planning process and continue to have a strong stake in ensuring that the design guidelines are met.)

1 citizen from the area covered by the Northeast Civic Association (NECA), or alternatively, one citizen designated by NECA. (Note: NECA was also very involved in the Potomac Yard planning process and has continuing concerns, particularly traffic and the impact of the new bridge over the rail tracks to replace the Monroe Avenue Bridge. Old Town Greens and the recently approved Potomac Greens townhouse development are included in the area covered by NECA.)

2 citizens representing neighborhoods in Potomac Yard located WEST of the rail tracks. (Note: Obviously, there are no current residents of Potomac Yard and there likely will not be any for several years. The Planning Director or City Manager should be given discretion as to when these representatives would be appointed.)

1 citizen designated by the Federation of Civic Associations. (Note: Citizens in other parts of the city have an interest in Potomac Yard because of its size and impact. This would be an efficient way to provide additional citizen input into the design review process as well as provide regular updates to other citizen groups.)

1 citizen designated by the Park and Recreation Commission. (Note: The Potomac Yard plan includes extensive park and open space, which PYDAC will review. Because of the importance of parks in the plan, it makes sense to have a representative from this commission.)

In short, PYDAC would have seven members in the near term (the same as the current membership) and nine members when citizens from Potomac Yard eventually are appointed.

PC Docket Item #18
TA #2004-0001

Park and Recreation Commission

February 26, 2004

To: The Planning Commission

Re: Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC)

Dear Chairman Wagner and Planning Commission members:

At its February 19 meeting, the Park and Recreation Commission discussed possible changes to the composition of the membership of the Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC), which you will be considering at your March 2 meeting. As you know, the Potomac Yard plan approved by the City Council in September 1999 includes extensive new park and recreation areas, including a major linear park along the railroad tracks, a significant expansion of Simpson Park, a new town center, recreation areas on the Four Mile Run bridges, and new neighborhood parks. It is important that the design of these new areas be done in a very thoughtful and integrated way. This City will need to maximize the utility and quality of these new open spaces and recreational amenities. We understand that PYDAC will be involved in developing and reviewing the designs.

Because the Park and Recreation Commission has a major interest in monitoring the development of these amenities at the Potomac Yard project, the Commission voted to request that you designate a seat on PYDAC to be filled by a member of this Commission. We respectfully ask that you consider this recommendation as you discuss the possible changes on March 2nd. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Judy R. Guse-Noritake
Chair
Alexandria Park and Recreation Commission

703-739-9482

cc:
Phil Sunderland
Sandra Whitmore
Eileen Fogarty

12
3-13-04

To: Mayor Euille and members of Alexandria City Council
From: David Fromm
Subject: Recommendation for composition of PYDAC

First, I would like to say that I agree that there is a problem with the current criteria for composition of PYDAC. Councilman Gaines, in his memo of 3 November 2003, captured the essence: "The underlying principle of this amendment is that residents who live inside Potomac Yard are most immediately impacted by the evolving development process in Potomac Yard, and thus, should have comparable representation on the committee (PYDAC) responsible for reshaping their community in the years ahead."

It is not surprising we are having to deal with PYDAC. Although there was significant public participation in the approval of the Potomac Yard Plan – the culmination of almost ten years of planning processes – very little of that public decision process focused on PYDAC. This is evident in the fact that Council changed the composition from five at-large seats to the current composition.

Before continuing, I would first like to suggest that there is, in fact, a broader, more inclusive principle contained in the Gaines quote. Specifically;
Those residents most affected by an evolving development process should have comparable representation on the committee responsible for reshaping their community.

Obviously, the "evolving development process" refers to the Potomac Yard project.

Over the coming years, who is "most affected" will depend on exactly how the project is completed. The Potomac Yard project should be periodically reviewed to determine which are the "most affected" residents/neighborhoods. A good time to do this is when a significant community is added.

A fairly robust criterion is that the primary "affected residents" are those in neighborhoods, either new or old, that essentially abut the PY project or are contained within it.

One approach is to just pick a representative from each neighborhood, but for the current stage of the PY project, the committee would be too large. Another approach is to divide the entire affected area into regions based on common interests/problems.

The final factor to consider is that the committee is "*responsible for reshaping their community.*" Thus, it may be important to ensure certain skills or interests are also present on PYDAC.

Once the "affected residents" have been identified, then "comparable representation" can be determined.

Now to apply all the above:

Old Town Greens and the new Potomac Greens are new significant communities and should be included as part of the affected neighborhoods.

Since the majority of the Potomac Yard project is still to come, the existing list of affected neighborhoods has not changed.

Until the changes to the Monroe Avenue bridge are executed, or until a major community is completed on the west side of the tracks, divide the representation for the "affected neighborhoods" by the railroad tracks. This respects the history and realities of current interests in the PY project.

For balance, Planning Commission has suggested that there be 2 (not 1) architects/urban designers.

The composition before Council today has in effect, 6 of 9 seats being "at-large": the 3 explicit at-large seats, the 2 architects, and the representative for business. These are not necessarily the "most affected residents." They will not necessarily have the same vested interest as those from the affected neighborhoods.

Therefore, I recommend that PYDAC should remain at 7 seats and the composition should be:

- 1 architect/urban designer from city at-large
- 1 architect/urban designer from affected neighborhoods
- 1 representative from businesses in affected neighborhoods
- 2 representatives from affected neighborhoods east of tracks
- 2 representatives from affected neighborhoods west of tracks

In conclusion, I ask Council to:

- Adopt this recommendation for PYDAC composition.
- Adopt a clear procedure for determining the composition of PYDAC that ensures, "Those residents most affected by an evolving development process should have comparable representation on the committee responsible for reshaping their community."

Sincerely,

David Fromm
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Del Ray Citizens Association

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3-13-04

PO Box 2233

Alexandria VA 22301

Established 1954

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council

From: Justin M. Wilson, President 

Date: Tuesday March 9, 2004

Subject: Potomac Yard Design Advisory Committee

On the docket for your public hearing this Saturday (Item 12) is the text amendment that Councilman Gaines initiated in November and the Planning Commission has returned for approval. The original proposal was the product of collaboration with the Old Town Greens Townhome Owners Association.

The current language before you, bears little resemblance to the proposed language that was the product of that collaboration, and that you sent to the Planning Commission at that time. Accordingly, **we cannot support the language as it currently stands.**

PYDAC was created to provide for the review of applications for development in Potomac Yard and assess them for their compliance with the Plan for the area. At the time, Council felt that it was important to ensure representation from the areas directly involved in the creation of the Plan—which are also the areas directly affected by what occurs in Potomac Yard.

The original composition was appropriate at the time, and we recognize that given the changes that have occurred in subsequent years, that composition is no longer sustainable.

Although we are opposed to the language that emerged from the Planning Commission, we are able to support any one of these options as viable and sustainable alternatives:

- 1) The original language proposed by Councilman Gaines: Two members representing Potomac West, two members representing Potomac Yard, three members from the City at-large—including two qualified professionals skilled in architecture or urban design. This would total seven members.
- 2) Councilman Gaines' proposal with the addition of two members from Northeast. This would total nine members.
- 3) New language providing for: One architect or urban design professional from the City at-large, one architect or urban design professional from affected neighborhoods, one representative from the business community in affected neighborhoods, two representatives from affected neighborhoods east of the railroad tracks, two representatives from affected neighborhoods west of the railroad tracks. This would total seven members.

We believe that one of these options will appropriately address the fairness issues that have been raised with the current composition. However, if Council deems that none of these prove to be appropriate, we would respectfully request that Council make no change to the existing composition at all, and retain the status quo.

We thank you for your consideration and please contact me with any questions. I can be reached at 703-338-2843 or via e-mail at justin@justin.net.

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3-13-04



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03/09/2004 05:33 PM
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Time: [Tue Mar 09, 2004 17:33:42] IP Address: [69.140.80.134]

Response requested: ☐

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Comments: Dear Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Pepper, and City
Council members:

At your meeting on Saturday, March 13, you will
be discussing the membership of the Potomac
Yard Design Advisory Committee (PYDAC). I
strongly oppose the Planning Commission
recommendation and ask that you change it.

I particularly object to the Commission's decision
to eliminate one of the two positions for Potomac
West neighborhoods, which were the most

actively involved in the planning process that led to the approval of the Potomac Yard plan and which have a strong continuing interest in ensuring that the plan's high design standards are met.

The Commission also created one position each for Northeast and Potomac Yard. However, because the only people living or working in Potomac Yard for the time being live in the Old Town Greens townhouse development, Old Town Greens would effectively have representation equal to all of Potomac West, which is a large area with multiple neighborhoods. The Northeast section of the City would effectively have two seats and Potomac West only one. Three of PYDAC's current members are residents of Old Town Greens. Depending on how the City works the transition from the current membership to a new one, it's not inconceivable that, in the short run at least, residents from Old Town Greens could also pick up the proposed Potomac Yard and Northeast seats.

The Planning Commission's recommendation also does not make sense because ALL of the remaining development at Potomac Yard will take place WEST of the railroad tracks and thus will most affect Potomac West neighborhoods.

The status quo would be far preferable to the Commission's proposal. However you decide, please adopt a solution that will ensure equitable membership by people who live in neighborhoods that will be most affected by the Potomac Yard development.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Hendrickson