

# **Crystal City Vision Plan, Draft 1.1**

## **Long Range Planning Committee, Meeting Summary**

**06-09-2009**

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### **Opening Remarks**

Terry Savela, Planning Commission member and chair of the meeting, made a few opening remarks on the background of these discussions and general objectives of this round of LRPC meetings to discuss the draft Crystal City Vision Plan.

### **Staff Presentation**

Anthony Fusarelli, Planning Division, made a brief presentation on the process background and broad level review of plan elements.

### **Discussion/Remarks**

#### **Overall Document Structure and Format**

- Some of the more technical items, such as street cross-sections, could be moved to an appendix.
- In Chapter 1, add a map/graphic that shows Crystal City in its broader context from the Potomac River, 395, and Four Mile Run.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **Existing Conditions**

- In Figure 1.2.5, revise the diagram to soften the edge between Restaurant Row and the Aurora Highlands neighborhood. This area is an important element integral to Aurora Highlands, so the edge shown on the map should be deleted.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Vision Statement**

- Several comments suggested that the Vision Statement should be more concise and to the point. This could be done in conjunction with new chapter or section that describes the overall place of Crystal City in the future and what life would be like in the area.
- Expanding from the Vision Statement, the Plan should include a new chapter/section that humanizes the Plan, or discusses how life in Crystal City would support daily, civic, and cultural life in a variety of ways. This new section should address comments on the following elements, if not addressed in the Vision Statement itself:
  - Emphasize the point about Crystal City, Aurora Highlands, and Arlington Ridge functioning as a single unit;
  - Stronger reference to bicyclists and bicycle facilities;
  - Additional anecdotes to include lower income and/or physically; handicapped individual living in Crystal City;
  - Delete planning jargon (e.g. “urban form”) from Vision Statement;
  - Expand beneficiaries of Plan to include business visitors, neighbors, tourists, etc.;

- Clarify that surface transitway system will connect beyond; Arlington into Alexandria and also Fairfax;
- Stronger emphasis needed for open spaces and parks;
- Expand the bullet on “Very high quality public parks...” to include “high quantity” as well;
- The Plan should have an order of magnitude estimate for a bracketed range of school children that may be generated by Crystal City in the future assuming the vision of more family households, with children; logical boundaries for impacts need to be considered;
- Enhancements to the transit system should be its own bullet, and the idea of placing the pedestrian and transit users at the same priority level as vehicles should be made;
- Flexibility should be reserved to allow the area to adapt to what the market will allow, within the Plan framework;
- Long Bridge Park also needs to be recognized as part of surrounding context;
- It does not appear that the plan for Jefferson Davis is consistent with the policy directive language adopted by the Board in December regarding bridging the gap between the east and west sides;
- Additional text is needed on sustainable design and development, urban forestry canopy, and carbon neutrality.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **New Section**

- A new section could introduce Chapter 3, and talk about how we anticipate the types of lives people will live in Crystal City, while also discussing the array of services and infrastructure that supports the Complete Community concept (see discussion under Vision Statement above).

### **Neighborhood Overviews**

- Identifying six individual “neighborhoods” seems counterproductive as it could perpetuate existing boundaries rather than breaking down barriers for a more seamless community. Suggests that another term (e.g. “district”, “sub-area”, etc.) could resolve this issue.
- Consideration should be given to the open spaces outside but nearby Crystal City;
- More clarity is needed around the plan’s expectations for site plans up to the base density and site plans that include bonus density, to denote that there will still be certain expectations up to the base density, in addition to beyond.
- Suggestions for more detailed demographic figures at a sub-area level, if possible.
- Consideration should be given to the natural east-west flow of people (corridors) into and out of Crystal City, and identify pertinent improvements as needed.

### **Sustainable Design**

- What’s the appropriate level of detail in recommendations for sustainability? Can they be more specific than currently written?
- Clarity is needed as to whether these guidelines are requirements or suggestions? Consideration should be given for new construction vs. adaptive re-use projects.
- In terms of implementation, are density bonuses envisioned for LEED projects in Crystal City, if so at what levels?

### **Block Structure**

- The existing figure ground diagram, Figure 3.5.1, should be corrected to accurately convey the Crystal Houses block, Potomac Yard, and the wastewater treatment plant facilities.
- Would it be possible to include guidelines on emergency management and forced protection standards into the Plan, for elements such as mass evacuation strategies, HVAC systems, increased infiltration, etc.?

### **Audience Comments:**

- Attention to green spaces is very important; this was also conveyed in comment from LRPC member.
- Schools and libraries are important activity centers for the neighborhood, and so there are concerns about impacts of additional growth in Crystal City and whether community facilities in Arlington Ridge/Aurora Highlands will be relocated to Crystal City.
- Plan directs traffic to major arterials, which includes 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Arlington Ridge Rd and Glebe.
- Sidewalks in Arlington Ridge and Aurora Highlands are falling apart.
- Please use a current aerial photo of the CC/AHCA/ARCA geographic extent.
- Pocket Parks are key assets.
- The Plan suggests that affordable housing could be within Crystal City or nearby areas; does that include ARCA and AHCA – this is a concern?
- The Plan’s maximum heights and setbacks for the Holiday Inn site preclude future redevelopment of a hotel – it’s just not feasible; asks that the LRPC look at this issue.

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### **LRPC Participant Attendees**

<b>Terry Savela</b>	<b>Planning Commission</b>
<b>Inta Malis</b>	<b>Planning Commission</b>
<b>Steve Cole</b>	<b>Planning Commission</b>
Brooks Rainwater	E2C2
Bruce Cameron	Aurora Highlands CA
Christopher Mailander	Arlington Ridge CA
Harmar Thompson	Property/Land Owner
Jerry Norris	Economic Development Commission
Jim Whittaker	Resident - Crystal Drive Condominiums
Larry Whithers	Housing Commission
Mitch Bonanno	Property/Land Owner
Neal Sigmon	Park and Recreation Commission
Paul Benda	Transportation Commission

(**Bold** = Planning Commissioner)