WORKSESSION #2
Design Review Board Case #2019-0001
WMATA Building - Block 15A / 2395 Mill Road

Application	General Data	
Project Name: WMATA Office Building – Block 15A **Location:** 2393, 2395, 2403, 2415, & 2421 Mill Road **Applicant:** WMATA c/o McGuireWoods LLP	**DRB Date:**	June 13, 2019
	Site Area:	3.116 acres (135,737 sf)
	Zone:	OCM(100) & UT to CDD#2 & UT
	Proposed Use:	Office Building
	Gross Floor Area:	425,187 SF

Purpose of Application: Second design work session review of a proposed 14-story office building with surface and above grade parking on a vacant lot north of the existing Hoffman Town Center, scheduled for public hearings in June 25 and July 9, 2019.

Staff Reviewers: Robert M. Kerns, AICP robert.kerns@alexandriava.gov
Thomas H. Canfield, AIA tom.canfield@alexandriava.gov
Dirk H. Geratz, AICP dirk.geratz@alexandriava.gov
Abigail Harwell abigail.harwell@alexandriava.gov

DRB WORK SESSION, APRIL 25, 2019: The Board discussed the concept for the building and site design and offered the following comments for the applicant to consider:

- Consider the 360-degree visibility of the building from roadways, walkways, railways and surrounding buildings.
- A future second building on the site was a concern. The Board advised careful consideration of the design and siting of the proposed office building, and that short- and long-term landscape designs be explored. Street-level renderings should be provided in the next submission.
- Further consider site circulation around the plaza and main entrance.
- Provide a massing model of the site to include the proposed project and adjacent future buildings.
- Carefully consider window and façade treatments since they would need to address both the proposed above-grade parking levels and potential future conversion to office use.
- The Board expressed the importance a high-quality building and a statement of WMATA, offering the nearby AlexRenew headquarters as a similar example.

Environmental issues were discussed, including natural light, and consider rooftop utilization and potential amenities.

Block 15A – DRB Work Session #2

Background

Summary of the Project Evolution
The applicant, Washington Metro Area Transit Authority (WMATA), represented by McGuire Woods LLP, is requesting Design Review Board (DRB) review and comment on a new 425,187 square foot (gross) office building. The site is located north of the Hoffman Town Center, at the Mill Road and Mandeville Lane intersection, and on a portion of Block 15 that is proposed to be identified as Block 15A in the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (EESAP). Since the applicant proposes a rezoning for inclusion into the Eisenhower East Coordinated Development District #2 (CDD #2), Carlyle/Eisenhower East Design Review Board (DRB) reivew and recommendation of approval is required. Based upon a conceptual design meeting with the DRB, held on April 25th, the applicant and project architect (Gensler) are seeking further input from the DRB on the architecture, building materials and site design of the proposal. Since the first DRB meeting, multiple revisions have been made to the project, as will be discussed below and as summarized in the attached letter from McGuireWoods (dated May 31, 2019).

Changes to the Project
Since the last DRB meeting, the applicant has made some revisions to the size of the proposed building due to WMATA programing needs. It was found that additional height on the interior of the building was needed, and the building has increased from 13-stories to 14-stories. Below is a breakdown of resulting changes:

	Previous Proposal	Current Proposal	Change
Building Size (gross SF)			
TOTAL	394,745 SF	425,187 SF	+30,442 SF
Office Space	297,283 SF	327,725 SF	+30,442 SF
Parking Structure	97,462 SF	97,462 SF	0 SF
Building Size (net)	379,539 SF	408,767 SF	29,228 SF
Building Height	150 feet	200 feet	+50 feet
Total Parking	232 spaces	218 spaces	-14 spaces

1. **Building Size:** Due to additional programming needs for WMATA, a 14th story was added to the building, increasing the size by 30,442 gross square feet (29,228 square feet net). The applicant has indicated that the final size of the office levels may decrease due to refined programming to the building interior that would reduce the floor area. No change was made to the parking levels or first-level program.

2. **Building Height:** The building height has increased by 50 feet to accommodate the additional story to the building that was needed for interior programming. The rooftop penthouse has slightly increased in height from 20'-0" to 20'-6" but this height has been incorporated into the overall 200-foot structure height.

3. **Parking Spaces:** The surface parking lot has decreased by three spaces to accommodate ADA parking, and the structured parking has decreased by eleven. The six parking spaces at the end of the eastern driveway remain unchanged.

Description of the Proposed Architecture and Design

Proposed Building Design
The proposed building massing and primary functional design consists of two 65-foot-wide "bars" of office space on each typical floor, separated by a roughly triangular core containing building services (stairs, elevators and restrooms). The proposed ten stories of office space sit atop a four-story podium containing garage parking, a lobby and conference area. The southern "bar" facing Mill Road is set back from 5-20 feet from the podium façade below to address the different program demands of office and parking, and to create more dynamic massing. The northern "bar" facing the train tracks is expressed as a single volume with the podium for the full height of the building, to address the larger-scale environment of the transit corridor. The podium has a ground level of glass that fronts Mill Road, consisting of a recessed two-story glass lobby with a vestibule and conference area; the projecting volume also creates a usable terrace area for the fifth-floor office space. The rest of the podium garage parking uses a higher than standard floor-floor height of 11'-6", to allow for future conversion of these levels to office space if parking demand decreases.

Architecture and Building Materials
The building elevations employ an overlaid series of patterns to achieve a dynamic expression while maintaining a balance between vertical and horizontal. The most noticeable motif is the use of offset vertical solid panels, in a rhythm of two narrow and one wide, which serve to both hide column locations and evoke the imagery of train windows rushing past. These panels, horizontally scored, are proposed in terracotta for the lower levels, and precast concrete for the upper floors. These in turn are arranged in two-story groupings for much of the façade, separated by strong horizontal slab expressions. The solid panels alternate with glazed portions, each of which is in turn divided into a narrow and wide section, separated by a vertical metal fin. The alternate (suppressed) floor bands read through this entire composition as a subtext – appearing to pass behind the vertical panels and fins, and are expressed in a shadowbox spandrel, in contrast to the projecting bands of the expressed floors.

Selected elevations are treated more simply, with single-story expression of continuous window wall with high-performance glazing and metal slab edge expression.

At the massing scale, there is a distinct horizontal break between the four-story building base, and the nine stories above, created by a recessed all-glass office level at the fifth floor wrapping around the west, south and east sides of the south "bar," where the larger footprint of the parking/lobby base creates dramatic angled geometry. The more solid treatment of this dividing floor at the north wing seems somewhat less successful visually, and would benefit from further study.

Design of the Parking Structure
Taking a closer look at the façade components proposed for the parking levels, a similar vocabulary as the office levels is proposed. In place of the larger, glazed openings which occur above, metal

louvers are proposed with a narrow, strongly vertical glazed opening that may incorporate frosted glass to help hide the cars and unfinished ceiling of the garage. If these floors are converted in the future to occupiable space, the louvered screens would simply be replaced with vision glass, but the rest of the façade could remain intact and be visually consistent with the office levels above.

Staff Analysis of Proposed Design
Overall, staff feels that the applicant has developed a strong and compelling design concept, with a sophisticated visual language that addresses the building's programmatic challenges well. The areas where staff feels the design could benefit from additional study include: specific façade allocation of the various typologies, in terms of expressing a consistent parti (for example, does the building skin primarily reflect the massing, interior function, solar orientation, or some other diagrammatic motive?); integration of the penthouse into the overall design and massing; and further development of materials and colors.

As the applicant's design team continues to evolve the design, in keeping with the materials and concepts presented, staff encourages WMATA to continue to promote the highest quality of design, materials and environmental response for this important new building. This will be a major new element on the skyline, and will further the goals and aspirations of the EESAP.

Relationship with Future Second Building
During the previous DRB discussion, the applicant indicated that a second building may be built on the property, in the place of the proposed surface parking lot. As part of the submittal package presented to the DRB, the applicant has provided elevation drawings that include how a proposed second building could be incorporated onto the site. Keeping the same height and building program (towers above structured parking) as the proposed office building, elevations and section drawings show the relationship between the office building and a second building on the site. Since surface parking is discouraged in this area, staff encourages the applicant to continue working towards a second building on the site which incorporates below-grade or screened above-grade parking, and to develop basic concepts of how this future building would relate in form and language to the current proposal and other surrounding structures, both existing and proposed. A physical model is strongly encouraged as the applicant continues with this study.

Site Design Improvements

Plaza and Landscape Improvements
Additional information has been provided regarding paving and landscape improvements. The Plaza at the main entrance of the building and site is shown with horizontal, decorative pavers that differs from the brick pavers more commonly seen in the area. There are slight discrepancies between the plaza area shown on the civil drawings submitted for preliminary review to staff and the architectural designs presented to the DRB. The civil drawings (attached, C6.00) show a narrow curb cut at the intersection, that opens up to a circular area with a curved bollard layout for the drop-off area. The architectural designs indicate a more linear design with a triangular shape and straight lines of bollards that separate the walkways and driveways. Also shown is a seating area just west of the entrance driveway under an area of proposed new trees.

Roof Terrace
The architectural plans also provided more information regarding the roof terrace atop the building, and accessible from the penthouse. The architectural plans indicate decorative pavers and wood decking, with planters, landscaping and a metal canopy. The roof terrace is located on the north east corner of the building, which faces east towards the river and has views of the Masonic Temple to the north. The southern and western sides of the terrace are proposed to be a green roof.

Site Circulation
The applicant continues to request a driveway at the western most side of the property into the surface parking lot. The applicant has indicated that establishing the driveway at this time would not only address circulation in and out of the parking lot, but would also provide access to a future second building on the property. While the foresight is appreciated, a second building is not proposed at this time and the applicant has not provided any indication of when a second building would be constructed. The existing site design results in two new driveways and curb cuts off Mill Road, one of which is the driveway to the main parking structure for the building which would be a right in-right out driveway, and staff does not see the necessity for a third driveway on the property. Two driveways appear excessive for a small, 28-space surface lot intended for customers and clients and use of the lighted intersection of Mill Road and Mandeville Lane would provide better traffic efficiency. A reduction of driveways would decrease the number of conflict points along Mill Road, particularly with the multi-use trail. City Traffic engineers discourage more than two curb cuts for any new developments and ask that designer provide creative, efficient vehicle access alternatives. As such, staff continues to request this western most driveway be eliminated with the proposed plan.

Next Steps and Preliminary Recommendations

As mentioned, this project is scheduled to be heard before the Planning Commission on June 25th and by City Council on July 9th. Because of the accelerated timeline for this project due to critical infrastructure, a condition of approval is being recommended that final building design and architectural details, including materials and finishes and material boards, shall be subject to review and approval by the DRB.

As such, the applicant will be required to present at a third DRB meeting to achieve consensus with the Board on the building design and materials. Although the applicant is not requesting an official recommendation, which will come at a future DRB meeting, staff is seeking a preliminary DRB recommendation that could be relayed to the Planning Commission and City Council that the project before them is on-track to be a high-quality building that will enhance this area and be in compliance with the goals of the EESAP.

Discussion Items for June 13, 2019 DRB Hearing:

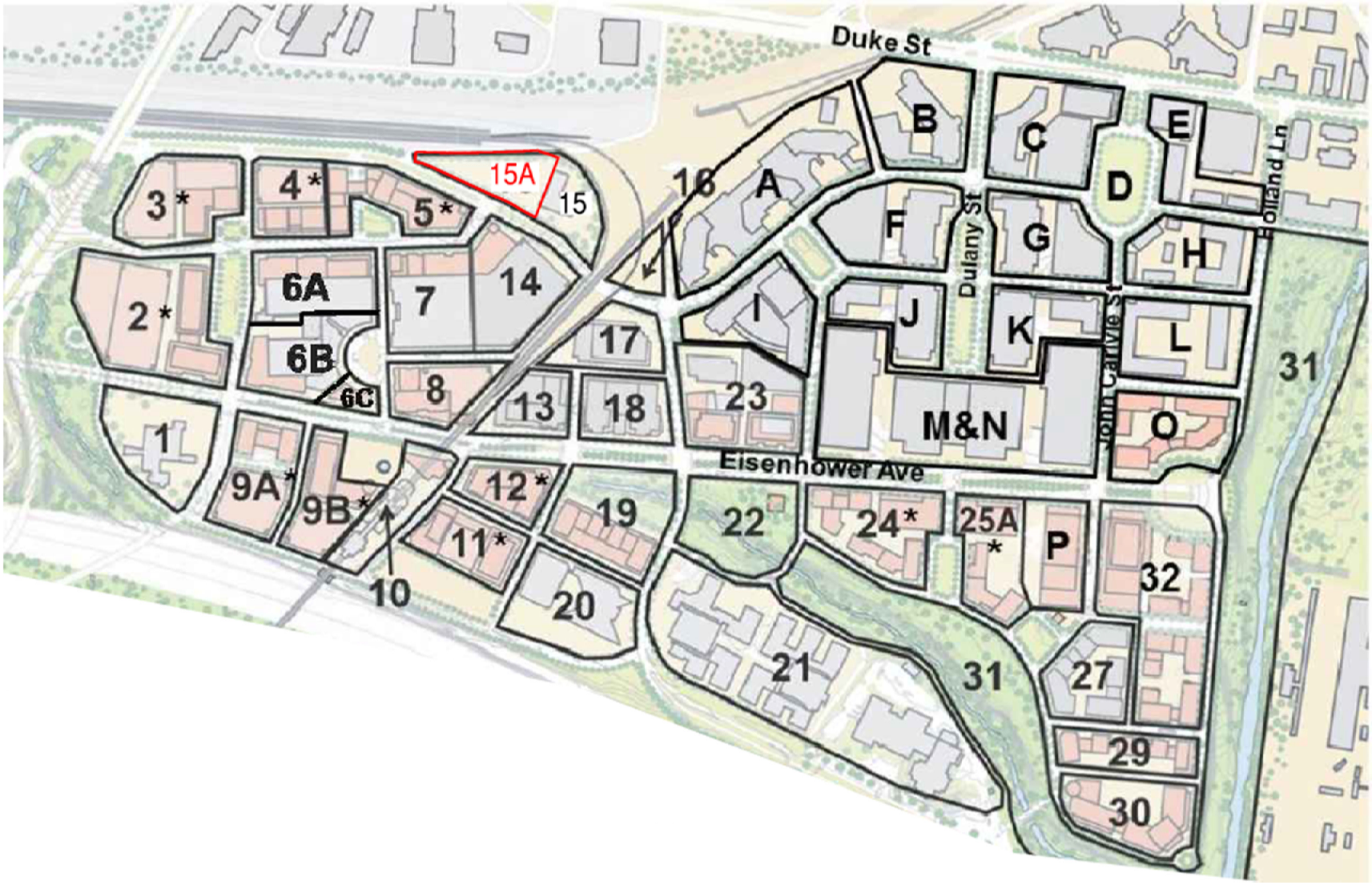
1. Building architecture and site design of the proposed WMATA office building plans, dated May 30, 2019:
   a. Building Design and Architecture
   b. Site Design

2. Design Review Board guidance for future submission(s)
   a. Further refinement of architectural materials and design
   b. Incorporation of any site design suggestions
   c. Required submission materials for subsequent DRB meetings

Attachments:

1. Eisenhower East / Carlyle Blocks CDD Concept Plan
2. Letter from McGuireWoods – Dated May 31, 2019
3. Preliminary Development Site Plan, Sheet C6.00 – Dated May, 2019
4. Concept Design Study Plans from Gensler – Dated May 31, 2019

Eisenhower East / Carlyle Blocks



McGuireWoods LLP
1750 Tysons Boulevard
Suite 1800
Tysons, VA 22102-4215
Phone: 703.712.5000
Fax: 703.712.5050
www.mcguirewoods.com

Jonathan P. Rak
Direct: 703.712.5411

McGUIREWOODS

jrak@mcguirewoods.com
Fax: 703.712.5231

May 31, 2019

Via Email

Abigail Harwell
Urban Planner
City of Alexandria
Dept. of Planning and Zoning, Rm 2100
City Hall
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

RE: DSUP #2018-0028
2395 Mill Road
Narrative to Accompany Revisions to DRB Meeting #2 Submission Documents of May 21, 2019

Dear Abigail,

On May 30, 2019, Gensler delivered physical and digital copies of our revised plans, for review by the Eisenhower East / Carlyle Design Review Board in advance of our scheduled meeting of June 13, 2019. As discussed, these revised plans reflect changes and enhancements discussed with the DRB at our initial meeting on April 25, 2019, and have improved upon the "working designs" shown to Staff at our meeting on May 17, 2019, and initially submitted on May 21, 2019.

With the excellent feedback from both the DRB and city staff, WMATA has worked with its team to iterate on a series of revisions and refinements that we believe address and reflect those comments, and most importantly, delivers a design proposal that reflects WMATA's vision for its Virginia office.

WMATA's team has made changes to the original DRB submission from April 24, 2019 that include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. New views and features since the last DRB Submission:

- Provided new exterior renderings of each façade of the building;
- Included articulation of the façade and design updates;
- Added elevations with material callouts;
- Conducted and included into the plans, where appropriate, a more articulated and refined urban design study and related views with context;
- Included views of site sections of office building and potential future development;
- Refined and expanded review of landscape plan, with included plaza precedents, and;
- Added a conceptual roof terrace plan and roof terrace precedents.

2. Building Design

While the overall design of the building has maintained its original intention as being organized around two 65' wide "bars" of office space, with a triangular core between them, the particulars of that design have progressed significantly since our prior April 25, 2019 submittal. Most notably, the building has been increased to a maximum height of 200', inclusive of a mechanical penthouse, from its original maximum height of 175'. The building has also added some additional floor area, increasing from a previous 394,745 SF to 425,187 SF.

These changes in height and square footage permit the design of the building to incorporate higher ceilings in interior parking floors – 11'6" as compared to 11' in the prior submission – making them conducive to a future conversion to office uses, and permit the design to increase the typical office floor to 12' in height. The changes also make room for an additional 15' high floor to the overall office layout, which provides the additional vertical space WMATA may require for certain necessary and specialized operations equipment.

3. Building Façade

Whereas the original DRB presentation lacked details on building façade, our updated submission reflects that the building façade systems will be a combination of glazing and solid façade materials. This will be primarily be precast, at the office levels and terracotta at the podium. Façade type 1 will be window wall with high performance glazing and metal panel spandrel panels forming continuous ribbon windows. Façade type 2 will be precast concrete panels with two-story punched windows with insulated glazed units and ACM panels at the slab cover between floors. At the parking levels the façade openings will be a combination of translucent glass panels or architectural louvered screens to allow natural ventilation of the parking garage, but screen parked vehicles from view.

4. Additional Changes

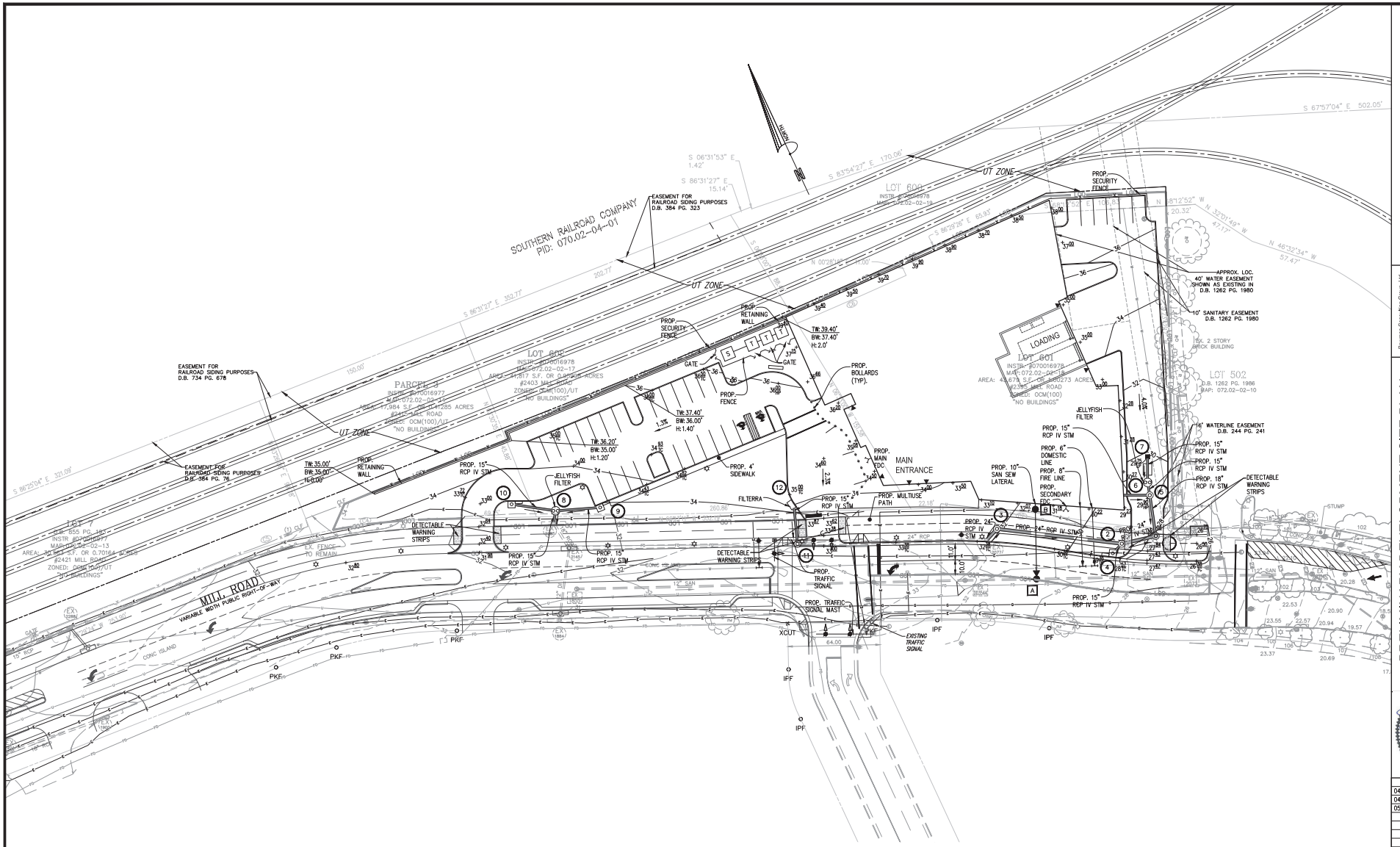
Our revised DRB submission has also incorporated comments received at the first DRB meeting regarding the addition of a turnaround in front of building in the "plaza," and the provision of urban design and massing studies showing surrounding buildings. Finally, the revised DRB submission incorporates the concept of an occupiable terrace amenity on NE corner as suggested in a meeting with the Department of Planning and Zoning.

Please, feel free to reach out with any questions or for additional information.

Sincerely,

Jonathan P. Rak

cc: Robert Kerns, Division Chief, Development, P&Z
Dirk Geratz, Principal Planner, Public Facilities



GRAPHIC SCALE

30 0 15 30 60 120

(IN FEET)

1 inch = 30 ft.

ARCHAEOLOGY NOTES

1. THE APPLICANT/DEVELOPER SHALL 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.
2. THE APPLICANT SHALL NOT ALLOW ANY METAL DETECTION TO BE CONDUCTED ON THE PROPERTY, UNLESS AUTHORIZED BY ALEXANDRIA ARCHAEOLOGY.

APPROVED 2018-0028
SPECIAL USE PERMIT NO.
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING

DIRECTOR DATE

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
SITE PLAN NO.

DIRECTOR DATE

CHAIRMAN, PLANNING COMMISSION DATE

DATE RECORDED

INSTRUMENT NO. DEED BOOK NO. PAGE NO.

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION!!! THIS PLAN IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AND BCG SHALL NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY COSTS DUE TO CHANGES.

Bowman CONSULTING

Bowman Consulting Group, Ltd.
13461 Sunrise Valley Drive
Suite 500
Herndon, Virginia 20171
Phone: (703) 464-1000
Fax: (703) 481-8720
www.bowmanconsulting.com
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PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT SITE PLAN

2395 MILL ROAD

PRELIMINARY DEVELOPMENT SPECIAL USE PERMIT

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA VIRGINIA

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
STEVEN T. LIAM
Lic. No. 40224
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER
05/15/19

PLAN STATUS	
04/09/19	PDSUP 1ST SUBMISSION
04/29/19	PDSUP 2ND SUBMISSION
05/15/19	PDSUP 3RD SUBMISSION

DATE	DESCRIPTION

CA DESIGN	CA DRAWN	STL CHKD

SCALE H: 1"=30'
V:

JOB No. 030109-01-002

DATE : MAY, 2019

FILE No. 030109-D-PR-002

SHEET C6.00

Cad file name: I:\PJ\030109 - emails 2395-2403-2405 mill rd\030109-01-002 eng\ - 2395 + 2403 mill road site\engineering plans\PDSUP\030109-D-PR-002-SHT-SITE PLAN.dwg