

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 12, 2022

TO: GLORIA SITTON  
OFFICE OF CITY CLERK AND CLERK OF COUNCIL

THRU: KARL W. MORITZ, DIRECTOR  
PLANNING & ZONING

FROM: STEPHEN W. KULINSKI, CHAIR  
URBAN DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: URBAN DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (UDAC)  
FY 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

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This is the annual report for the Old Town North Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC) for Fiscal Year 2022, as required by City Code Section 2-4-7(i)(1).

UDAC “review[s] applications to the City for Site Plan approval and Special Use Permits for compliance with the urban design guidelines for Old Town North when such guidelines are adopted by City Council” per section 6-505 of the Zoning Ordinance. UDAC provides guidance to staff and makes formal recommendations to the Planning Commission on new development proposals that are located within the Old Town North Small Area Plan boundary for project sites that are not also within the City’s Old and Historic Alexandria District.

The guiding document for UDAC is the Urban Standards & Guidelines for Old Town North (UDSG), adopted by Ordinance on September 16, 2017 by City Council. The standards and guidelines in the UDSG are “intended to provide requirements and guidance in written and graphic form to implement the vision” of the Old Town North Small Area Plan. Additional guiding documents for the Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) site, the PRGS Urban Design Standards and Guidelines addendum and PRGS Design Excellence Prerequisites and Criteria addendum, were approved by City Council on July 5, 2022.

**Website:**

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/boards-and-commissions/urban-design-advisory-committee-serving-old-town-north>

## SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Policy and Membership Accomplishments

The Committee is comprised of five (5) members, each permitted to serve two (2)-year terms. Membership of UDAC consists of the following categories:

- Two (2) representatives of the Old Town North business community
- Two (2) residents representing the Old Town North residential community
- One (1) qualified professional skilled in urban design, architecture or landscape architecture

#### *FY2022 Committee Members:*

Member	Representation	First Appointed	Term End
Katherine Bingler	Resident	04.09.19	04.06.23
Thomas Soapes (Vice Chair)	Resident	10.05.18	10.06.22
Stephen Kulinski, AIA (Chair)	Business Community	02.10.15	02.09.23
Abbey Oklak, AIA, AICP, LEED AP (Secretary)	Design Professional	09.13.16	09.08.22
Theresa del Ninno	Business Community	11.10.20	07.06.22

#### *Staff Liaison:*

Michael Swidrak, Planning and Zoning, acted as the staff liaison to UDAC during the course of FY2022.

### Membership and Leadership

Committee membership was remained unchanged over the course of the year, with the exception of the resignation of Theresa del Ninno in early July 2022. Ms. del Ninno was appointed to the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) and resigned prior to joining her first BAR hearing on July 6. The vacancy for a Business Community member will be filled by City Council in September.

Stephen Kulinski, Thomas Soapes and Abbey Oklak were re-elected as Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, respectively, at the September 2021 meeting. The next vote on these positions will occur at the first autumn meeting.

### Meetings

UDAC meets monthly at its most frequent, but only meets quarterly or as needed if no applications have been submitted for review. Additionally, extra meetings may be scheduled as needed. Meetings are generally scheduled for the first Wednesday of a given month at 9:00 a.m. in the City Hall Sister Cities Conference Room 1101.

UDAC held five (5) meetings in FY2022. The meetings were scheduled as in-person meetings in City Hall, though the January 2022 meeting was held as a virtual meeting due to the Omicron wave of COVID-19 infections. The meetings in January, March and May were “hybrid” meetings where the Committee met in City Hall, though a Zoom webinar and camera were set up to facilitate online viewing and participation in the meetings.

The proceedings are summarized below. The full meeting notes for each meeting are located on the UDAC website:

**September 8, 2021:**

- The applicant for the Transpotomac Plaza / Tidelock redevelopment site (1033, 1055 and 1111 N. Fairfax Street) presented to UDAC for the third time. The Committee asked for the applicant to provide further site and building design changes and return for to UDAC for another presentation.
- The applicant for the redevelopment at 901 N. Pitt Street presented to UDAC for the first time and provided an overview of the site and building design. Committee comments included on the building massing, proposed curb cuts and the publicly accessible open space at the north end of the site.
- City staff introduced the UDSG matrix as a document that applicants were required to fill out to better facilitate UDAC’s review of development projects with the UDSG.
- The Committee held yearly elections for Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary.

**November 3, 2021:**

- The applicant for the redevelopment at 901 N. Pitt Street presented to UDAC for the second time. The applicant presentation focused on design options for the publicly accessible open space. Committee comments focused on parking and loading, storefront treatments on Montgomery Street and streetscape and open space amenities.
- The applicant for the Transpotomac Plaza / Tidelock redevelopment site (1033, 1055 and 1111 N. Fairfax Street) presented to UDAC for the fourth time. Committee and applicant discussion focused on building articulation, pedestrian circulation and open space amenities. The Committee voted 3-2 that the development proposal met the standards and guidelines in the UDSG.
- Staff brought a UDAC rules and procedures governing document for the Committee to review. The Committee voted 5-0 to approve the document with amendments to sections outlining a minimal requirement for meetings (semi-annual) and flexibility in the recording requirement for meetings.
- Following the formal meeting, UDAC members and members of the community met at the Alexan Old Town at 600 N. Royal Street and went on a walking tour of developments recently reviewed by UDAC. This included the Alexan Old Town, Gables Old Town North, The Muse and The Venue developments previously reviewed by UDAC. The walking tour was 90 minutes and ended at approximately 12:00 p.m.

**January 12, 2022:**

- The applicant for the redevelopment at 901 N. Pitt Street presented to UDAC for the third time. Committee comments focused on streetscape and sidewalk width and the design

evolution of the publicly accessible linear open space. The Committee voted 5-0 that the development proposal met the standards and guidelines in the UDSG.

**March 9, 2022:**

- The applicant for the addition to the Perfect Pita building at 951 N. Fairfax Street presented to UDAC. The applicant proposed a building expansion to a small building and solicited feedback on architectural details based on the limited nature of the proposal and the applicability of the UDSG. The committee voted 5-0 to support the proposal.
- Staff provided an informational update on the Development Standards and Guidelines Addendum and Design Excellence Standards for the Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) Coordinated Development District (CDD) site. Staff outlined the drafting of the Addendum and Design Excellence Standards and the process for the applicant for each CDD building or block to seek UDAC endorsement using either document.

**May 11, 2022:**

- The Committee met with City staff, community members and the owner of the PRGS site for a site tour at 8:30 a.m. The property owner and CDD applicant walked the tour group around the site until 9:30 a.m. when Committee members headed to City Hall for a 10:00 a.m. meeting start time.
- Staff provided a second informational update on the Development Standards and Guidelines Addendum and Design Excellence Standards for the Potomac River Generating Station PRGS site. Staff went into more detail about the application of the Design Excellence Standards and the process of drafting each document, noting it was part of the CDD approval package for the July City Council hearing. The Committee asked for additional background on the creation of the Addendum document and time for review of the documents.
- The applicant for the Montgomery Center redevelopment on the 800 block of N. Royal Street presented to UDAC for the first time. The applicant outlined the building massing program and the open space and circulation plan, including the inclusion of mid-block open spaces and a covered “paseo” area for parking and loading access as well as pedestrian circulation.

**GOALS FOR THE COMING YEAR**

1. Continue to standardize the UDAC process for hybrid meetings that prioritize in-person meetings but allow for an adequate virtual participation option.
2. Prepare UDAC members for review of projects tied to the PRGS site, including the utilization of the UDSG Addendum and Design Excellence Standards for each project as applicable.
3. Continue to plan a yearly walking tour of previous UDAC-reviewed development sites.

4. Discuss, present and share ideas on urban design principles with UDAC members, including at Committee meetings.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. FY2022 Attendance Sheet
2. Endorsement Letters to Planning Commission for Tidlock and 901 N. Pitt Street developments

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA  
URBAN DESIGN ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING ATTENDANCE REPORT**

**JULY 1, 2021 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2022**

**CHAIRPERSON:** STEPHEN W. KULINSKI, AIA

<b>MEMBER'S NAME</b>	<b>September 2021</b>	<b>November 2021</b>	<b>January 2022</b>	<b>March 2022</b>	<b>May 2022</b>
Abbey Oklak	X	X	X	X	X
Theresa del Ninno	X	X	X	X	X
Thomas Soapes	X	X	X	X	X
Katherine Auth Bingler	X	X	X	X	X
Stephen Kulinski	X	X	X	X	X

**INDICATE: X - FOR PRESENT**

**E - FOR EXCUSED**

**U - FOR UNEXCUSED**

**LIST OF THOSE WHO DID NOT ATTEND 75% OF MEETINGS:**

N/A

**FORM MUST BE SIGNED BY CHAIRPERSON  
(APPROVED) STEPHEN KULINSKI**



**(Chairperson)**

City of Alexandria

# *Urban Design Advisory Committee*

**Committee Members:**

Stephen Kulinski, Chair  
Tom Soapes, Vice Chair  
Abbey Oklak, Secretary  
Katherine Bingler  
Theresa del Ninno

March 15, 2022

Planning Commission for the City of Alexandria

Stephen Koenig  
David Brown  
Melissa McMahon  
Vivian Ramirez  
Nathan Macek, Chair  
Melinda Lyle  
Jody Manor

Re: 901 N Pitt Street

Concept Design Submission

The Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC) serves in an appointed advisory committee capacity to the Planning Commission and to City Council on the planning and design of projects within the Old Town North (OTN) small area plan boundaries. In that role, the committee has met on three separate occasions between September 2021 and January 2022 to review the concept plan submission for the above referenced project. The applicant was responsive to the Committees questions and concerns. It was noted that the applicant was proactive in engaging and responding to Watergate, the established community adjacent to the north property line of the project.

This redevelopment project is the fifth to be considered by UDAC since the adoption of the revised Urban Design Standards and Guidelines on September 16, 2017. The applicants responded to the Committees comments and revised the plans accordingly. The Committee unanimously endorsed the project as meeting the Old Town North Urban Design Standards and Guidelines.

The committee endorsed the overall concept design for the project at the January 12th, 2022 meeting for the presentation dated January 5, 2022.

Respectfully,

**Urban Design Advisory Committee**

Stephen Kulinski, AIA , Chair

City of Alexandria

# *Urban Design Advisory Committee*

**Committee Members:**

Stephen Kulinski, Chair  
Tom Soapes, Vice Chair  
Abbey Oklak, Secretary  
Katherine Bingler  
Theresa del Ninno

December 9, 2021

Planning Commission for the City of Alexandria

Stephen Koenig  
David Brown  
Melissa McMahon  
Vivian Ramirez  
Nathan Macek, Chair  
Melinda Lyle  
Jody Manor

Re: Tidlock project at Transpotomac Plaza (1033, 1055 & 1111 N. Fairfax Street)

Concept Design Submission

The Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC) serves in an appointed advisory committee capacity to the Planning Commission and to City Council on the planning and design of projects within the Old Town North (OTN) small area plan boundaries. In that role, the committee has met on four separate occasions between December 2019 and November 2021 to review the concept plan submission for the above referenced project. The development team had outlined its conformance to the guidelines in every presentation.

This redevelopment project is the fourth to be considered by UDAC since the adoption of the revised Urban Design Standards and Guidelines on September 16, 2017. The applicants responded to the Committees comments, although the re-use of the existing building structures and the complicated land ownership/parking garage agreements made for limited responses to some of the committee's concerns. The committee ultimately split the vote with a 3-2 margin.

The committee endorsed the overall concept design for the project at the November 3, 2021 meeting for the presentation dated November 3, 2021.

Respectfully,

**Urban Design Advisory Committee**

Stephen Kulinski, AIA , Chair