



Urban Design Advisory Committee

The **Urban Design Advisory Committee (UDAC)** reviews site plan and special use permit applications for compliance with the Old Town North Urban Design Guidelines.

MEMBERSHIP

Committee Members: 5 **Term:** 2 Years

Membership to Consist of:

- ◆ 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

ROSTER

Member	Representation	Date Originally Appointed	Term Expires
Theresa Del Ninno	Business Community	11.10.20	11.10.22
Katherine Bingler	Resident	04.09.19	04.06.23
Tom Soapes	Resident	10.05.18	10.06.22
Stephen Kulinski	Business Community	02.10.15	02.09.23
Abbey Oklak	Design Professional	09.13.16	09.08.22

CITY STAFF + CONTACT

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UDAC webpage
www.alexandriava.gov/69556

Updated April 2021

I. REVIEW AUTHORITY AND PRIMARY GUIDING DOCUMENTS

Section 6-505 of the Alexandria Zoning Ordinance:

Urban Design Advisory Committee.

- (A) *Committee established.* There is hereby established an urban design advisory committee to assist the city in reviewing applications for development approval.
- (B) *Authority.* The urban design advisory committee is authorized to review 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.
- (C) *Membership.* The urban design advisory committee shall consist of five members to be appointed by city council for staggered terms of no more than two years each. The committee's members shall include two representatives of the business community of Old Town North, two residents representing the residential community of Old Town North, and one qualified professional skilled in urban design, architecture or landscape architecture.
- (D) *Procedures.* The director and the director of transportation and environmental services shall coordinate the review of each application for site plan review or a special use permit by the urban design advisory committee with its own review of each such application. Such coordination shall include notifying the committee when a pre-application conference is scheduled or requested under this ordinance, including under [section 11-407](#). Staff shall include the committee's comments and suggestions as part of the staff report on each application for consideration by the approving agency. Each applicant for site plan approval or a special use permit will be encouraged to discuss its proposal with the urban design advisory committee, including prior to the time an application is filed.

II. COMMITTEE SELECTION / ELECTIONS

- ◆ The committee initiates an annual election for a chair, with nominations presented by members of the committee. Committee members may also elect additional positions (such as vice chair).
- ◆ According to Section 2-4-4 of the City Code, the Committee also selects a secretary, with the duty of “preparing minutes or reports of all meetings or actions taken at any meeting.” A City staff member may be designated as the committee secretary by action of the committee (Section 2-4-10). *See Communication and Outreach.*
- ◆ Members can submit their resignation (and effective date) to the City Clerk or the chair of their respective committee.
- ◆ All committee members must reapply for their appointment with the City Clerk when their term has expired. No committee member may reapply for their appointment after serving 10 consecutive years on the committee. The prevailing exception is for committee members that were serving as of June 13, 2009 may reapply for an additional term beyond the 10-year limit.

Updated April 2021

III. COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP DUTIES

Chair and Vice Chair

- ◆ The Committee chair has the main task of running meetings, including the introduction of items on meeting agendas for presentation and discussion, and calling items for a vote.
- ◆ The chair also assists staff in proposing and reviewing meeting agenda items, meets with staff periodically to address any ongoing committee issues, and is the main author of any Committee memos, including letters of endorsement or official correspondence to City departments, Council or Planning Commission.
- ◆ The vice chair assists the chair in running meetings, and leads the meeting in absence of the chair. The vice chair may join the chair in meetings with City staff concerning Committee matters in a leadership capacity.
- ◆ Chair and vice chair work with staff to review the Committee annual report that is drafted by staff and sent to the City Clerk (see section VI. below).

Secretary

- ◆ The secretary acts as the first point of contact for the review of meeting notes, which are drafted by staff.
- ◆ Additionally, the secretary works with staff on Committee communication, including updating the UDAC webpage.

IV. REVIEW PROCEDURES

- ◆ Staff begins coordinating development reviews by informing the chair at the Concept I stage¹. The projects are formally presented to the overall committee by the applicant and staff at the Concept II stage. Submissions to UDAC are based on the Project Review Checklist.
- ◆ Staff will provide committee members with information sheets for each project the committee reviews. The information sheets will provide the basic planning data on the development proposal, including the zoning parameters, and a list of key issues that staff has identified as part of the review process.

¹ The Concept stages of development review are defined as the “pre-application” stage in the Zoning Ordinance. The Concept /pre-application review period occurs before an applicant submits a formal application to the Planning Commission for review.

- ◆ UDAC makes recommendations to the Planning and Zoning director that can be issued to Planning Commission and City Council as a memo or endorsement letter and through the staff report for a given project.²

V. MEETING PROCEDURES

Occurrence of Meetings:

- ◆ UDAC has agreed to procedurally convene quarterly meetings, with additional meetings scheduled on the first Wednesday of the month on an as-needed basis.

Procedures Based on Section 2-4-5 of the City Code:

- ◆ The committee will conduct meetings on procedures set forth in Robert's Rules of Order, and will have a Planning and Zoning staff member present to assist with any needs of the committee. The applicant for each project is tasked with presenting its project to the committee for discussion, though City staff will be present to provide any background on the development review process and for committee assistance.
- ◆ A quorum (a majority of the committee members) shall be present for any committee business to be conducted or actions to be taken. A member present but not voting shall be considered in counting a quorum.
- ◆ No action which "constitutes a recommendation or proposal for action by the city council or any other city board or commission" shall be taken without the "affirmative votes of a majority of the committee." All committee votes must be taken in public session, and not by proxy (i.e. via email).

Procedures based on Section 2-4-6 of the City Code (Public participation in committee meetings):

- ◆ All committee meetings shall be open to the public. The exception is for an executive session or closed meeting. The committee chair shall consult with the City Attorney before holding a closed meeting to determine whether such a meeting is authorized and what procedures should be followed.
- ◆ "Except as may be permitted by law, all books, papers and reports or other documents produced by or under the control of a committee shall be open for public inspection and copying."
- ◆ Working with City staff, each committee must provide "reasonable" public notice of the time and place of its meetings and the meeting agenda. Staff posts the meeting time and place on the City's

² In rare cases, design committees are granted approval authority for portions of the review process. In the approval of Carlyle Plaza Two (DSUP2011-0031), the DRB was granted approval authority for the final architecture of buildings on the site and certain signage developed under the coordinated sign program.

online calendar (alexandriava.gov/calendar) and on the committee's webpage. The agenda should identify any items that would allow (or preclude) public comment.

VI. COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH

- ◆ The UDAC webpage on the City's website provides meeting agendas, notes, and development project information. Meeting agendas are posted on the City's website prior to the related meeting.
- ◆ Staff is generally tasked with preparing notes of committee meetings (*see Committee Selection / Elections*). Staff responsibilities include archiving and the dissemination of notes to committee members, and the audio recording of meetings.
 - Meeting notes are distributed by email to committee members for their personal review. A draft of the final notes will be posted on the committee's webpage no more than 30 days after the meeting. A notation shall appear on the notes indicating whether they have been officially approved by the committee. The committee will have the opportunity to formally adopt the notes at the next meeting. The adopted notes will replace any final draft notes on the committee's webpage.
 - Staff audio records each committee meeting to provide an additional record of the meeting. Either staff or the committee chair will make an announcement at the beginning of each meeting concerning the audio recording in progress, and where any speakers and presenters in attendance should stand in order to have their voice picked up by the microphone.
- ◆ The committee is responsible for the submission of an annual report. The report summarizes the objectives and relative success of the committee, committee meetings and project reviews, and general recommendations. The annual report and attendance report is prepared by staff, reviewed and signed by the committee chair(s), and submitted within 60 days after the close of the fiscal year or "as shortly thereafter as possible" (Section 2-4-4 of the City Code). The composition of the annual report is outlined in 2-4-4(d)(2) of the City Code.