

Park and Lee
Rezoning
Narrative Statement

October 6, 2017

The Applicant requests a rezoning of the property from the T-1 district to the B-1 district to permit development of a mixed-use project known as Park and Lee. Park and Lee addresses significant market needs in Falls Church for owner occupied condos and flexible commercial space targeted toward small businesses. The project addresses the City's vision for mixed use development in the West Broad Street POA and furthers the goal for transforming Park Avenue into a Civic Great Street.

Project Background

Park and Lee addresses significant market needs in Falls Church for owner occupied condos and flexible commercial space targeted toward small businesses. The project addresses the City's vision for mixed use development in the West Broad Street POA and furthers the goal for transforming Park Avenue into a Civic Great Street.

The proposed development will require a rezoning of the properties from the T-1 zoning district to the B-1 zoning district. This rezoning will allow for a fully realized development of the property and appropriate benefits to the City. Additionally, special exceptions for residential use within a mixed-use project and for a height bonus are required.

The ground floor of the building incorporates a work/live use targeted toward small businesses and professional service providers. The work/live component is designed to provide small businesses and professional service providers with a flexible option to establish and grow their businesses with Falls Church. Similar uses and options do not exist within the City, so this project will create a significant opportunity to attract desired commercial uses. The work/live space will be divided into individual units that will be customer facing with individual commercial entrances on Park Avenue and N. Lee Street, large transparent facades with commercial designs, and commercial signage for individual businesses. The work/live use is the most appropriate, and economically viable, commercial uses for this location and will enhance the pedestrian experience in this area.

The upper floors of the project contain ownership condo units. There is a great need for condo units in the City, with the last new units being delivered in 2009. Park and Lee serves that need by providing 70 luxury condo units. The proposed units are targeted toward a move down, empty nester demographic that is underserved in the City. The anticipated owner will be a current Falls Church resident that is ready to sell a larger house, but wants to remain in the City. Park and Lee provides an opportunity for those users and will help maintain and enhance the community fabric.

In addition to the proposed uses, Park and Lee incorporates high quality architectural design that is sensitive to the context and fabric of the community. Along Lee Street, the building has a harder commercial and multi-family feel, with clear delineation between the ground floor commercial element and the upper level condo use. The ground floor on N. Lee Street includes larger amounts of glass to create a more transparent commercial feel, while the upper floors have a more traditional multi-family condo massing. On Park Avenue, the building has a softer, more residential feel as it transitions to the lower density uses across the street. On that frontage, the building has a more articulated form that evokes a townhouse feel and look. Further, the ground floor uses have a softer commercial feel, while still creating the activity and vibrancy within the pedestrian realm.

Overall, Park and Lee provides a welcome addition to the City's development fabric that serves two major needs in the City, a lack of condo ownership units and a lack of high quality innovative commercial space for small businesses. When combined with the high quality architecture and sensitive design, Park and Lee will become a true asset to the City.

Existing Conditions

The existing development contains non-viable commercial space that is not in conformance with the City's vision for the West Broad Street POA. The building located at 120 N. Lee Street contains a dated and deteriorating office building that is not attractive to the office market. A significant amount of the current space is located below grade, which is not desirable for office users. The building located at 609 Park Avenue is a single-family house that has historically been used for both residential and commercial uses. Under the existing T-1 zoning, the building could be used by-right as a single-family home.

The existing development configuration is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the West Broad Street POA small area plan, and the City's urban design guidelines. The streetscape adjacent to the properties contains narrow sidewalks, with very narrow grass strips. The buildings are set back from the street and do not create a positive pedestrian experience. Additionally, the buildings contain surface parking with no interior landscaping. The streetscape also includes overhead powerlines and associated poles that visually impact the pedestrian realm.

The site is located at 120 N. Lee Street and 609 Park Avenue (RPCs 51-130-018 and 51-130-022), is zoned T-1, Transitional, and contains _____ acres of land area.

Compliance with Comprehensive Plan

Park and Lee is in harmony with the Comprehensive Plan vision and recommendations for the property. The site is identified on the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Map as "Mixed-Use" and is located within Planning Opportunity Area 4 – The Village Section.

Sites with "Mixed-Use" designations are "designed to encourage an innovative and integrated approach to a mixture of residential, retail, and office commercial uses." The Comprehensive Plan further provides that the "Mixed-Use" designation "allows a wide variety of land use

options in exchange for densities that are generally higher than those allowed in the other residential and commercial zoning districts.” Park and Lee includes an innovative work/live commercial component and a desired ownership condo residential use.

The Comprehensive Plan provides that “Development in the Village section should also achieve the following land use and design goals:

- *Consolidate parcels to create potential for larger scale and mixed-use development;*

Park and Lee consolidates multi lots to facilitate a mixed-use development.

- *Consolidate entrances;*

The proposed development consolidates the 3 existing entrances down to 1 strategically located entrance.

- *Create ground floor retail in multi-story buildings;*

Park and Lee includes ground floor commercial uses in a multi-story building.

- *Create a recognizable and functional commercial and residential neighborhood along this portion of West Broad Street;*

While not located on West Broad Street, the project continues the commercial and residential development pattern in the area.

- *Achieve a better balance of mixed-uses to strip commercial-style uses;*

The project contains a varied mix of potential commercial uses in the work/live space and achieves an appropriate balance of commercial and residential uses.

- *Create development that is pedestrian-oriented;*

Park and Lee is designed to elevate the pedestrian realm through enhanced streetscape, appropriate building design, ground-floor commercial uses, limited curb cuts, and undergrounding of overhead power lines.

- *Locate buildings close to West Broad Street and Park Avenue.;*

The proposed building is appropriately oriented toward Park Avenue, with a building zone, sidewalk, and amenity area that reflect the West Broad Street POA Small Area Plan goals.

- *Screen parking areas, preferably in the rear or in structured facilities;*

Parking is provided in a fully screened structured facility, with the majority of parking located below ground.

- *Create signage that is complementary;*

Complimentary and appropriate project signage, including signage for individual commercial uses is anticipated.

- *Develop minimum and maximum building heights; and*

Park and Lee reflects building heights anticipated by the Comprehensive Plan, West Broad Street POA Small Area Plan, and Zoning Ordinance.

- *Achieve consistent architectural goals (building materials, window types, roof overhangs, roof pitch, and porches).*

The project's high quality architecture reflects the City's preference for masonry materials and design that fits within the context of Falls Church's existing development fabric.

Compliance with the West Broad Street POA Small Area Plan

Park and Lee furthers the West Broad Street POA Small Area Plan's ("West Broad Plan") vision and goals for the property. The project creates a mixed-use project that addresses a number of the City's development needs, while being sensitive to and enhancing the existing community fabric.

The West Broad Plan creates a vision and goals for the area, along with specific guidance on development and implementation of the plan. The West Broad Plan's vision provides that:

The West Broad Street Planning Opportunity Area will become a vibrant, economically viable, diverse, walkable, bicycle friendly destination along one of the City's major commercial corridors. Redevelopment will reinforce the concept of unique business uses and shopping notes designed to be environmentally sustainable and that enhance the character of the City.

Park and Lee is completely aligned with the West Broad Plan's vision. The project is designed to create a vibrant, walkable, bicycle friendly environment. Additionally, it takes non-viable commercial spaces and creates an economically viable project. The work/live ground floor use create a unique opportunity to attract small businesses and professional offices to the City and caters to the creative class that will enhance the City's character.

The West Broad Plan further lays out a number of goals that are directly addressed by the project. Those include:

- *Create a Great Place that accurately reflects the community, culture, and character of the City while incorporating mixed-use redevelopment that is at the appropriate scale for the area.*

Park and Lee is designed to reflect and enhance the community, culture, and character of the City. The condo units reflect the City's home ownership culture. The work/live units reflect the City's strong tradition of homegrown small businesses and professional offices, with business owners that live in the City. Further, the project is designed at an appropriate scale that relates to both the higher density development on West Broad Street and the lower density uses on Park Avenue.

- *Promote the integration of new development into the fabric of the surrounding areas by establishing a framework for merging density levels and architectural designs.*

The building massing and form, high quality materials, and layout were thoughtfully designed to fully integrate and enhance the fabric of the surrounding areas. The building transitions from a more urban design on Lee Street that corresponds to the Broadway and Kensington projects to a softer design and form on Park Avenue that more closely relates to the nearby lower density uses.

- *Promote redevelopment of underutilized commercial properties to increase the tax base and to improve quality of life.*

Park and Lee replaces two non-viable commercial buildings with a mixed-use project that provides a net fiscal impact of \$8.4 million.

- *Establish an Office & Hotel Node and Retail Nodes that build on established commercial activity in recognized areas.*

The site is located within an identified Activity Node and builds upon the Broadway and Kensington developments to enhance small business and professional offices within the immediate area.

- *Increase the amount of public open space to help improve the area socially.*

The project includes public open space opportunities along the Park Avenue and Lee Street frontages.

- *Increase the number of buildings meeting LEED Silver and Energy Star standards; decrease impervious surface cover; and incorporate stormwater mitigation into new projects to improve the area environmentally.*

The proposed building includes a commitment to LEED certification. Additionally, the site currently has no Stormwater management controls. As proposed, the project meets the City's requirements for Stormwater management and includes methods for phosphorus removal (otherwise known as BMP treatment) that also help reduce volume

runoff from the site, such as urban bioretention planters. There will also be onsite detention to control the runoff from the site for erosion and channel protection of the downstream system.

- *Increase transportation options along the Route 7 corridor by establishing better connections with existing public transportation options, and increasing pedestrian and bicycle access to, from, and within the area.*

Park and Lee creates an enhanced pedestrian environment that will promote pedestrian activity within the area. Additionally, the project will incorporate exterior bike racks and a secured bike storage room within the building.

The West Broad Plan identifies this site as Neighborhood Serving and Transitional. Additionally, it identifies the site as part of an Activity Node. Neighborhood Serving areas serve as places for additional neighborhood serving retail and office uses and destinations for surrounding neighborhoods. Transitional areas are intended to create appropriate relationships between redevelopment and surrounding residential areas through landscaping, building step backs, varied façade treatments, and other appropriate architectural treatments. Activity Nodes indicate areas where greater concentrations of commercial activity are suggested. The plan provides that redevelopment in Activity Nodes “will most likely require taller building heights in order to make redevelopment feasible”, with appropriate tapers to residential areas.

Park and Lee provides a significant increase in commercial use that is targeted toward small businesses and professional offices. Those uses will serve as an amenity and necessary resource for the surrounding neighborhood. The building also appropriately transitions on Park Avenue to the surrounding residential uses. On Park Avenue, the building has a softer, more residential feel on the ground floor. On that frontage, the building has a more articulated form that evokes a townhouse feel and look. Further, the ground floor uses have a softer commercial feel, while still creating the activity and vibrancy within the pedestrian realm.

The West Broad Plan further identifies the site as a potential opportunity for redevelopment and consolidation. It also anticipates the rezoning of the property and specifically identifies the site as allowable for rezoning to the B-1 district.

Park and Lee also conforms with the guidelines for building design, streetscape improvements, and the undergrounding of overhead power lines.

Compliance with City Design Guidelines

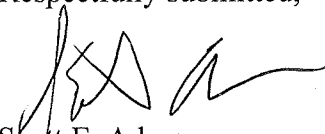
The high quality architectural design furthers the City’s Design Guidelines by creating an appropriately scaled building that is in harmony with the context of the surrounding area. The project also incorporates enhanced streetscape design to activate the pedestrian realm on Park Avenue and N. Lee Street.

- Provides appropriate landscaping to define and create an attractive pedestrian realm.

- Utilizes special paving materials for sidewalks and minimizes curb cuts, including a reduction in curb cuts from 3 to 1.
- Strategically locates the proposed curb cut to create an uninterrupted pedestrian realm.
- Building and ground-floor uses are oriented toward the street.
- The building's design creates an urban edge on Lee Street and a softer edge on Park Avenue that is scaled for the pedestrian realm and adjacent uses on those frontages.
- Service areas are located inside the screened parking garage.
- Parking is provided in a structured underground garage that is screened from view on all four sides of the building.
- Project architecture is a significant upgrade over existing uses on the site, which do not meet the City's design guidelines.

For the above reasons, we respectfully request that the City Council rezone the property from T-1 to B-1 zoning district.

Respectfully submitted,



Scott E. Adams